



# NHS and HE Partnership in Wales

Janet Peters

University Librarian and Senior  
Assistant Director, Information Services  
Cardiff University

# The context

AWHILES:

21 Trust  
Libraries;

7 Cardiff  
University  
managed  
Health Libraries





# The user base

- Clinicians in the NHS
- Clinicians with a teaching/supervisory role
- Trainee (junior) doctors
- Undergraduate medical students
- NHS Nurses
- Nurse trainees
- Health care professionals
- Health care trainees
- Trainees based at Cardiff, Swansea, Glamorgan, Bangor
- ...



# Entitlements

Clinicians	NHS e-resources; Trust libraries	
Clinicians who teach	NHS e-resources; Trust libraries	plus Cardiff/Swansea University resources (need Honorary Contract)
Trainee doctors/nurses/health care professionals/ Undergraduates from Cardiff University	Cardiff University e-resources and libraries	plus Trust libraries and usually NHS e-resources
Trainees/Undergraduates from other Universities	Other University's e-resources and libraries	plus Trust libraries and usually NHS e-resources



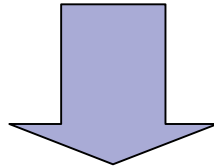
# The need

- Obvious! Remove the complexity
- Simplify licensing arrangements for electronic access
- Iron out funding anomalies



# The vision

- Access to best possible range of health information in Wales
- For all who need it
- Simple access
- No complex interrogation to determine entitlements



**Better health care using a consistent evidence base**



# The process

- Identify key partners
- Organise stake-holder meeting(s)
- Brain-storm solutions
- Establish project framework
- Implement
  
- Simple!



# The reality

- Key partners identified:
  - 'Value Wales'
  - 'Informing Healthcare'
  - University librarians
  - Trust librarians
  - Suppliers
- Two stakeholder meetings held in 2007/8



# Initial findings

- Evidence of duplication across sectors, especially of databases
- Different procurement methods between NHS (IHC) and Universities
- Different selection methods: NHS e-library selected title by title, Universities often purchase bundles
- Different contractual periods
- Different preferred platforms for same resources
- Some help could be provided by agents willing to work across sectors e.g. JISC Collections



## Strengths

- AWHILES already exists as a group
- University Libraries control Budgets
- Will to act
- Focus on evidence-based medicine
- WHELF – HE equivalent to AWHILES
- Merging of NHS Trusts requires review of subscriptions
- Close links between Librarians and NHS
- Clinical Librarianship model

## Weaknesses

- AWHILES does not include all Universities offering healthcare programmes
- Fragmentation of current procurements and funding streams
- Lack of single WAG contact point and policy
- Lack of dedicated resource to plan
- Different content requirements
- Currently Social Workers, Prison and Private Hospitals not included in licenses

## Opportunities

- Stop duplication within Public Sector
- Provide patient access?? (in future)
- Increased content
- Support of Strategic Content Alliance
- Consistent services across Wales
- Value for Money efficiencies
- Support of Chief Medical Officer
- Identity Management already being tackled in HEIs – NHS to consider using Shibboleth?

## Threats

- Project scope too large/fragmented
- Lack of time & resource to work together
- Lack of commitment
- Anxiety about change
- Fear of loss of control over library budgets
- Training issues
- Technology barriers e.g. firewalls
- Management of administration/invoicing
- Funding discrepancies across Wales



# Initial groundrules

- To simplify and enhance access to health information for NHS and University users (general public/patients later??)
- Not to reduce expenditure overall
- To reduce administration for libraries and suppliers
- To improve overall range of resources in Wales for healthcare



# Initial progress

- Very slow
- Pended during NHS e-library re-procurement process; would buy 12 months time to allow some joint contracts to be negotiated
- Identified databases as a relatively quick win representing n% of the total expenditure



# Current situation

- Disaster! Expenditure on NHS e-library halted in August and September. Contracts due for renewal 1 October
- Meeting with Value Wales held
- Decided risk of future contracts with NHS probably too great to allow further progress
- Risk assessment meeting to be held with government agency responsible for e-library
- Alternative of joint procurement between Trust libraries and University libraries in Wales to be explored



# Learning points

- Multi-partner work is time-consuming, demanding and slow
- Trust between partners is essential
- Shared vision maintains momentum
- Watch this space – but don't hold your breath!