



The Next Step in Universal Health Care:

The Saskatchewan Cochrane Library
Initiative

Christine Marshall

Librarian

Health Quality Council

Saskatoon, SK



Overview:

- ❖ The Cochrane Library Initiative
- ❖ Setting the stage: The Province of Saskatchewan
- ❖ How it came together
- ❖ The current state of the project
- ❖ The response
- ❖ Plans for the future
- ❖ Questions ?



The Cochrane Library Initiative

- ❖ In October 2004 Saskatchewan became the first Canadian province to offer access to The Cochrane Library for all its citizens free of charge.
- ❖ The Library can be accessed at any public library (in house, or via website), and at any regional health authority facility
- ❖ Training of healthcare workers and library staff is ongoing, and provided without charge

Setting the stage: The Province of Saskatchewan

- ❖ Reputation as a “have-less” province
- ❖ Population is spread out:
 - Less than half the population of the city of Toronto, just over half the size of Ontario
 - Largest city: Saskatoon at pop. 237 000
- ❖ 1 medical school with health sciences library (Saskatoon)
- ❖ In the past access to medical literature outside of major centers has typically been limited





How it came together

- ❖ Janet Bangma & Dorothy Forbes of the Canadian Cochrane Centre Saskatchewan Site group had an idea, but couldn't do it alone
- ❖ Approached HQC in 2002/2003 for funding: HQC's mission, "to improve the quality of care and the caring experience in Saskatchewan by encouraging the use of best practice". Funding secured for 3 years
- ❖ Sask Health Resource Centre prepared to be the means for the health regions to access the database & provide training: the Multitype Database Licensing Program would negotiate the license and provide access to the public




❖ *Disaster Strikes!* Sask Health shut down their resource center in spring of 2004

❖ Panic started to set in

❖ Remaining partners got together to regroup & pick up the pieces:

- Could use IP authentication for healthcare workers affiliated with a regional health authority : IPs gathered because of SHIRP

- IP not doable for people who are not associated with a region (example: private clinics, community pharmacists)

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- ❖ The MDLP could be the answer! Anyone could access Cochrane through the MDLP libraries, all they would need is a library card
 - ❖ HQC was worried that they wouldn't go for it... the Provincial Library said “bring it on!”
 - ❖ HQC was toying with the idea of hiring a librarian: database training could be part of their duties until there were enough people in the regions that they could train each other



In the end...

MDLP:

Negotiated the license for everyone in the province. They provide technical support for MDLP libraries, and deal with Wiley in general.

HQC:

Providing funding for the license for 3 years. The librarian provides free training to health regions and MDLP libraries upon request. Undertakes some promotional activities.

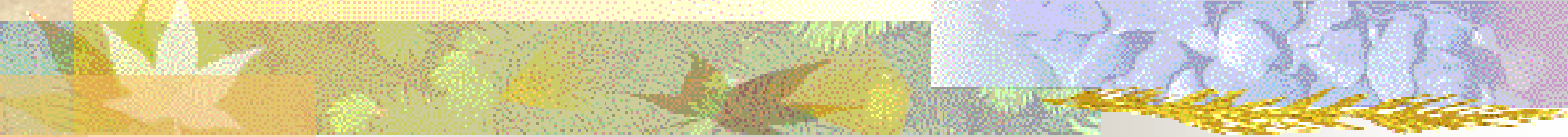
Saskatchewan Cochrane Group:

Conducting a study on the impact of province wide access



The Current state of the Project

- ❖ Access to Cochrane in October 2004, after delays with a changing interface
- ❖ Database training continues. To date HQC training has been held in 5 of 13 health regions and 5 of 8 public library regions. Wiley reps have made 2 trips to Saskatchewan for MDLP training in addition to regular training
- ❖ February 2005 first venture into distance training, using Sask Health's telehealth system

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- ❖ Two news releases: a “quiet” news release in October 2004, and a “splashy” news release in February 2005 that involved three simultaneous open-houses in public libraries across the province
 - ❖ Periodic updates in HQC newsletters to remind people that Cochrane is out there and training is available
 - ❖ An article published in the SLA Forum about the Cochrane Library in December 2004
 - ❖ Had a presence at provincial health and library conferences in March and April 2005



The Response

- ❖ Overall response to the project has been quite good

Health Sector:

- ❖ Enthusiasm for access, particularly from the more rural areas (many relied on the Sask Health resource centre for library services and were left with virtually nothing when it closed)



Public Libraries:

❖ Response has been mixed:

[...] Thanks! This will be helpful to our patrons!

[...] I am pleased this resource is available to the public.

VS.

Unfortunately I can't imagine many of our patrons being able to make use of this; sounds like a great idea but it would have to be much more accessible to be used much by the public



Plans for The Future

Training:

- ❖ Continue with “in person” sessions; expand into alternative formats
- ❖ Goal: before the end of the year offer training at least once in every health region outside of Saskatoon and Regina Qu’Appelle, and every public library region

Promotion ideas:

- ❖ Publish on the project itself
- ❖ Attempt to engage the public themselves to encourage public librarians to acquaint themselves with the database



Cochrane Site Group Study:

- ❖ Participants will continue to be recruited and interviewed over the coming year
- ❖ Impact of Cochrane Library access will inform decisions as the funding period draws to a close.



Questions?