

BECOMING INVOLVED IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE SIDE OF RESEARCH

– a librarian's viewpoint

When I took over the role of Library Manager in early 2012, I saw it as an opportunity to become more embedded in other departments. Much of my focus has included involvement with the Research and Ethics Service within my hospital. This initially started with involvement in The Ballarat Health Services and St John of God Human Research and Ethics Committee (HREC). This is a duly constituted Ethics Committee under the guidelines of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), responsible for approving, overseeing, and monitoring the conduct and performance of research in both institutions. This involvement has opened my eyes to a whole other paradigm. I now see what staff are proposing to research and I can help them better tailor their searches so that they are gaining not only the material required, but also fulfilling administrative requirements of the HREC. Many 'newbie' researchers come to the library before submitting applications, and I can guide them on the expectations required by the HREC in what can be a tricky and paper-filled world. By being on the committee I can also see what research the hospital is affiliated with (eg. clinical trials) and I can set up alerts to ensure that we capture all the research BHS is involved in. My participation with HREC meshed well with my plan to establish a digital repository, and this has since been established

capturing the intellectual and research output of the hospital.

From my involvement with HREC, I was also asked to sit on an internal Research Advisory Committee for Ballarat Health Services (BHS). As a committee member, I help to run and organise an internal conference, showcase BHS research, run training sessions on library resources, and promote the library at events. This role has also led to a library page in the Research and Ethics Service newsletter and helping to run Researcher Training focusing on the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and the use of private information in research.

I highly recommend forming close ties with your Research and Ethics Service as it opens up networking opportunities, library marketing and promotion prospects, and allows you to anticipate needs instead of responding to them. Librarians also bring a different skill set and thought process which can enhance projects and encourage more collaboration.

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