

## Editorial

**Jean McMahon**

Tallaght University Hospital, Dublin

Welcome to the first issue of the Health Sciences Libraries Journal (HSLJ), a publication of the Health Sciences Libraries Group (HSLG). HSLG is the group of the Library Association of Ireland that is dedicated to health librarianship in all of its many and varied incarnations. The HSLG has been producing a newsletter called [HINT](#) for many years and the increasingly high quality of submissions led us to the conclusion that they merited publication in a journal rather than a newsletter, hence the idea to publish HSLJ was born.

Our first issue centres around the 2025 HSLG conference, which had the wonderfully themed title: ‘Cultivating Curiosity – A Wonderland for Librarians’. We welcome both research and practice-based articles for HSLJ as well as articles on any topics of general interest to health librarians and the wider librarian community. We will carry over popular features from HINT such as ‘Librarians Past and Present’, which has included pieces on Belle Da Costa Greene, first director of the personal library of banker, J.P. Morgan, in New York ([22\(3\)](#)), and Charlotte Serber, the librarian appointed by Oppenheimer to work on the Manhattan Project ([22\(2\)](#)).

Health librarians have traditionally worked in hospitals or academic libraries, however, the highly transferable skills of the library and information professional are in demand in other health-related organisations, where we carry out evidence synthesis and support research and innovation. It is important to note that in this journal, when we refer to librarians and information professionals, we mean the terms to be as inclusive as possible and to encompass all who work in information management, knowledge sharing, data management or libraries and librarianship. We endorse the view that, “What makes someone a professional is the knowledge, skills, attitude, behaviours and values that they bring to their work.” CILIP (n.d). Common to all of us is our commitment and expertise as guardians of the gateway to the evidence-base of health, providing curated access to trusted, fact-based sources of information. If you are working in what might be regarded as a non-traditional area of librarianship, we would like to hear from you for another feature we will be carrying over from HINT: Librarians in Interesting Roles. Write a piece telling us about your work and how you use your expertise as an information professional in your organisation.

As well as research articles and articles discussing an aspect of your practice, we want to hear from you if you have a book, a podcast or a film you would like to recommend. We’re not looking for literary or cinema critique, rather, a recommendation of something you read, saw or listened to that you think other librarians would find useful or interesting.

This is a time when access to truth and to evidence-based information, together with a well-honed sense of critical appraisal, have never been more important. This is a time for librarians to shine. We thrive on change and if there is an information-related bandwagon, we will eagerly jump on it. We did it when the internet was invented; we eagerly sought to bring e-books into our libraries when they first appeared, and right now we are already seeking ways to understand and harness the potential of Artificial Intelligence. We would love to hear from you on your experience of, or ideas about, any aspect of technology that is impactful in the world of libraries and which requires us to be agile in how we respond and adapt.

HSLJ will have two issues per year: summer and winter. We are already seeking submissions for the winter 2025 issue, which will be published in December, and you can consult our guidelines for authors or email us at [hslj.hslg@gmail.com](mailto:hslj.hslg@gmail.com) to enquire about making a submission. The summer 2026 issue will be published in June and as well as our regular articles and features, we would welcome additional pieces that have a Diversity, Equity, Belonging and Inclusion (DEBI) focus, allowing us to reaffirm our commitment to libraries as safe spaces for all. You have plenty of time to think about submitting an article on any aspect of DEBI that will be of interest to our readers. We look forward to joining in the celebration of June as Pride month.

Finally, this journal would not be seeing the light of day were it not for the incredibly dedicated Mary Dunne, who produced the journal policies and guidelines and managed the editorial meetings; Breeda Herlihy who managed all aspects of set-up and hosting of the journal by UCC, achieving her aim of ensuring the first Irish journal for health librarians would have an address in Cork rather than Dublin; and Julianne O'Callaghan, who oversaw all the graphics and design, resulting in the fabulous cover and layout. Niamh Lucey, Chair of HSLG, has been actively involved since the idea was first proposed and has guided, supported and encouraged throughout, as have all of the HSLG committee members. Thanks also to those who have agreed to sit on the journal Advisory Board.

We hope you enjoy issue 1 of the Health Sciences Libraries Journal and we look forward to hearing from you.

Jean McMahon

## REFERENCE

Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals. (n.d.). A definition of libraries, information and knowledge as a 'profession.' Accessed on 14 June 2025  
<https://www.cilip.org.uk/page/professionalismdefinition>

