

**HEALTH**

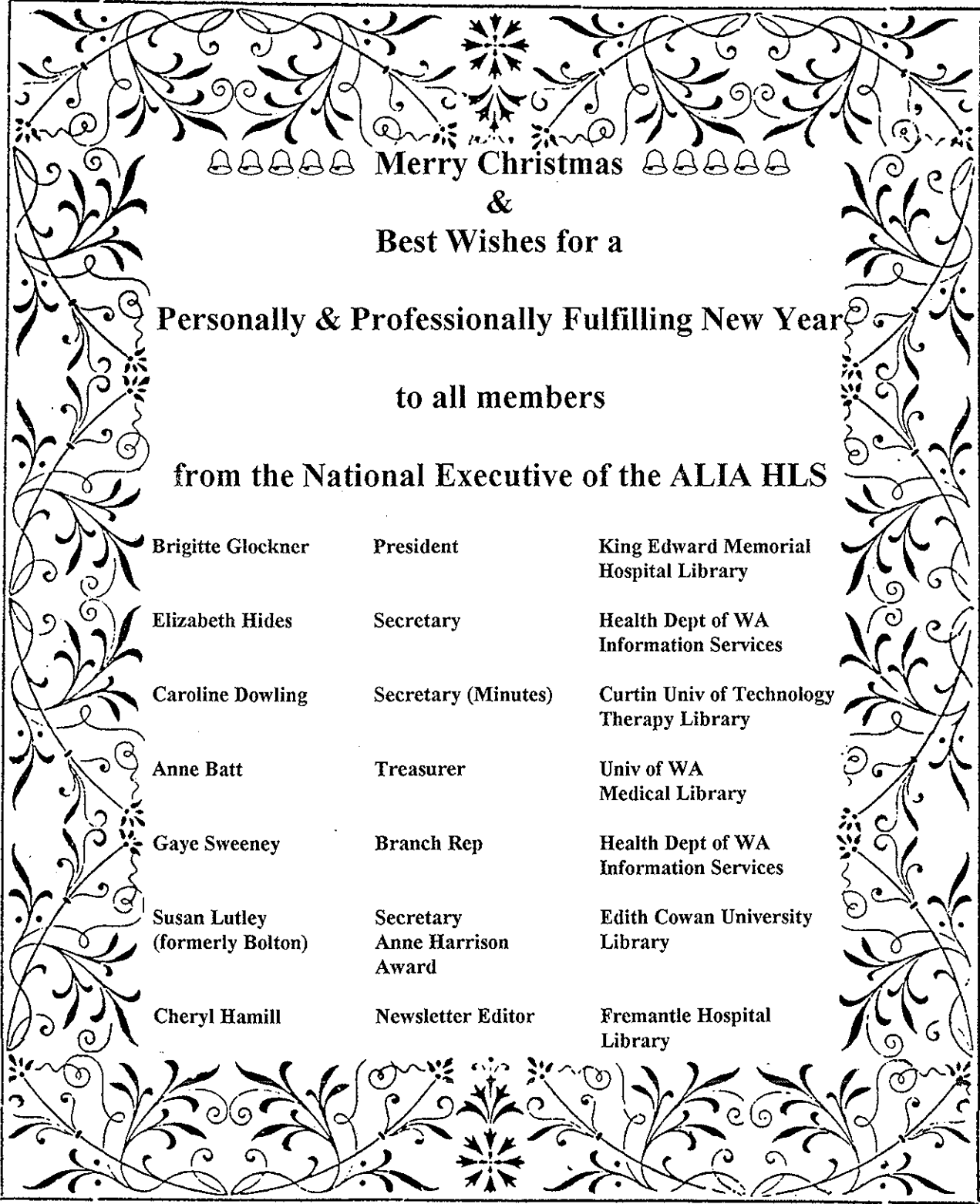
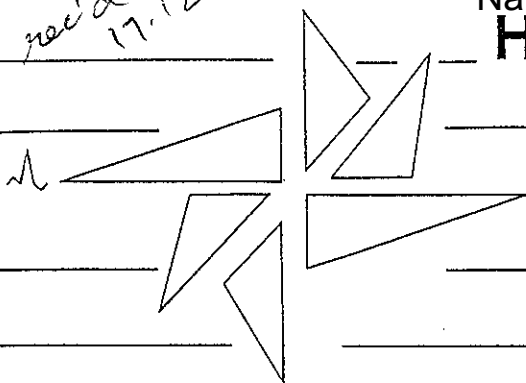
**LIBRARIES'**

**SECTION**

**NATIONAL**

**NEWSLETTER**

rec'd  
17.12.92



Merry Christmas

&

Best Wishes for a

Personally & Professionally Fulfilling New Year

to all members

from the National Executive of the ALIA HLS

Brigitte Glockner	President	King Edward Memorial Hospital Library
Elizabeth Hides	Secretary	Health Dept of WA Information Services
Caroline Dowling	Secretary (Minutes)	Curtin Univ of Technology Therapy Library
Anne Batt	Treasurer	Univ of WA Medical Library
Gaye Sweeney	Branch Rep	Health Dept of WA Information Services
Susan Lutley (formerly Bolton)	Secretary Anne Harrison Award	Edith Cowan University Library
Cheryl Hamill	Newsletter Editor	Fremantle Hospital Library

**THE AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF THE  
HISTORY OF MEDICINE**

The Australian Society of the History of Medicine is an association of some 300 persons interested in the history of medicine. It aims to encourage the study and teaching of the history of medicine in Australia and to organise conferences and meetings on matters related to the history of medicine. The Society produces a quarterly newsletter. The next national conference will be held in Hobart, 10-14 February 1993, with the theme "Outpost Medicine". Librarians are welcome to join the Society - we have an important role to play in preserving material and making it accessible. If you would like further information, please contact: Prue Deacon, Secretary ASHM. c/- Library, Dept of Health, Housing and Community Services, GPO Box 9848, Canberra ACT 2601.

**PUBLICATIONS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN  
SOCIETY OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE**

The Society is very active in producing publications under the imprint of the Amphion Press. The Press is a non-profit publishing unit within the Dept of Child Health, Royal Children's Hospital, Brisbane.

Their most recent publication is "Health, History & Horizons" edited by John Pearn. This is about the history of outback medicine and health. It has twenty chapters by a series of top Australian writers. The publications are all reasonably priced. This new title is \$24.95 which includes postage and packaging. This book, along with information on others in their catalogue, may be obtained from the address shown above.

**ASIAN PACIFIC SPECIALS, HEALTH AND  
LAW LIBRARIANS CONFERENCE  
23-27th AUGUST 1993  
HOTEL CONRAD, BROADBEACH, QLD**

The conference organising committee has put out a preliminary program and a call for speakers. The Conference theme is "Creating Our Future". The program will include formal papers, panel sessions, and poster papers. Formal papers and panel sessions will be held from Tuesday 24th to Thursday 26th August with poster papers on Friday morning 27th August.

Enquires concerning the professional program to:

Ms Susan Heath  
Programme Convenor  
Asian Pacific Specials, Health & Law Librarians  
Conference  
ASC Library  
Brisbane QLD 4000

**ALLIED HEALTH / LIBRARIAN???  
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These unique T-shirts, designed by a W.A. Occupational Therapist, are available for only \$15.00 + \$2.00 p.p. in one size (Extra Large).

From: Sue Gough, Director, Nutrition Services  
Hollywood Hospital  
Monash Ave  
NEDLANDS WA 6009

**HLS 1992 AGM**

Members are referred to the minutes which are enclosed with this Newsletter from the 1992 HLS Annual General Meeting which was held during the ALIA Biennial Conference in Albury on 29th September 1993.

**NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS**

Budding correspondents are encouraged to burst into summer flower and send contributions to the Editor. The next Newsletter will be April 1993. Contribution deadline is 24th March 1993. I strongly identify with some of the top 10 problems faced by newsletter editors which were listed in an article in the British Medical Journal [305 (6854) 12 Sept 1992 by Tim Albert]. To quote:

I don't know what readers really think	60%
Everyone is too apathetic to write for me	55%
I find it difficult to write headlines	55%
My contributors can't write	50%
I need more money	50%
I can't afford good photographs	50%
I never know what's going on till the last min.	45%
The pages in my magazine look grey and dull	45%
I find it difficult to start writing	45%
I have trouble cutting articles down to size	35%

Contributions to:

Cheryl Hamill, Fremantle Hospital Library,  
PO Box 480, FREMANTLE WA 6160  
ph. 09 431 2780  
fax. 09 431 2522

(NOTE THIS NEW FAX NUMBER)

## NEWS FROM THE FLEDGLING ACT HLS SECTION

The birth of this new section was noted in the last newsletter. The Executive held its first meeting on 29th October. The Executive members named in the last newsletter are assisted by two Committee members: Sheelagh Snedden and Saroj Bhatia (both from Woden Valley Hospital).

In December, Sheelagh Snedden will give a presentation about her European trip (European Health Libraries Conference in France and visit to Royal Dublin Hospital Library). Christmas partying will follow at the Athenian Restaurant.

New year, the section plans a session on the Authoring of Health-ROM and one on the Current State of Health Information Networks in Australia. They also plan to run monthly workshops on some of the "hot issues" in medical librarianship as part of their continuing education activities. eg - CD-ROM networking, IAIMS, Health Resources on the NET and medical informatics.

John Holgate, the president, anticipates that 1993 "should be a pretty busy year for this ALIA neonate".

### HHCS THESAURUS - 2nd EDITION

The 2nd edition of the HHCS Thesaurus will be published early in 1993. The Thesaurus is a list of subject terms covering concepts of interest to the Department of Health, Housing and Community Services. It was developed as a tool for any indexing or classifying tasks in the Department, particularly to assist in the management of electronic documents.

The health areas of the Thesaurus, particularly the clinical medicine areas, are based on MeSH and the MeSH tree structure has been kept as the framework. To decide which MeSH subjects should go in the Thesaurus there were discussions with Departmental staff followed by a review of the subjects used in Healthnet and further consultation with Healthnet librarians. Sheelagh Snedden from the Woden Valley Hospital Library provided advice from a hospital library perspective. We have changed some MeSH terms to more common terminology or spelling but the result is essentially a subset of MeSH.

The Thesaurus consists of about 3000 preferred terms and about 2000 non-preferred terms with references to preferred terms. It would be useful for health libraries which find MeSH too extensive for their indexing/cataloguing needs. Further details will be provided at the time of publication.

Prue Deacon  
Library, Dept of Health, Housing and Community  
Services. (06) 289 7062

## HEALTHROM

The Information Resources Section of the Department of Health Housing and Community Services has produced a CD-ROM product. The CD-ROM has been given the title **HealthRom**.

**HealthRom** consists of:

- 70-80 National Health & Medical Research Council (NH&MRC) and Departmental publications in full text covering the subject areas of HIV/AIDS, communicable diseases, drug and substance abuse, as well as medical and nursing practice, public and environmental health;
- Directories of publications for the Department, the NH & MRC, and the Australian Institute of Health & Welfare (with directions for obtaining hard copy);
- Selected annual reports, bibliographies and conference proceedings;
- Codes of practice, clinical guidelines and health strategy documents;
- Guides and advice for community health practice and health in the home;
- The DRUG database of the Australian Council on Alcohol and the Addictions (1987-1992);
- The Australasian Medical Index (AMI) produced by the National Library of Australia;

HealthRom is due for release to selected pilot sites at the end of November. Pilot participants will provide valuable feedback which will be incorporated in the next version of HealthRom.

For further information please contact:

Judy Holmes    06 289 8826 (ph)  
                          06 289 7102 (fax)    OR  
John Holgate    06 289 8488 (ph)  
                          06 289 7102 (fax)    AT

John Hogate  
Dept of Health, Housing and Community Services  
Information Resources Section

SENSITIVE REFERENCE ISSUES

In the last newsletter, we promised a report from a seminar held in WA in October on Sensitive Reference Issues. There were striking similarities in the types of problems faced by librarians in dealing with sensitive reference issues to those faced by other health professionals in the course of their contact with the public.

The first speaker was Avril Whately from the Office of Seniors Interests. This is the smallest state government agency. Their aim is to develop strategies for the aging population. They operate a Meditalk hotline, have a tax adviser from July to October, and administer Seniors Card. Her experiences have convinced her that what people ask for is often not what they want. People often need someone to listen and give support. She stressed that they were not qualified to provide counselling but can provide information and referral. The second speaker was Tony Minchin, a clinical psychologist with the Dept for Community Development who has considerable experience with sexual abuse cases. The third speaker was Margaret Stevens from the Environmental Health Branch of the Health Department. She has considerable experience in dealing with the very touchy issue of termite control and pesticides and

insecticides. The health effects of these chemicals have been very vigorously debated over the last few years and many of the public do not accept government advice and recommendations. The fourth speaker was Mark Hamilton from the AIDS Bureau and works with recalcitrant HIV cases.

The question/discussion time highlighted some commonalities of experience. Hidden agendas are very common. One needs to be aware of who is asking the question and why the question has arisen. Fears about a topic are often stimulated by the media and people may have preset dogmatic ideas which may not always be responsive to facts however these are presented. There are variable amounts of information available for the public depending on the subject. Individuals with medical questions may be given information but are best referred back to their doctor to assist with interpretation and specific questions about their own case. It is sometimes worthwhile suggesting they take a friend along to the doctor as support if they find it difficult to communicate effectively with their doctor. It is often not possible to refer members of the public on to any other agency. There is a need for more information on support groups, and resources on specific subjects.

# SPP

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**POTENTIAL IMPACT ON LIBRARIES**

Elizabeth Hides, Secretary of the National Executive of HLS has written to Dr Hewson to ask about the potential impact of the GST on health libraries. A response was received from Peter Reith, Deputy Leader of the Opposition

The impact on libraries seems to depend on whether the organisation is commercial or non-commercial. If it is not commercial, the service would be zero rated. However, even a non-commercial organisation may engage in some commercial activities such as sales of photocopies, hire of videos etc. In this case, for these activities, the organisation would be liable to pay the GST.

Copies of the correspondence are available on request to:

Elizabeth Hides  
A/ Information Services Manager  
Health Department of WA  
189 Royal Street  
EAST PERTH WA 6000

Readers are also referred to the report from the Australian Council for Libraries and Information Services (ACLIS). "Libraries and the Coalition Parties' *'Fightback!'* Program for Taxation and Expenditure Reform" by Hans Hoegh Guldberg, 1992. One copy of the report was sent free to all ACLIS members. Additional copies or copies to non-members are available at a cost of \$20 (including postage) from:

Gordon Bower  
Executive Officer  
ACLIS  
P O Box E202  
Queen Victoria Terrace  
ACT 2600

**PAPER PRESENTED AT THE**  
**THIRD EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON**  
**MEDICAL LIBRARIES, FRANCE**  
**SEPTEMBER 1992**

Lynn M Fortney, Assistant Vice President and Biomedical Division Marketing Manager, EBSCO Subscription Services, Alabama, USA, presented a paper at the European Conference. The paper is titled "Management of Health Sciences Libraries in the Twenty First Century". The paper was submitted to this Newsletter but is too long for our newsy publication. Copies may be obtained from Julie Boyd, the Melbourne Representative of EBSCO Australia. ph. 03 596 8155 fax 03 596 8109

**CASEMIX**

The impact of the introduction of casemix funding on the allied health component of acute inpatient care has been discussed often in WA over the last few months. For those not familiar with the concept, a brief overview follows.

The Government wishes to fund hospitals on the basis of their outputs rather than on the basis of costs they have historically incurred. It is felt that historical funding gives no guide to whether hospitals are efficient. Funding on the basis of the types of cases typically seen by a hospital is seen as encouraging efficiencies and allowing comparisons to be made between hospitals. Casemix funding is only being applied to acute inpatient care in hospitals with more than 100 beds. An Australian wide study is going on to evaluate the whole process at the moment.

Casemix funding is based on a standard reimbursement per grouping of patients into a DRG (Diagnosis Related Group). Each DRG, (there are 527 in the Australian National DRG version) describes a group of patients, which may be expected, on average, to consume a similar level of resources in the course of their treatment. The DRG is assigned by a computer programme called a DRG Grouper after various pieces of information are coded by medical records coders. This information is derived after discharge of the patient and completion of the medical record. The information needed to code the record includes: the principal diagnosis on discharge; the secondary diagnosis (co-morbidities & complications); the principal procedure; secondary procedures; age; gender; type of discharge (home, death, transfer to another facility etc.). The Grouper assigns the appropriate level of DRG depending on the level of resource usage. A simple illness or procedure will be assigned a higher level DRG if complications occur or co-morbidities are found. Problems obviously occur if there are errors in the coding. This can occur if the doctor fails to record co-morbidities or complications, or if the medical record coders make errors in interpretation of the record. Problems also occur if the costs assigned to a DRG are not adequate to cover the full costs of treating an average patient in that DRG. If a hospital has a high level of patients who stay longer than average (called outliers) for a medically valid reason which can not be recognised by the DRG, that hospital will ultimately be underresourced.

A vital part of the cost modelling for a DRG is that various service weights are correctly identified. It is in this section that the allied health costs are identified and the weights assigned to each DRG determined. This is based on the Maryland cost weights but the US version is not regarded as adequate for Australia.

CASEMIX (Cont)

Many of the allied health professions do not even have their input into acute inpatient care measured in the Maryland tables. Some of the allied health professions have been active in trying to establish the correct weighting to be given to each DRG on the basis of their average resource input into that class of patient.

It is on this aspect of casemix that I am interested to discover whether any of the health librarians around Australia have been able to have any input into measuring the weight which should be assigned to the use of library services in the treatment of acute inpatients. As far as I know, this has not happened anywhere and may indeed be too ambitious a task. I suspect a large study across many different hospital libraries would be necessary to get enough data.

I think it is important that we attempt to be seen as integral to the process of direct patient care. Any services not directly costed in this way are regarded as overheads and I think this would ultimately be to our disadvantage.

Feedback please to:  
Cheryl Hamill, Fremantle Hospital Library,  
PO Box 480 FREMANTLE WA 6160 fax 09 431 2522

ILL ALERT

The fax number shown in the new "Australian Inter-Library Resource Sharing Directory" (2nd ed 1992) for Fremantle Hospital Library (WFH) is incorrect. Please amend the record. It is NOT 431 2977. It is 09 431 2522.

DA BOOKS & JOURNALS NEW ENTERPRISE

DA Books and Journals is proud to announce a new free computer assistance service for librarians. DA Direct is the first Australian system to offer online information to BOTH books and journals. To access DA Direct, the customer's computer is linked directly into the DA databases using either Austpac or AARNet computer networks. The system includes a number of important features that are valuable to librarians. They include:

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ARCHIVAL STORAGE OF HLS NEWSLETTERS

In line with discussions at the AGM on archival storage of HLS records, I would like to send archival copies of all HLS Newsletters to be kept at ALIA in Canberra. Unfortunately, I am missing several issues. If anyone has a copy of any of the following that they could send to me it would be appreciated.

LAA Medical Libraries Section Newsletter nos. 1-4  
LAA Medical Libraries Section Newsletter nos. 6-8  
LAA Health Libraries Section Newsletter nos. 11-12  
Cheryl Hamill, Fremantle Hospital Library,  
P O Box 480, FREMANTLE WA 6160

ANNE HARRISON AWARD

Happier news to report than that reported in the last newsletter. There will be an Anne Harrison Award offered in 1993. Application forms will be in Incite early next year and in the April 1993 issue of this newsletter.

Standish Prideaux & Pye made a donation to the fund and a substantial amount was donated from the ALIA HLS National Section. Frances Bluhdorn refunded the amount she had been awarded in 1989 as she was unable to complete the project due to unforeseen circumstances.

Donations are still welcome and may be sent to the following address:

Susan Lutley  
Anne Harrison Award Committee  
Edith Cowan University Library  
Churchlands Campus  
Pearson Street  
CHURCHLANDS WA 6018

MLA USA INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITOR

The US Medical Library Association has a new editor for the International News section of their newsletter. The editor is Jon Cone, Medical Librarian, Mercy Hospital, 500 E. Market Street, Iowa City, IA 52245. Any contributions you wish to make to the US MLA News should be directed to Jon.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The WA Training & Development Committee of ALIA held a seminar on performance indicators on 27th October. This was very well attended and received favourable comments. The session was videoed and the video along with other materials from the session is available for hire at a cost of around \$10 from the WA ALIA Branch Office. The Office may be moving early in 1993 so it would be best to check with ALIA in Canberra for further details of their address next year. At the moment they are at:  
Suite 9, Technology Park 2 Brodie Hall Drive,  
BENTLEY WA 6102 ph. 09 451 0831 (part-time staff only) fax. 09 361 4077

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FROM THE LITERATURE

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Factors influencing research productivity among health sciences librarians.  
Bulletin of the Medical Library Association 80 (4) Oct 1992: 353-60
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Costing library services - towards a model for the NHS. Proceedings of a seminar and workshop held at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 13 December 1990.  
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Modern methods of searching the medical literature.  
Medical Journal of Australia 157 (9) Nov 2 1992: 603-611

ABORIGINAL HEALTH WORKERS: A GUIDE TO RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION AND TRAININGBY ANNE BATT (1991 Recipient of the Anne Harrison Award)

Sales have been strong but copies of this book are still available for purchase of only \$12 (including postage & packing). The resource guides are free to Aboriginal organisations. Others must send payment with cheques made payable to the Medical Librarians Group Trust to:

Medical Librarians Group Trust  
c/- Anne Batt  
30 Colombo Street  
VICTORIA PARK WA 6100

Please forward me \_\_\_\_\_ copy/ies of the book: Aboriginal Health Workers: A Guide to Resources for Education and Training.

A cheque for payment is enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_, made payable to the Medical Librarians Group Trust.

Please mail to:

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