



# CHRC News

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A Service Funded by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners

## ***Announcing the Consumer Health Reference Center at Treadwell Library, Massachusetts General Hospital***

Welcome to the first issue of the Consumer Health Reference Center newsletter!

### **Contract Awarded**

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) recently awarded the Consumer Health Reference Center contract to the Treadwell Library at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston.

This first, brief issue of our newsletter is to introduce the Treadwell Library and the Consumer Health Reference Center.

### **The Consumer Health Reference Center**

The MBLC's *Strategic Plan for the Future of Libraries in Massachusetts* calls for the statewide provision of value-added services to all libraries that are members of the six new multi-type regional library systems for the benefit of the residents of the Commonwealth.

The plan identifies the provision of access to reference, research and information centers that specialize in health, business and legal information as one of the most

important and visible of these value added services. To provide access to consumer health information resources the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners has contracted with the Treadwell Library to be the Consumer Health Reference Center for Massachusetts.

The Consumer Health Reference Center is available to all member libraries of the regional library systems who are seeking consumer health information to answer user queries when local or regional resources have not been able to meet the needs.

### **The Treadwell Library**

Treadwell Library is the health sciences library at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston.

It is the largest hospital library in New England and also one of the oldest hospital libraries in the country -- celebrating its 150th birthday last October.

The library has eight professional librarians and twelve support staff. Our rich biomedical collection is comprised of 1,065 journal titles, 15,000 books, 35,000 bound

journal volumes and electronic and web-based databases. Also included in our collection are many patient education and consumer health materials.

### **Consumer Health Reference Center Services**

The Consumer Health Reference Center offers a variety of services which are outlined below. As this project is just beginning, some services are still under development.

#### **Reference Services**

The CHRC provides mediated reference services to library staff at all regional member libraries. Reference services are intended to supplement your local and regional resources when local or regional resources have not been able to meet the needs.

#### **How to Contact us:**

Phone: 1-877-MEDI REF (toll free)  
1-877-633-4733

This will connect you directly to a reference librarian.

Reference librarians are available from 9:00AM-5:00PM, Monday to Friday.

Voicemail will be used to accept queries on nights and weekends.

You may also contact us by:

Fax: (617) 726-6784  
Email: askus@medex.mgh.harvard.edu  
Mail: Treadwell Library  
Bartlett Hall Extension 1  
MGH, 55 Fruit St.  
Boston, MA 02114

#### **Reference Queries:**

Some examples of reference queries: information on diseases, medications, surgical procedures, hot topics and alternative therapies, a quick search of the medical or nursing literature, and clearing-house referral information.

#### **Turnaround Time:**

During regular week-day hours we aim to provide answers within 24 hours.

#### **Continuing Education and Training Workshops**

Planning is underway for a half-day continuing education and training workshop to be held in each region later this year. Details of times and locations will be announced.

#### **Quarterly Newsletter**

Future issues of the newsletter will focus on consumer health resources and tips for providing consumer health information. Publication dates are July, October, January and April.

Let us know if you have any ideas or suggestions for content.

Articles, news, book reviews, web site reviews, or any other information relevant to consumer health information are most welcome and can be sent to *CHRC News* by fax, email or mail to the addresses below.

### **Web Page -- Coming Soon!**

A web page with links to evaluated consumer health resources is coming soon. This will be available through the Massachusetts Library and Information Network (MLIN) home page at:

<http://www.mlin.lib.ma.us>

We will let you know when it's available.

### **How to Reach Us**

Phone: 1-877-MEDI REF (toll free)  
1-877-633-4733

(617) 726-8600

Fax: (617) 726-6784

Email: [askus@medex.mgh.harvard.edu](mailto:askus@medex.mgh.harvard.edu)

Mail: Treadwell Library,  
Bartlett Hall Extension 1  
Massachusetts General Hospital  
55 Fruit Street  
Boston, MA 02114

Web: Coming soon!

### **Useful Treadwell Library Information**

Our online catalog, MAGIC, is at:

<telnet://magic.mgh.harvard.edu>

Our home page is at:

<http://www.mgh.harvard.edu/library/library.htm>

Check it out! Here you will find many biomedical resources, including some consumer links. Remember, there will be a separate Consumer Health Reference Center home page.

### **The Consumer Health Reference Center's Relationship with Boston Public Library, the Statewide Reference and Referral Center**

Under the authority of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 78, Section 19C, the Boston Public Library (BPL), serves as the Statewide Reference and Referral Center. The BPL plays a unique and special role in the provision of statewide supplemental reference and research services for reference requests that cannot be met by the contracting libraries who serve as the Regional Library Systems' Regional Reference Centers. BPL's telephone reference and departmental reference specialists handle mediated reference queries directly from both the Regional Reference Center and individual local libraries through a prescribed and mutually agreed upon set of procedures. As part of BPL's Journal Document Delivery

Service, BPL will provide copies of articles for verified citations at no charge to libraries who members of

the Regional Library Systems. This may include the provision of articles cited by the Consumer Health Reference Center in response to a question they are addressing.

*We are delighted to be the  
Consumer Health Reference Center for Massachusetts  
and are looking forward to helping you  
help your users.*