

DML Excellence Awards 2016 Report

Project No: 384 – Dr. Jim Mahon Library and Education Centre, St. Luke’s General Hospital, Kilkenny

Address: St. Luke’s General Hospital, Kilkenny

Location: Ireland East Hospitals Group

Brief Description (up to 200 words)

Existing library and education facilities in the Carlow/Kilkenny area were for many years dispersed across a number of different locations: Lackan, Dublin Rd., Kilkenny; St. Luke’s General Hospital, Kilkenny; and a number of small, un-staffed departmental facilities, including the Dept. of Psychiatry, St. Luke’s General Hospital Kilkenny. Opening the new Dr. Jim Mahon Library and Education Centre provides an integrated single resource in a central location that will adequately address all of the educational and research needs of healthcare practitioners and students on clinical placement with health services in the Carlow/Kilkenny area. The function of the consolidated Library and Education Centre will be to embrace all aspects of medical education and continuing professional development, and to provide a focal point on the hospital campus for access to the evidence base on healthcare. The remit of library and education services is to provide access for doctors, nurses and professions allied to medicine to a comprehensive range of evidence – based, up-to-date knowledge resources for purposes of:

research into specific clinical questions, conditions or treatments relevant to the care of individual patients; keeping up to date with developments in a specific area of the health sciences, or the professional literature of a given specialty;

continuing professional education.

Services are intended to ensure that point-of-care decisions are informed by best international evidence and that staff engaged in education or research have an available knowledge resource, and assistance when they need it.

Main goal(s) and aims of the Project

The Buttimer report (2006) states that ‘Doctors require access to both traditional library resources and services such as books, journals, document supply services, physical space to read and study and a professionally – staffed reference and information service, and the increasing range of virtual library resources such as health databases, online journals and the Internet’ (Buttimer, J. Preparing Ireland’s Doctors to Meet the Health Needs of the 21st Century (Dublin: Department of Health and Children, 2006) p.33) ; ‘Trainees should have access to state-of-the-art educational and training facilities including... global access to web based journals (and) a well-stocked library and/or virtual

library” (p.109). The Fottrell report (2006) states that ‘Students must have access to appropriate learning resources and facilities including libraries, computers, lecture theatres and seminar rooms. The quality of facilities should be regularly reviewed to make sure they are still appropriate’ (Fottrell, P. Medical Education in Ireland: A new Direction (Dublin: Department of Education and Science, Department of Education and Science, Department of Health and Children, 2006) p.49).

Four main factors necessitated the development of library and education facilities to include the provision of improved ICT facilities, out-of-hours access and the provision of virtual learning environments and resources:

1. An increase in the number of students on clinical placement in the Carlow/Kilkenny area;
2. A greater emphasis on the processes of continuing medical education, continuing professional development and lifelong learning;
3. A greater emphasis on problem-based and group learning;
4. A requirement to ensure the ready availability of up-to-date, evidence-based information for patient care and the support necessary to access and collate best evidence

In order to encourage and sustain library use and educational activity among healthcare staff and students on clinical placement, the overarching aim of the project is to provide comfortable, spacious, well-lit and well-ventilated spaces, a robust ICT infrastructure and the resources – both print and electronic – to transform these spaces into integrated learning environments.

The arrival of graduate medical students on clinical placement at St. Luke’s General Hospital from the medical school at the University of Limerick as well as students from the Royal College of Surgeons, Waterford Institute of Technology and other institutions highlighted the necessity for the creation of a new type of Library and Education Centre in the Carlow/Kilkenny area. Experience internationally indicated to us that that students following problem - based learning courses – such as those from the university of Limerick – use library and education services more frequently and for longer periods.

The provision of a consolidated Library and Education Centre will ensure that the hospital responds to increasing internal demand and to key strategic service goals:

Equity of access for all healthcare practitioners whether hospital – or community-based in the Carlow/Kilkenny area to standardised opening hours; print and online resources; services

Outreach and open access to the primary care sector

A more efficient pooling of library staff with consequent gains in terms of skill sets economies of scale, cover for annual leave, etc.

Reduced duplication of resources across both of the main library sites

Potential for increased clinical librarian (CL) and EBM activities on the hospital campus, particularly with the relocation of the “Clinical Queries” services and associated CL activities

Improved capacity of St. Luke’s General Hospital to attract NCHDs and function as a multidisciplinary training hospital.

Outline of Approach – main steps taken to implement the Project

1. Convening a Project Team to include representation from Hospital Management, the Clinical Director, Library Services, Estates and ICT
2. Establishment of a Library and Education Committee
3. Preparation of a comprehensive planning brief
4. Early and continuing consultation with architects O'Mahony Pyke in order to transpose the planning brief into a coherent and efficient design
5. Consultation with our educational and funding partners at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and University of Limerick
6. Equipping of the Library and Education Centre to include state-of-the-art ICT infrastructure: electronic display units; PC and tablet computing; Wi-Fi, videoconferencing
7. Official opening of the Dr. Jim Mahon Library and Education Centre by Minister of State Ms. Ann Phelan on October 8th, 2015