

RDA Ireland SPOTLIGHT:

Health Service Executive National Health Library and Knowledge Service (NHLKS)



“The vision of the NHLKS is that everyone working in Ireland’s health service will have access to knowledge, and will apply it whenever and wherever they need it, to deliver the best possible health and care.”

Interview with
AOIFE LAWTON
General Manager/National HSE Librarian



NATIONAL HEALTH LIBRARY
& KNOWLEDGE SERVICE



Commitment to good research, effective data management and Open Science

The Health Service Executive National Health Library and Knowledge Service (NHLKS) aims by 2023 to become an integrated and quality assured National service, recognised by healthcare professionals for adding value by using knowledge to deliver safe, effective person centred healthcare, accessible to all on an equitable basis offering standardised service provision nationally as set out in the “Turning knowledge into action: Enabling care; Improving health 2018-2023” strategy and implementation plan <http://hdl.handle.net/10147/623032>.

The NHLKS is part of a wider Research and Evidence function in the HSE. Research and Evidence is central to our vision and an important enabler of safe and effective patient care. Research data management is of relevance to everyone working in the area of research in the health services. For those of us working in the library services, we work in partnership with researchers to support open

science, open access publishing and open policies and practices. Additionally there is a new national office for Policies, Procedures, Protocols and Guidelines (PPPGs) which is due to be set up in 2020. This national office will come under the remit of the National Library Service and will have important links to open science, open policies and open practices.

RDM is important on many levels. Ultimately it is about reproducibility of research, avoiding duplication of research and data and adhering to the principles of FAIR. The benefits of RDM and open science have been well documented. For the health services, the benefits are real in that they are about life and death as well as quality of life. The benefits of having access to open research, open science means everything to patients and their families looking for answers to complex health questions and for example rare diseases and rare conditions where research is limited.

Aligning policy and practice



In the technical domain, we have put in place a national open access repository www.lenus.ie. This will need to integrate with other research systems as they come on stream in the health service. We have also put in place a policy on open access publishing, in place since 2013. However there is more to do. It is important to have both policy and practice aligned. By this

we mean that we have the policy on open access publishing and we have the digital platform which aligns with it. You can't have one without the other. For the future more resources would be needed to invest in educational oriented activities. We would be open to partnering with other organisations to achieve this in a sustainable way.

The Challenges

There are two key challenges:

1) There is a lack of a truly national approach when it comes to subscriptions to electronic journals and electronic databases in Ireland. There is one consortia for the academic sector called IReL which does not include the health

sector. As long as this continues, there will be an imbalance when it comes to open science.

2) There is a lack of awareness and education about Open Science. There is still a heavy reliance on traditional metrics such as impact factor and peer review.

Sharing lessons learnt

We have introduced annual Open Access Research Awards in the HSE. They are up and running since 2014 and have been a great success. We have learned from this that it is

important to celebrate and recognise the achievements of everyone who chooses to openly publish their research.



Contributing to the open research environment in Ireland and Europe

Infrastructures support academic and practice based research and we are frequent partners in health research in Ireland and abroad.

Now that the HSE has a national lead for research, Dr. Ana Terres, there is a focus on research in a coordinated way. The steps to achieve this are outlined in the recent 10 year plan for research detailed in the "HSE Action

plan for health research 2019-2029"

<http://hdl.handle.net/10147/626952>.

Active participation by the HSE in the NORF (National Open Research Forum) and its working groups will be essential in shaping the open research environment in Ireland for now and the future.

Keep in touch!

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