Report on the

Fourth regional conference on health sciences virtual library: Its role in e-learning and building the information society in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

Cairo, Egypt
23–25 November 2004
CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................. 1

2. TECHNICAL PRESENTATIONS .................................................................................... 2

   2.1 Egyptian National Information Centre for Health and Population ...................... 2
   2.2 The Ministry of Health and Population’s medical library, services and health information support ................................................................. 2
   2.3 Virtual health sciences library of the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region: Bridging the knowledge gap ................................................................. 3
   2.4 Electronic environmental health information services and networking activities ... 4
   2.5 Global health library project .................................................................................. 4
   2.6 Union Catalogue of Medical Journals: Progress in utilization, content ............. 5
       and technology ........................................................................................................ 5
   2.7 E-Osteoporosis: online care/info to e-patients and professionals ....................... 5
   2.8 The Libyan Board of Medical Specialties future vision for the medical electronic library ................................................................. 6
   2.9 Online consumer health information services in Pakistan: Developments in e-learning ......................................................................................... 6
   2.10 The Graduate Diploma of Medical Librarianship: Diploma at Sultan Qaboos University ................................................................................................. 6
   2.11 Training of Egyptian hospital libraries ................................................................ 7
   2.12 The e-library and open access initiatives: What impact will this have on .......... 7
       services and users? ................................................................................................. 7
   2.13 e-learning in public health: Organization, benefits and limits ............................ 7
   2.14 E-learning and professional development at Ziauddin Medical University .......... 8
   2.15 The future of e-learning in Egypt ...................................................................... 8
   2.16 How can you enhance your skills and library practice at your own desk .......... 9
   2.17 Use of the Internet and e-mail by physicians in Egypt ....................................... 9
   2.18 The accessibility of new information technologies .......................................... 9
   2.19 Digital library and e-learning: The experience of King Hussein Cancer Center Medical Library ................................................................. 9
   2.20 Implementation and use of Ovid’s LinkSolver at AUB and the Lebanese mini medical consortium ................................................................. 10
   2.21 The use of the Medline full-text and health library resources in faculties of medicine in Egypt ...................................................................................... 10
   2.22 Ovid’s LinkSolver: A consortium of accumulated and collective knowledge base and resource sharing for Member States in the Region ......................... 10
   2.23 The role of the digital (electronic) library in the development of the information society .............................................................................................. 11
   2.24 The role of virtual libraries in teaching and research in parasitic diseases .......... 11
   2.25 Citation analysis tools: Web of Science and Scopus ......................................... 12
   2.26 E-learning in type 1 medical universities in the Islamic Republic of Iran ........ 12
   2.27 Bridging the gap: the role of a librarian in e-learning and building the information society ......................................................................................... 13
   2.28 Saudi health information network: A proposed prototype ............................ 13
1. INTRODUCTION

The fourth regional conference on the health sciences virtual library was organized by WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean from 23–25 November 2004. The conference was preceded by a one-day national congress of Egyptian medical librarians which was attended by 385 participants from health sciences libraries attached to the Ministry of Health and Population, Egypt, research centres and health sciences colleges. A total of 64 participants from 18 countries in the Region participated in the conference and staff from WHO Regional Offices and headquarters.

Dr Mohamed Abdi Jama, Deputy Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, delivered the opening speech of Dr Hussein A. Gezairy, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean. Dr Gezairy said that the main theme of the fourth regional conference was to examine the role of the regional health sciences virtual library in e-learning and in building the information society. He reviewed the progress of the virtual library including its digital content and electronic access and said that its success had been manifested by a number of achievements including: a significant increase in the number of libraries connected to the Internet in the Region; the number of libraries with access to electronic information resources; the number of libraries that had participated in the Union Catalogue of Medical Journals in the Region; and the number of libraries that were networked.

Dr Gezairy noted that libraries and information centres had always had a role in education, research, decision-making and management. The growing trend in e-learning and the expansion of electronic libraries and digital collections as part of virtual libraries went hand-in-hand. E-learning referred to the use of Internet technologies to deliver a broad array of solutions that enhanced knowledge and performance. He added that e-learning encompassed all forms of computer-assisted learning, computer-based training, and went beyond that to include application of networking technologies such as the Internet, intranet, extranet and virtual networks.

Dr Gezairy emphasized the concept of the information society as one in which information was the main capital in the knowledge economy. It was a society in which information and communication technology represented the major tool for conducting business, providing services and conducting transactions, research, education, learning and leisure.

The Chairmanship was shared on a rotating basis. The programme and list of participants are included as Annexes 1 and 2, respectively. The full text of Dr Gezairy’s opening speech is included as Annex 3.
2. TECHNICAL PRESENTATIONS

2.1 Egyptian National Information Centre for Health and Population

Dr Thanaa Saleh, Ministry of Health and Population, Egypt

The Egyptian National Information Centre for Health and Population (NICHP) is committed to constructing the Ministry of Health and Population’s (MOHP) national standard structure for information management and an information technology system. In pursuing this goal a number of objectives have been set, the most important of which are: coordinating the design and development of integrated, effective and appropriate information systems across the MOHP for health and health-related data; promoting the ready availability of, and access to, health information to support all of the organizational divisions of the MOHP; supporting the information technology planning functions of the MOHP; and establishing cooperative relationships and ensuring information sharing with the governorate’s health directorates to improve their usable health information.

The NICHP performs a set of activities including: planning, designing, implementing and supporting data standards and appropriate information technology. Another important activity is establishing data management and information technology standards (scalable, secured, easy to be updated) for the MOHP’s information systems; providing training to representatives of health information centres, including representatives from the district levels; and designing, developing and maintaining a national information system and an executive information system that will be used by MOHP decision-makers.

As for the ministerial network, it connects five buildings within the Ministry’s headquarters using fibre optics to a common data-sharing environment using a standards-based design approach. This network will facilitate a more efficient and effective use of the data and provide access to common shared software.

2.2 The Ministry of Health and Population’s medical library, services and health information support

Dr Mohamed Sultan, Nasser Institute, Egypt

The library was initially established in the central laboratories of the MOHP. It was then transferred to the centre of Medical Education Technology at Manyal El Roda. In 2001, it was transferred to the Nasser Institute for Research and Treatment. The library contains approximately 118 medical periodicals in different scientific specialties and 3000 books and medical texts in different specialties. Medical researchers can obtain the full texts of articles from libraries outside of Egypt through an agreement with the Regional Office. There are 25 computers connected to the Internet which is free for doctors conducting research and preparing scientific essays and theses. There is also a computer laboratory in the library for the computer training of doctors and nurses. A conference hall in the library is supplied with all educational facilities and a video room, and a multimedia room is currently under construction.
2.3 Virtual health sciences library of the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region: Bridging the knowledge gap

Dr Najeeb Al-Shorbaji, WHO/EMRO

The health care sector, as an information-intensive sector, requires extensive and systematic efforts to manage information and make it available to its potential users. The informational needs of researchers, practitioners, academics and health workers cannot be met by any one single source of information. Bridging the knowledge gap requires extensive effort to first identify the gap(s) and then develop creative solutions and requires multiple and networked resources. The Regional Office has committed itself to developing a virtual health sciences library, which comprises networks of libraries, databases, professionals, researchers and institutions.

Two basic principles have been applied to contribute to bridging the knowledge gap: 1) to inventory and utilize locally-produced research; and 2) to establish networking and resource-sharing mechanisms. The work of the Regional Office in collaborating with Member States to develop this library started early in the 1980s. To build this virtual library the Regional Office has considered a number of factors, including:

- social, cultural and language considerations;
- diversity in the status of science and technology, research and development and the application of information and communication technology;
- the economic situation of the Region, which has created more demand to network and work together;
- libraries in general, which are not high on the agenda of most countries;
- weak, uncoordinated and undocumented health research;
- low penetration rate of ICT, in general, and the Internet, in particular, in the Region.

To support the virtual health sciences library the Regional Office has been developing the following activities and initiatives:

- union list of medical journals in the Region, which includes over 3000 titles;
- Index Medicus for the Eastern Mediterranean, which includes the indexing of over 320 journals published in the Region since 1984;
- interlibrary loan and document delivery services;
- listservs (mailing lists), discussion groups and communities of practice;
- an electronic journals consortium;
- resource sharing and regional databases;
- training of health care professionals, researchers and information specialists;
- hosting of websites of ministries of health;
- information technology support, Internet access, provision of hardware and software.
2.4 Electronic environmental health information services and networking activities

Mazen Malkawi, Technical Officer, WHO/CEHA

The Centre for Environmental Health Activities’ (CEHA) regional information network (CEHANET) offers extensive information delivery services to approximately 1500 users in the 22 Member States of the Region. News and newsletters are being digitized and issued through the web and disseminated through e-mail. Some funds were received from the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND) to establish an electronic network among 13 countries in the Region. Among activities there will be training on environmental health information management, capacity-building and establishing national environmental health websites in nine countries. Funds were also received from AGFUND to establish two documentation centres in Iraq.

The production of relevant and reliable environmental health information in local languages has received CEHA’s special attention over recent years. 30 documents have been Arabized and disseminated electronically to users in the Region and documents are being made available to users through the web and on CD-ROM.

2.5 Global health library project

Mrs Yvonne Grandbois, WHO/HQ

Too many people die simply for lack of access to the knowledge that could save their lives. Although this knowledge exists, it remains inaccessible to those who need it the most. Access to health information is an integral part of all health systems because it improves people’s health. The global health library will provide first-step access to reliable health information in paper and electronic form, and in any other media to those who need it. The library will offer an opportunity to provide a virtual platform that assembles multiple resource user groups.

The library aims to assemble reliable information collections and systems, in which different users and user groups (ministries of health, policy-makers, health workers, information providers, patients and their families, the general public) can focus on the knowledge that best meets their health information needs. The global library also seeks to act as a facilitator enabling access to information content produced by numerous key providers, whether they are commercial companies, government institutions, civil society, not-for-profit organizations, and regional or international bodies, and to strive for universality with a focus on developing countries. It will act as a resource locator for printed materials essential to areas that do not have access to electronic content.
2.6 Union Catalogue of Medical Journals: Progress in utilization, content and technology

Mr Hatem Nour El-Din, WHO/EMRO

The objectives of the Health Information Management and Telecommunications Unit are mainly based on establishing information networking and knowledge sharing in Region. This refers to an integrated system of sharing information among different countries of the Region. Progress in the Union Catalogue has been achieved on three levels—utilization, content and technology.

2.7 E-Osteoporosis: online care/information to e-patients and professionals

Dr Marei KM, Dr Gad MHE, Dr El Tantawi MMA, Mr Helal SN, Mr Zakareya N, Dr Abdel Wahab H

A new website is to be launched by the Osteoporosis Research Centre, Faculty of Dentistry, Alexandria University, Egypt. This website is a model for using the Internet as mass media for health education. The centre has been involved in osteoporosis research since 1999 to: assess osteoporosis prevalence among women in Egypt; develop a new diagnostic tool for osteoporosis and health education.

The objectives have been fulfilled but efforts in health education have not been matched by a satisfactory improvement in the attitude and behaviour of patients. Therefore, the strategy was changed from the one-to-one approach used so far to health education targeted to specific groups. The Internet has been chosen as a web-based approach for a mass media health education programme. Compared to a conventional mass media campaign, the website would cost less to develop and maintain than a mass media health education programme delivered through a conventional medium such as television. The website offers a chance for the users to interact with the educators through questionnaires and allows the provider to receive the feedback needed through emails. This is not the case with conventional mass media campaigns. The website would also provide an opportunity to update the information presented and to sustain the message for a long time at a minimal cost. It can reach two important target groups that are the focus of educational activities: professionals and teenagers. The former is very difficult to reach by conventional mass media channels and the latter is the prime user of the Internet at the present time. In addition, teenagers are the group where health education for osteoporosis is most important because it is at this time of life that peak bone mass is formed.

Learning through the Internet is self-directed; the user can get the information s/he needs at the time that is convenient to him/her and for as long as s/he feels is necessary. This is contrary to a television-based health education programmes where the same message is offered to all sectors of the population without differentiating between their backgrounds, needs or education, and which is available only at the time of broadcasting. It is estimated that the number of Internet users will reach 25 million by the end of 2006 in Arab countries.
2.8 The Libyan Board of Medical Specialties future vision for the medical electronic library

Mr M. A. J. Abujnah and Mr O.M. F. Aboshagour

The Libyan Board of Medical Specialties was established in 1994 and has been since determined to apply the highest level of medical education, and to develop, validate and implement a high standard of measurement and strategies to evaluate physicians' proficiency. The board has put into practice a hands-on training approach under the supervision of a local specialist to ensure the achievement of the highest academic level by using a Libyan expert.

The board administers 33 training centres (educational hospitals), all equipped with a medical library. The central medical library has been built to accommodate and serve the resident and the consultants who are involved in programmes as well as teaching professors, researchers and graduate students from medical colleges in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

The collections of the central library stand at more than 750 books, journals, technical reports, photographs and images. The library has been developed to accommodate a substantial collection of books, journals and technical reports, including a complete section for Internet access with access to the board’s website where the rules and regulations of the board are posted, library items are listed, services provided by the library are described, exams dates and the results are posted, and all the activities organized by the board are explained.

2.9 Online consumer health information services in Pakistan: Developments in e-learning

Ms Azra Qureshi and Mr Khawaja Mustafa, Agha Khan University

In Pakistan, the public and private sectors involved in health-related activities have realized the potential of online consumer health information, however, the realization is not widespread in terms of penetration and impact. Online consumer health information provides a timely and efficient means to access available information; this particular benefit has risen over and above other conventional access methods of health information.

2.10 The Graduate Diploma of Medical Librarianship: Diploma at Sultan Qaboos University

Dr Naima Jabr, Sultan Qaboos University

The graduate education programme in medical librarianship was developed as a result of the critical needs of medical libraries in Oman. The first batch of students (comprising 12 science graduates) has been enrolled in the programme. The collaboration between WHO Regional Office and Sultan Qaboos University resulted in the design and implementation of the programme. The programme covers basic library training in addition to specialized medical librarianship training.
2.11 Training of Egyptian hospital libraries

Ms Amany Mohamed El-Sayed

A study was conducted in order to investigate the status of hospital libraries in Egypt (medical libraries and patient libraries) and to create a framework for their evaluation. A field study methodology with a questionnaire was used. The researcher studied 31 governmental hospital libraries and five private hospital libraries in Cairo.

The study consists of five chapters which cover: definitions, problems and the importance of the subject, methodology and pre-studies. Chapter one is about hospitals and types of hospitals, the history of hospital libraries and the value of a hospital library. Chapter two addresses associations and organizations in the field of hospital libraries globally that include two categories (specialized associations in library and information sciences and in medicine). Chapter three reviews four standards in the field of hospital libraries published by the American Library Association, the International Federation of Library Associations, the Medical Library Association and the Canadian Health Libraries Association. Chapter four is about administration and technical services. Chapter five is concerned with services for hospital staff (physicians, administrators, nurses) and services for patients. Finally, conclusions and recommendations are stated. At the end of the study, there are a union list of medical periodicals in Egyptian hospital libraries and adoptive standards for these libraries and other appendixes.

2.12 The e-library and open access initiatives: What impact will this have on services and users?

Dr Najeeb Al-Shorbaji, WHO/EMRO

Electronic publishing ensures information is more available and accessible taking into consideration the limitations of each type of publishing (paper versus electronic). There are several factors that limit availability of, and accessibility to, electronic health information resources. Electronic publishing of medical journals has affected availability and accessibility of information for both professionals and the public. Open access archiving and open access journals and publishing show the advantages and disadvantages from the points of view of the publishing community and the users. “None of the advantages of traditional scientific journals need be sacrificed in order to provide free online access to scientific journal articles. Objections that open access to scientific journal literature requires the sacrifice of peer-review, revenue, copyright protection, or other strengths of traditional journals, are based on misunderstandings” (Peter Suber).

2.13 E-learning in public health: Organization, benefits and limits

Dr Mondher Letaief, Kamel Ben Salem and Mohamed Soltani

E-learning has been considered a method to improve the quality of training, providing an additional opportunity to overcome problems of conventional education. The public health distance learning programme has included various partners from different institutions in developed and developing countries. Learners were divided into different groups. A public health problem case study was first presented to the students.
A four-step collaborative training methodology was adopted (case presentation, bibliographic synthesis, health problem epidemiology and risk factors and developing a programme for prevention and control) supported by different tutors.

Despite some limitations, mainly related to the shortage of equipment, the method has proven very successful as it reduces the constraints arising from time and distance with more flexibility.

The originality of this approach lies in the fact that on the technical level it enables the integration of information, and communication technologies (ICT) (e-mail, chat, discussion forum,) and the learners were also facing different ways of dealing with the health problem raised (sharing the different points of view of different partners).

2.14 E-learning and professional development at Ziauddin Medical University

Mr Muhammad Khurshid Alam, Mr Imran Ahmad Shaikh and Ms Amtul Aziz Shazia

Information and communication technologies are promoted as a bridge between rapid, relevant, reliable and usable knowledge and library customers. Ziauddin Medical University supports innovative strategies in teaching methods. Problem-based learning, seen to offer a stimulus for developing reflective and critical practitioners of the future, has been adopted as one of the techniques. In this approach, these courses require access to multiple sources of information.

Professions need theoretical foundation and specialized skills. A lack of intellectual foundation has been the weakness of library professionals. Strategies have been evolved to broaden the university’s intellectual base of library staff especially in an e-learning environment. The Ziauddin Medical University changed the name of the library to the learning resource centre, where, in addition to traditional learning materials, CD-ROMs, video cassettes, anatomical and CPR models and the Internet are available. A strong computer network of more than 50 computers has been established for accessing e-resources and its information with broadband DSL 256 kbps CIR. VPN has been installed for sharing e-resources between the main Clifton Campus and the North Nazimabad Campus. A recently conducted survey has revealed positive comments/observations from faculty and students.

2.15 The future of e-learning in Egypt

Dr Amr Saber, Egypt

The Internet will radically change medical education. The next decade may see the emergence of a new type of medical faculty, not made of bricks and mortar but based mostly on the hard drives of computers, accessible by thousands of students from all over the world.
2.16 How can you enhance your skills and library practice at your own desk
Hakim Bishawi, Tawam Hospital, United Arab Emirates

Opportunities for health sciences librarians to learn via distance-learning are increasing. Distance learning in librarianship ranges from short-term professional development and continuing education courses and workshops to long-term programmes of study. It takes advantage of digital technologies including: television and radio broadcasts, video conferencing, online learning and satellite teleconferencing.

Concern for the development of special educational programmes for health sciences librarianship has existed since the 1950s. The application of technology in libraries led to an increased demand for education and training for librarians. Professional associations such as the Medical Library Association and the Canadian Health Libraries Association play a key role in continuing education programmes for health sciences librarians.

2.17 Use of the Internet and e-mail by physicians in Egypt
Dr Mohamed Sultan, Nasser Institute and Research Centre

Using the Internet today is like trying to use a library where all the books have been placed on the floor and the lights turned out. Everything is there, but better flashlights (browsers), search time (bandwidth), and room directions (directories) are needed to find it. The Internet has become an important source of medical information for both patients and providers. However, it is increasingly difficult to properly access and evaluate the information obtained on the Internet.

2.18 The accessibility of new information technologies
Mr Zarrintan MH and Neshati, S, Tabriz University

A study showed that accessibility of new information technologies in the Faculty of Pharmacy in Tabriz University led to easier and improved use of these facilities by academics; led to greater originality in the subject of theses; improved the quality of theses; and resulted in an increase in the number of international academic and scientific papers published by the faculty. In view of the results, a larger budget was appointed to the faculty to be used for library development.

2.19 Digital library and e-learning: The experience of King Hussein Cancer Center Medical Library
Ms Alice Haddadin, King Hussein Cancer Centre, Jordan

The medical library of the King Hussein Cancer Center was established in October 2003. Dedicated to providing a variety of distinctive and advanced services to its cancer-focused audience (and others), the medical library has achieved, during its modest period of existence, a unique presence in the country as well as the Region, due to the progressive, high-technology services it offers. As a comprehensive cancer centre,
availability of patient access to information is one means of ensuring a better quality of care for cancer patients and their caregivers, at all points of cancer care.

2.20 Implementation and use of Ovid's LinkSolver at AUB and the Lebanese mini medical consortium

Ms Hilda T. Nassar and Ms Aida Farha, American University of Beirut

If an institution has purchased the rights to content, institutional users should have access to that content from any application, regardless of where that content resides. Thus, linking to and from content from different sources and platforms is an essential condition in modern day electronic libraries. Ovid's LinkSolver is a universal linking solution that supports the open URL standard for bidirectional linking that includes linking to any full text, document delivery, catalogue holding and other open URL-compliant Internet resources. Many similar solutions carry a hefty price tag, and require Perl programming to build the filters to get around the syntax required by database and target resource formats. All require that the link matching syntax keeps up with the ever-changing world of resource movement across the great digital divide.

2.21 The use of the Medline full-text and health library resources in faculties of medicine in Egypt

Mr Shawky Salem, Mr Mohamed Mustafa Alexandria Centre for Multimedia and Libraries

The Alexandria Centre for Multimedia and Libraries is a leading organization which aims to develop the information infrastructure in Egypt and in Arab countries. The Centre installs and provides training for electronic databases in medical fields and their usage in Egypt, such as: ProQuest Medline which is the main source for medical activities containing 4300 publications and the full text of 400 leading journals in medical fields dating back to the 1990s; the ProQuest nursing journal, containing more than 270 publications in full text and dating back to 1992, with some full images dating back to 1988. Other databases include: EBSCO Host; CINAHL; SPORTDiscus; and Nursing Allied Health. ContentScan contains CancerDome, ComDisDome and NeuroDome. Each contains 400 journals, 1800 books and 700 research articles. Micromedex contains 40 databases in pharmaceutical activities and is divided into health care products, corporate solution products and USP and PDR and most of the famous databases in pharmacology such as: Martindale, DrugDex, Poisindex, etc.

2.22 Ovid's LinkSolver: A consortium of accumulated and collective knowledge base and resource sharing for Member States in the Region

Mr Mahmoud Hussein, LIMS

A consortium of accumulated and collective knowledge bases from different sources ensures that duplication or redundancy of information resources does not occur. The integration of resources within the Regional Office and Member States are not enough. Linksolver, state-of-the-art technology eliminates such a situation by adopting a unique linking technology. The Regional Office and Member States require a tool to
integrate and facilitate the use and access to a wide spectrum of resources, including online public access catalogues, document delivery services, databases on other search services and full texts on publishers’ sites, etc.

The LinkSolver tool has an advanced administration interface that eliminates the need for Perl programming by dramatically reducing implementation time when compared with other link re-solver offerings worldwide. The LinkSolver system is built with consortium/multisite capabilities; and thus, settings can be copied from one site to another site within the Region. A platform independent is the ultimate request of all medical researchers within the Region.

2.23 The role of the digital (electronic) library in the development of the information society

*Mr Jamal Yousef Bodair, University of Jordan*

The library of the University of Jordan was established in 1962 and developed in line with the development of the University itself. The library has subscribed to some databases in different fields and in 2003 began proceeding towards the creation of an e-library. The e-library includes CD-ROM format services and on-line subscriptions such as Science Finder, Hinari, Medlines. The e-library offers different services to researchers and users from the university and local society and supports IT and scientific research at the university and in Jordan as a whole.

2.24 The role of virtual libraries in teaching and research in parasitic diseases

*Mr Seyed Mahmoud Sadjjadi*

With advances in science and technology, research sources and references have been growing rapidly. Access to these research references will change the quality and quantity of research work in every branch of the sciences. Previous methods for accessing research references are not always able to meet the demands of today, and so virtual libraries are needed for all science subjects.

In the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region a virtual library has been established and Index Medicus is one of the examples of indexes in the Region which cover a wide range of journals. However, there are many journals in which the results of medical research are published although only a small number of these journals are indexed. Accordingly, only a few researchers have access to these research references.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, some efforts have been made to index articles in the field of medical sciences. One of these is the Hbi system. A total of 83 approved medical journals are published by the medical universities and other medical organizations in the country. A few of these journals are indexed in the Hbi system. The Hbi system for indexing journals is not linked to the Eastern Mediterranean health library.
Two new indexing medical journals with online access were established last year: Iranmedex, which has indexed a total of 55 medical journals including a total of 13,471 records in the form of abstracts and full texts. Another index is ParsMedline, which indexes a total of 55 medical journals. The tendency to publish specialized medical journals has increased over recent years. Previous to the establishment of the above indexes, accessing medical sources was very difficult in the country. However, the above mentioned indexes are incomplete and are not up to date. The teaching and research quality in the field of medicine has been improved but needs further improvement by completing the indexing of, and accessibility to, the sources to virtual libraries in the world and the Region. More journals and books also need to be included in the virtual library for the e-learning of medical students.

2.25 Citation analysis tools: Web of Science and Scopus

_Ms Aida Farha and Ms Hilda T. Nassar, American University of Beirut_

Citation analysis tools empower users with a variety of unique services that are not available through other resources. As of now, there are two such specialized tools available, the Web of Science from the Institute for Scientific Information and the Scopus from Elsevier B.V. Both are multidisciplinary resources that cover a wide range of the most important scientific publications and allow users to navigate forward and backward through the literature. Most worldwide academic institutions depend on the citation analysis data for assessing the impact or evaluating a specific publication, a researcher or an institution. However, there are some limitations to this evaluation process that users should be aware of.

2.26 E-learning in type 1 medical universities in the Islamic Republic of Iran

_Dr B Rokni_

Different aspects of e-learning include computer networks, multimedia, search engines, electronic libraries, distance learning, etc., and most of the type I medical universities in the Islamic Republic of Iran exploit some or all of these. These universities including Tehran, Iran, Shahid Beheshti, Mashhad, Esfahan, Tabriz, Shiraz, Ahwaz and Kerman, at present, encompass a powerful link with their audiences regarding digital libraries, search engines and authentic databases. Tehran University of Medical Sciences now covers a comprehensive category of e-learning, including 10 authentic databases, more than 5000 online journals, 500 e-books, 30 related libraries, smart ordering and searching, a science citation index, approximately 60 local journals and so on. Shiraz University presents about 13 celebrated databases including Rose-net, Taylor, Ovid. Mashhad also covers 10 databases, including Elsevier, Silverplatter, Pubmed and Oxford. These universities now present a valuable category of databases, online journals and smart searches. For example, the University of Medical Sciences has stored 35,000 volumes in English and Farsi, 1323 current periodical titles and 9355 theses and dissertations in five databases which are searchable from any workstation of the library network. This university uses a networked CD-ROM system as well. Some of these universities utilize a distance learning network and a national programme is being
carried out to train academic staff in this regard. Some courses have also been taught in Tehran and Shahid Beheshti Universities.

2.27 Bridging the gap: the role of a librarian in e-learning and building the information society

Ms Farah Cheema

In a developing society, clinicians and medical teachers need the latest and most up-to-date authentic information in time, which is only available electronically, but unfortunately, there is still a lot to be done. So the duty and role of a librarian has changed, and she has a chance to prove their worth in this electronic era. S/he can bridge this gap between the health community and knowledge through e-learning. In Pakistan, at Fatima Jinnah Medical College, Sir Ganga Ram hospital library has access to more than 16,500 full text medical journals online under the PERI programme from all well-known medical publishers.

2.28 Saudi health information network: A proposed prototype

Mr Ahmad Khudair and Mr David Bawden

The Internet has become the largest and most important network of all networks today and has evolved into a global information society. The Internet has also become a key platform for rapidly expanding information as a major factor in reducing the digital gap. In Saudi Arabia, no steps have been taken in order to move various communities towards the concept of the information society, particularly the health care community. There are some individual efforts but they do not handle the problem and related root issues.

The problem is that the body and soul are not joined as one to formulate a single entity. The health professional is the body and the soul is the health information professional. Health professionals spend a great deal of time in information searching, while the health information professional’s role is underestimated. This issue has led to the development of the interface requirement for the design of a prototype Saudi health information network interface. The SHIN prototype attempts to join together the two elements of life, i.e. the body and the soul.

Implementation and evaluation remain as a plan for the future. The health information network assists both health professionals and health information professionals to perform effective functions within one setting which will enhance their information seeking and satisfy their informational needs. The proposed network will promote various channels of communication and cooperation in the health care environment. Importantly, it will help the health care environment to move towards the establishment of a flourishing health information society by popularizing the use of electronic resources and describing the benefits and advantages of electronic learning programmes.
2.29 Developing an e-learning community at the Aga Khan University  
Mr Syed Ahmed Naqvi, Mr Ajmal Rizvi and Mr Hamza Akram

The Aga Khan University is attempting to make e-learning a common feature of education in its School of Nursing and Medical College. It has more than 1500 computers for its 1000 students and 4000 employees. It is using the Internet, intranet, extranets, satellite, broadcasts, videos and CD-ROMS in teaching and learning.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The conference succeeded in providing a platform for health sciences librarians in the Region to discuss a timely and important issue leading to the World Summit on the Information Society. The role of the library in medical education and e-learning was emphasized. The technical presentations provided a basis for high-quality technical discussion and an exchange of experience. The support of the Regional Office to health sciences libraries, in general, and electronic access, in particular, was acknowledged by participants.

The conference has established itself as one of the major events in health information management and has been able to bring together health information specialists from Region. It is recommended that the conference is held on a regular basis and is open for the participation of the widest possible range of health information professionals and medical education specialists.

The training and education of medical librarians has been recognized as a major factor in defining the quality of health information services and the impact on health services. It is recommended that the newly established postgraduate programme on medical librarianship in Oman is supported and also recommended that WHO Regional Office conducts a formal evaluation of the programme and maintains the quality of the curriculum.

While commending the networking efforts lead by the Regional Office and the collaboration of many libraries in the Region, participants urged the Regional Office to allocate more resources to support national initiatives and requested all Member States to commit resources and take full part in the networking effort by sharing resources and ensuring greater involvement in both regional and global efforts.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Specialized short training courses on the operation and maintenance of the database training material should be developed and made available on the Internet. The database should be linked to other databases and resources and promoted among health care professionals and institutions in the Region.

2. The networking services and information services provided by the virtual health sciences library should be promoted by announcing them at national and regional
meetings, exchanging links on websites, distributing leaflets, ensuring open access and developing language versions.

3. There should be greater clarity on the objectives, method of work, mechanism for networking, tools, resources and the definition of the role of the global health library.

4. The Regional Office should request the consortium to review its policies and provide some alternative solutions for these countries. These countries expressed readiness to share cost in a similar way as countries of phase two of the project.

5. The role of the virtual library in e-learning has been recognized by both information specialists and health care professionals. The two groups should work together on the development of materials, improving access to collections and increasing awareness of the value of e-learning. The Regional Office should develop an inventory of e-learning, courses, resources and events in the Region.

6. All libraries in the Region should develop plans and implement digitization projects for their collections. All medical journals in the Region should publish their electronic equivalent on the Internet.

7. The emergence of the information society and knowledge economy is both a challenge and an opportunity for health information professionals and medical librarians. To ensure that health information and e-health are well presented in the World Summit on the Information Society, ministries of health and medical education institutions should ensure a strong presence at the regional consultations and at the Summit. As content is what is important in the information society, the role of health information professionals in collaboration with health care professionals should be enhanced through institutional and national efforts to make health information available on the Internet and in the appropriate format and languages.

8. The participants of the current conference took note of the forthcoming International Congress on Medical Librarianship (ICML) to be held in Brazil in September 2005. Participation in International Congress by librarians of the Region should be supported by both the Regional Office, governments of the Region and health care institutions.

9. The results of the survey on “Use of Internet and e-mail by physicians in the Region” revealed that most physicians use the Internet from home, which has been interpreted as resulting from lacking access to the Internet at work. Serious efforts should be made by all health care and medical education institutions to provide information and communication infrastructure and specifically to link their libraries to the Internet. This effort should be encouraged and supported by WHO Regional Office. Access to the Internet would present an opportunity for access to free and high-quality health information resources.
PROGRAMME

Monday, 22 November 2004

08:30–09:00 Registration

09:00–09:30 Welcome remarks by the Regional Office
Opening remarks by the organizers

09:30–10:00 Virtual health sciences library: Bridging the knowledge gap, Dr Najeeb Al-Shorbaji, Regional Adviser Health Information and Telecommunication WHO/EMRO

10:00–10:15 Discussion

10:15–10:30 Group picture

11:00–11:45 Library and information services at the Ministry of Health and Population, Dr Thanaa Ibrahim Saleh, Director General of National Information Centre National Information Center for Health and Population and medical information support in Egypt, Dr Thanaa Ibrahim. Ministry of Health and Population Medical library, Services and health information support, Dr Mohamed Sultan

11:45–12:00 Discussion

12:00–12:45 Library and information services at faculties of health sciences: faculties of medicine; faculties of pharmacy; faculties of dentistry; faculties of veterinary science Dr Ahmad Abdel Bassit, Chairman of Egyptian Universities Network. Telemedicine e-learning in medicine, Dr Mohamed Asem Al-Fiky

12:45–13:00 Discussion

14:00–14:45 Library and information services at medical research centres, Mrs Ola Lawrance, Director ENSTINET, Egyptian Union Catalogue of Serials, Mrs Rabab Rashwan, From the paper era to the online era: The experience of Theodor Bilharz Research Institute (TBRI), Dr Nora El-Bassiouny. VACSERA and library services, Dr Naglaa Elbarmawy.

14:45–15:00 Discussion

15:00–15:30 Community access center for the health care sector in Egypt, Dr Sherif Hashem, Ministry of Information and Communications

15:30–16:00 Egyptian and Arabic scientific research database and its role in serving the scientific research: the experience of Alexandria University, Dr El-Sayed M. Salem, The Institution of Postgraduate Studies and Research, Alexandria University

16:45–17:30 Conclusions and recommendations of the National Congress
Tuesday, 23 November 2004

08:30–09:00  Registration

09:00–09:30  Opening ceremony
Address by His Excellency Minister of Health and Population
Address by Dr Hussein A. Gezairy, Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean
Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur
Approval of agenda and programme

09:30–10:00  Regional Office health information support and the virtual health sciences library initiative Dr Najeeb Al-Shorbaji, Regional Adviser Health Information and Telecommunication WHO/EMRO

10:00–10:15  Discussion

10:15–10:30  Group picture

11:00–11:30  Environmental health electronic information services and networking activities, Mr Mazen Malkawi, Technical Officer, CEHANET, Amman, Jordan

11:30–11:45  Discussion

11:45–12:15  Global health library project, Mrs Yvonne Grandbois, Coordinator, Library and Information Networks, WHO/HQ, Geneva

12:15–12:30  Discussion

12:30–12:50  Union catalogue of medical journals: Progress in utilization, content and technology, Mr Hatem Nour, Librarian, WHO/EMRO, Cairo

12:50–13:00  Discussion

14:00–16:00  Country presentations
  • Egypt
  • Iraq
  • Islamic Republic of Iran

16:00–16:15  E-Osteoporosis: online care/information to e-patients and professionals, Dr Mona K. Marei

16:15–17:00  Country presentations (cont.)
  • Lebanon
  • Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
  • Pakistan
  • Sudan
  • Syrian Arab Republic
Wednesday, 24 November 2004

08:30–09:15 The WHO health academy: Health e-learning initiative, Dr Najeeb Al-Shorbaji, Regional Adviser Health Information and Telecommunication WHO/EMRO

09:15–09:30 Discussion

09:30–09:45 The Graduate Diploma of Medical Librarianship: Diploma at Sultan Qaboos University, Dr Naima Jabr and Dr Huda Al-Shibli, Oman

09:45–10:00 Training in Egyptian hospital libraries, Amany Mohamed El-Sayed, Lecture, Library and Information Science Department, Helwan University, Cairo, Egypt

10:00–10:30 The electronic library and open access initiatives: What impact will this have on the services and users? Dr Najeeb Al-Shorbaji, Regional Adviser Health Information and Telecommunication WHO/EMRO

10:30–11:00 e-Learning in public health: Organization, benefits and limits, Dr Mondher Letaief, Kamel Ben Salem and Mohamed Soltani Faculty of Medicine of Monastir, Tunisia

11:15–11:30 e-Learning and professional development at Ziauddin Medical University, Muhammad Khurshid Alam, Imran Ahmad Shaikh and Amtul Aziz Shazia, Pakistan

11:30–11:45 The future of e-learning in Egypt, Dr Amr Saber, Zagazig University, Egypt

11:45–12:00 HELGIS.ORG: A network libraries across Asia, Mrs Anchalee Chamchuklin, WHO/SEARO

12:00–12:15 How can you Enhance your skills and library practice at your own desk, Mr Hakim Bishawi, Medical Librarian, Tawam Hospital, United Arab Emirates

12:15–13:00 Regional input for the global review of health information access (Video conference from London)

14:00–14:45 Use of the Internet and e-mail by physicians in the Region: Dr Najeeb Al-Shorbaji, Regional Adviser Health Information and Telecommunication WHO/EMRO

14:45–15:00 Discussion

15:00–15:30 Use of Internet and e-mail by physicians in selected countries: Egypt, Dr Mohammed Sultan, Islamic Republic of Iran Dr Kia Pakravan, Pakistan, Mr Mustafa Khawaja

15:30–15:45 The accessibility of new information technologies in scientific communication of academic members with faculty library, Dr Zarrintan M.H. and Mr Neshait S. Faculty of Pharmacy, Tabriz
15:45–16:00 Discussion

16:00–16:15 Digital library and e-learning: the experience of King Hussein Cancer Center medical library, Ms Alice Haddadin, Medical Librarian, King Hussein Cancer Center, Amman, Jordan

16:15–16:30 Implementation and use of Ovid's LinkSolver at the American University of Beirut and the Lebanese mini medical consortium, Miss Hilda T. Nassar and Miss Aida Farha, Lebanon

16:30–16:45 The use of the Medline full-text and health library resources in faculties of Medicine in Egypt, Dr Shawky Salem and Mr Mohamed Mustafa, ACML, Egypt

16:45–17:00 Ovid's LinkSolver: a consortium of accumulated and collective knowledge base and resource sharing for Member States, Mr Mahmoud Hussein

**Thursday, 25 November 2004**

08:30–09:00 World summit on the information society: What has taken place and next phase? Video Conference, Dr Joan Dzenowagis, WHO/HQ

09:00–09:30 Digital images of anatomy tests as a tool for e-learning, Dr Mohammed El-Rakhawi

09:30–09:45 The role of the digital (electronic) library in the development of the information society, Mr Jamal Yousef Bodair, University of Jordan, Jordan

09:45–10:00 CD-ROM for information-searching skills: an example of e-learning for users in remote areas, Mr Ahmad Hajji, CDS-INAS, Rabat, Morocco

10:00–10:15 ENSTINET medical information services, Mrs Ola Lawrance, Director ENSTINET

10:15–10:30 The role of virtual libraries in teaching and research in parasitic diseases, Dr Seyed Mahmoud Sadjjadi, Islamic Republic of Iran

10:30–10:45 Discussion

11:15–11:30 Citation analysis tools: Web of Science and Scopus, Ms Aida Farha and Ms Hilda T. Nassar, Saab Medical Library, American University of Beirut, Lebanon

11:30–11:45 Virtual reference desk (VRD): @sk a health sciences librarian in the Region, Mr Hakim Bishawi, UAE

11:45–12:00 E-learning of type 1 medical universities in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr MB Rokni, Islamic Republic of Iran

12:00–12:15 Bridging the gap: role of a librarian in e-learning and building the information society, Ms Farah Cheema, Pakistan

12:15–12:30 Saudi health information network: a proposed prototype, Mr
Ahmed A. Khudair; City University, United Kingdom

12:30–12:45 Developing an e-learning community at Aga Khan University, Mr Syed Ahmed Naqvi, Mr Ajmal Rizvi and Mr Hamza Akram, The Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan

12:45–13:15 Discussion

13:15–13:45 Conclusions and recommendations

14:00–14:30 Closing session
Annex 2

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

AFGHANISTAN
Dr Hamid Hami
IEC Department
Kabul

BAHRAIN
Mr Abbas Khatem, Head of Ahmed Shaykhan Al Farsi Medical Library, Manama
Mrs Auhooud Esbai, Computer Science Analyst, Manama
Dr Hassam Aly Al-Moulla, Computer and General Sciences Department, Manama
Mr Mohamed Mubarak, Reference Librarian, Manama

EGYPT
Dr Abd El Gawad Hassan, Cairo
Mr Abd El Kader Abd El Moneim, Cairo
Mr Abd el Latefe Sand, Librarian, Mansoura
Dr Abd El Rahman Emara
Mr Abd El Raoof Sayed, Manager of Faculty of Library, Cairo
Mr Abdallah Belal
Mr Abdel Ghany Ali EL-Helby, Assistant Professor of Pharmaceutical Chemistry - Faculty of Pharmacy
Dr Abdel Hamid El-Zoheiry, Professor, Cairo
Dr Abdel Kader Abdel Moneim, Cairo
Mr Abdel Latif Sand, Mansoura
Mr Abdel Nasser Al Mughazy, Professor, Cairo
Dr Abdel Rahman Farrag
Dr Abdulllah Abdel Ghany Ibrahim, Cairo
Mr Abu Sheashea Saad, Librarian, Cairo
Dr Adel Abdel Hakeem, Sharqia
Dr Adel Ragheb Abd El Salam, Lecturer of Cardio Thoracic Surgery, Cairo
Ms Adela Soliman Hagaag, Cairo
Ms Afaf Mohamed El Sayed, Library Director, Cairo
Dr Ahmed Abdel Bassit, Director, Cairo
Mr Ahmed Abdel Kader, Cairo
Mr Ahmed Amin Mahmoud, Librarian, Cairo
Dr Ahmed Raouf, Consultant Dermatologist, Cairo
Mr Ahmed Said El Morsy, Professor, Cairo
Mr Ahmed Said Ismail
Mr Ahmed Salah Hadara, Digital Librarian, Mansoura
Mr Ahmed Sayed Ismael, Librarian, Cairo
Dr Ahmed Shehata
Dr Ahmed Tawfik Al Saban
Ms Aisha Saeed Mikawy, Senior Librarian Officer, Cairo
Dr Al Sayed Mahmoud Salem
Mr Alaa EL Tabei
Mr Alaa Osama Allam, Technical Support Officer
Dr Al-Husein Mohamed Abdel Fatah
Ms Alis Fahim Awad Allah, Librarian
Dr Alsayed Mohamed Alsayed
Dr Aly Ahmad Arafaa, Doctor
Mr Aly Araf
Dr Aly Mousa Aly
Ms Amal Abdel Rahim
Ms Amal Ahmed, Physician
Dr Amal Hussein Zaky
Ms Amal Ibrahim Ibrahim, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Amal Mohamed Ahmed
Ms Amal Mohamed Farghaly, Librarian
Dr Amal Safaan, Bany Swaif
Dr Amani El Sayed
Ms Amany Mohamed El sayed, Lecturer
Ms Amany Othman Ahmed, Library Director, Sohag
Ms Amina Ahmed Gafaar, General Manager of Information Centre, Cairo
Dr Amina Rashad, Mansourah
Dr Amira EL Beih, Head of the Community Health Nursing Department, Cairo
Mr Amr Saber Hamza, Doctor, Zagazig
Dr Ashraf Abdel Raouf Mohammed, Head of Neuropsychiatry Department, Cairo
Dr Ashraf Fathy Mohamed, Almenya
Mr Ashraf Hussein Asad, Assistant Manager, Cairo
Mr Ashraf Mahmoud Shaaban, Librarian, Cairo
Dr Ashraf Said Sayed Ahmed, Professor Dr of Anaesthesiology, Zagazig
Dr Ashraf Salah Al Ghanam, Doctor in General Directorate of Blood Affairs, Cairo
Mr Atef Mohamed Abo Mostafa, Urology Consultant, Shebeen Al Koum
Dr Ayat Atef Hagag, head of Information Knowledge, Cairo
Dr Ayman Ahmed, Information Officer, Cairo
Mr Ayman Amin Mohamed, Database Officer, Cairo
Mr Ayman Zein, Cairo
Dr Aza Aly Ahmed, Cairo
Dr Azza Adel Al Gayar, Cairo
Ms Azza El Sayed El Shazly, Manager of Information and Statistics Center, Cairo
Dr Azza Fikery Ismail, Cairo
Dr Azza Salah El Din Gohar, Head of Training Development, Cairo
Mr Bekir Gamal Hegazy, Librarian Officer, Cairo
Ms Ebtissam Abdel Aziz Ismael, Librarian Officer, Tanta
Ms Ebtissam Mostafa, Director of I.T., Cairo
Mr El Sayed Mahmoud Salem, Alexandria
Dr Emad Eisa, Lecturer, Cairo
Dr Emad Youssef Mekhaeil, Physician, Cairo
Ms Eman Abdullah Mohamed, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Eman Hassan Ahmed, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Eman Helmy Ata, Medical Epidemiologist and Coordinator of Communication for Health, Living - Preventive Sector, Cairo
Mr Essam Abd El Ghafer, Library Director, Cairo
Mr Essam Refaee Ahmed, Library Director, Monofya
Dr Ezat Abdel Khalek, Cairo
Prof Laila Amin, Professor, Cairo
Mr Fakhry Mahmoud Gouda, Consultant of Training Center, Cairo
Mr Farag Aly Hemida, Librarian Officer, Alexandria
Ms Fardous Abdel Samea, Zagazig
Ms Fatma Abd El Hay, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Fatma Abdel Hay Hamad
Ms Fatma M. Abd El Fatah, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Fatma Saeed Aly, Librarian Officer, Cairo
Ms Fedaa Al Din Zakaria, Cairo
Ms Ferandah Abdel Hakim, Alexandria
Ms Ferdous Ahmed Hamed, Library Director, Cairo
Dr Gaber Al Hawary, Information Officer, Cairo
Mr Galal El Deen Mohamed, Library Director, Assiout
Dr Gamal Abdel Mohsen Mohamed, Director of Health Information and Assistant Director, Cairo
Ms Gehan Fawzy Abd El Rahman, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Hadeel Mohamed
Eng Hadia Al Menyawy, Foreign Relations Manager, Cairo
Ms Hala Aly Soliman, Head of Medical Information center, Cairo
Dr Hala El Laboudy, Physician, Cairo
Dr Hamdi Aly Ismael, Cairo
Mr Hamdi Merghani, Assiut
Mr Hamdy Marghany Abdel Aal, Med. Librarian, Assiut
Ms Hanan Abdulla Hassan, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Hanan M. Fakhr El Din, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Hanan M. Mahmoud, Librarian Officer, Cairo
Dr Hanfi Mahmoud Awad, Cairo
Mr Hany Nagui Aziz Hanna, Doctor, Cairo
Mr Hassan Al Kurdi, Director of Library of Faculty of Medicine, Cairo
Mr Hassan Mohamed Abdel Hamid, Library Director, Cairo
Mr Haytham Kamal, Customer support, Cairo
Ms Heba Mahmoud Hanafi, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Heba Mahmoud Mahmoud, Cairo
Ms Heba Osama Kamal El Din, Information Officer, Cairo
Mr Helmy Makram Youssef, Librarian, El Menya
Mr Hesham Fathy Yousif, Digital Librarian, Mansoura
Dr Hisham Fawzy Yehya, Cairo
Mr Hisham Shaalan, Librarian, Cairo
Dr Hossam Abdel Rahman, Cairo
Ms Howaida Ali Al Sayed, Library Director, Cairo
Dr Huda Wadea Al Gawly, Dean of Faculty of Nursing, Suez
Ms Huweda Aly Alsayed Aly, Library Director, Cairo
Dr Ibrahim Youssef Ibrahim, Cairo
Ms Ibtsaam Mostafa
Dr Ihab Al Hosseny Ibrahim, Cairo
Ms Iman Abdel-Rahman, Librarian Officer, Cairo
Dr Iman Helmy Ata, Cairo
Ms Inas Asaad Badr
Dr Inas Ibrahim Al-Sheikh, Swiss Canal
Mr Kamal Mahmoud Omar, Librarian, Assiout
Ms Kamilia Hussen M., Librarian, Cairo
Mr Kareem Abdel Moniem, Cairo
Ms Kareema Abdel Aziz
Ms Karima Abdel Aziz, Head of the Medical Registration, Alexandria
Dr Karima Fuad El-Shamy, Lecturer Adult Care Nursing, Mansourah
Ms Karima Mohamed Emam, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Karima Mohamed Ibrahim, Librarian Officer, Cairo
Dr Khaled Abdel Badea, Cairo
Mr Khaled Abdel Satar, Librarian Officer, Tanta
Dr Khaled Ibrahim Barakat, Lecturer Maxillofacial Surgery, Almenya
Dr Khaled Ibrahim Mohamed, Doctor, Alexandria
Ms Laila AL Sayed Ahmed Zagazig
Ms Laila El Saied Nour El Din Librarian Specialist, Zagazig
Dr Laila Soliman, Cairo
Dr Magda Mohammed El Nazer, Head of Parasitology Department, Sohag
Dr Magda Shawky Botrous, Cairo
Dr Magdy Ahmed El Daly, Physician, 6th October
Dr Maged Abu Hashim, Zagazig
Dr Maged Ernest Riyad, Cairo
Dr Maha El Tantawy, Cairo
Ms Mahassen Abd El Rehim, Library Director, Cairo
Ms Mahmoud A. Abd El Rahman, Librarian, Cairo
Mr Mahmoud Abd El Azim, Journals Department, Cairo
Mr Mahmoud Ahmed Abdel Rahman, Librarian, Cairo
Mr Mahmoud Ahmed Dawoud, Assistant Sales Manager, Cairo
Mr Mahmoud Hussein, General Manager, Cairo
Mr Mahmoud Kamel Hassanein, Director, Cairo
Dr Mahmoud Mohammed, Lecturer of Orthopedic Surgery Monofya
Ms Malak Bekheet Botrous, Cairo
Mr Mamdouh M. Abdullah, Librarian, Cairo
Dr Mamdouh Zahra
Ms Manal, Assistant Lecturer of Medical Microbiology, Cairo
Dr Manal Gamal El Din Abed, Cairo
Ms Marwa Gaber Okasha, Database Officer, Cairo
Dr Marwa Mostafa Ragheb, Zagazig
Ms May A. EL Shazly, Librarian, Cairo
Mr Mazen AlAbbar, Cairo
Mr Medhat Abd El Tawab, Cairo
Dr Medhat Abdel Tawab
Dr Medhat Said Soliman, Cairo
Dr Mervat Eshak Hanen, Director of Scientific Library, Cairo
Ms Mervit Moris Tikla, Chief Librarian, Cairo
Eng Moemen Saad El Din, Computer Engineer, Cairo
Mr Mohamed A. Hasheesh, Cairo
Mr Mohamed A. Ibrahim, Chemist, Cairo
Dr Mohamed Abdel Kereem Mohamed, Cairo
Dr Mohamed Abdel Salam, Physician, Cairo
Dr Mohamed Abu Zeid Ahmed, Cairo
Dr Mohamed Ahmed Saber, Cairo
Dr Mohamed Al Nagar, Cairo
Mr Mohamed AL Zohary, Cairo
Dr Mohamed Ali A. Sultan, Library Director, Cairo
Dr Mohamed Asem Al-Fiky, Director, Cairo
Dr Mohamed Gad, Cairo
Dr Mohamed Gamal Badr, Cairo
Mr Mohamed Helmy Mohamed, Lecturer of Cardiology Consultant Cairo
Mr Mohamed K. Abd El Hafez, General Manager Secretary, Cairo
Dr Mohamed Kamal Sayed Ahmed, Professor of Medicinal Chemistry, Cairo
Mr Mohamed Karam, Secretary of the Dean, Cairo
Mr Mohamed Kasem, Librarian Officer, Cairo
Mr Mohamed Mahmoud Ghanem, Network Administrator, Cairo
Dr Mohamed Mohamed Abdel Karim, Cairo
Eng Mohamed Mustafa, Manager of Library Automation Sector, Cairo
Mr Mohamed Nasr El-Din, Librarian, Cairo
Mr Mohamed Saad Mohamed Al Sabagh, Librarian Officer, Almonofya
Mr Mohamed Salah Barakat, Zagazig
Dr Mohamed Youssif Ibrahim, Cairo
Mr Mohammed AbdulKarim M., Director of Training, Cairo
Dr Mohammed El Zohry Ramadan
Dr Mohammed El-Rakhawi Professor of Anatomy, Cairo
Mr Mohammed Gamal El Adawy, Banha
Dr Mohammed Ibrahim EL Sayed
Dr Mohammed Khashaba, Giza
Dr Mohsen Amr Shamaa
Manager of Information Systems, Cairo
Mr Mohsen S. Makram, Head of Medical Education Development Department, Cairo
Ms Mona Abd El Khalek, Librarian, Cairo
Mrs Mona Desouki, Alexandria
Ms Mona Hafez Hetta, Researcher, Cairo
Ms Mona K. Marei, Professor Tissue Engineering Laboratories, Alexandria
Ms Mona Kamal Habib, Library Director, Cairo
Ms Mona Khamees Mohamed, Librarian, Cairo
Dr Mona M. Esmat Ma’moun Skin Diseases and Reproduction Specialist, Cairo
Dr Moneer Ayad Youssef, Cairo
Dr Monira Abd El Latif Waked, Skin Diseases and Reproduction Specialist, Cairo
Mr Morad Mohamed Habashi, Cairo
Mr Mosaad Ashour Saleh, Librarian, Cairo
Mr Mostafa Kamal, Public Relations Officers, Cairo
Dr Mostafa Mohamed Mohamed, Assistant Manager, Cairo
Mr Muhammed K. Sayed, Professor, Cairo
Dr Mustafa Mohamed Ali Fouda, Zagazig
Ms Nabila Abdel Awy Salam, Zagazig
Ms Nabila Abdel Tawab, Librarian, Banha
Ms Nabila Al Metwalli Hegazy, Senior Librarian Officer, Cairo
Dr Nabila Hassan Aly, Doctor, Bour Saeed
Ms Nadia Mohamed Shehata, Senior Librarian Officer, Cairo
Dr Nadia Saad El Domiety, 1st Specialist, Cairo
Mr Nadir Essam Al Din, Information Officer, Cairo
Ms Nagat Salah Shalaby, Assistant Lecturer, Obstetrics and Gynaecology Nursing, Cairo
Ms Naglaa Ahmed Nabil, Cairo
Ms Naglaa Bayomy Ahmed, Librarian Officer, Cairo
Ms Nagwa Helal Ibrahim, Director of Scientific Library, Cairo
Ms Nahed Ahmed Aly, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Nahed Mahmoud Hamed, General Manager of Information Center, Cairo
Ms Nahed Mahmoud Hameed
Dr Nahla Roshdi Abdo, IEC Responsible, Cairo
Ms Nazema Abd El-Kader A., Information Officer, Cairo
Ms Nefisa Othman A. Othman, Assistant Librarian, Cairo
Dr Nemr Ramses Meksemous, Cairo
Ms Nermine Moussa Mohamed, Information Specialist, Cairo
Ms Nervin Abdel Salam, Librarian, Cairo
Mrs Nesreen Al Sayed, Cairo
Ms Nihad F. Abd El Maksoud, Cairo
Dr Nora El-Bassiouny, Cairo
Mrs Ola Lawrance, Director, Cairo
Ms Omayma M. Ahmed Aly, Library Director, Cairo
Ms Omayma Mohamed Mahdy, Librarian Officer, Al Monofya
Ms Omayma Mohamed Wagdy, Librarian Officer, Almonofya
Ms Omima Abdel Moaty Selim, Manager
Dr Osama Gameel Al Basyouny, Cairo
Mr Osama M. Abd El Fatah, Manager of Acquisition Department, Cairo
Mrs Rabab A. Rashwan, Cairo
Dr Ragaa Mohammed, Dentist
Ms Rahma Ibrahim, Manager, Cairo
Mr Ramadan Abdel Maksoud, Cairo
Ms Rania Basim Mohamed, Information Specialist, Cairo
Eng Rania Bassem, Cairo
Dr Raouf Sobhy Aziz, Specialist of General Surgery, Cairo
Dr Rasha Ahmed Morad, Doctor, Cairo
Dr Rashad Fouad El Sayed, Professor, Cairo
Mr Reda Mohamed Tawfique, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Rihab Mohamed AlAraby, Statistics Officer, Cairo
Ms Rihab Mohamed Tawfik Eid, Librarian Officer, Almonofya
Ms Rihab Riyad Mahmoud, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Riham Nazmy, Cairo
Mr Saad Antar Taha, Cairo
Mr Sabri Abdel Hafiz, Librarian, Assiout
Mr Sabry Abdel Hafiz Mohamed, Librarian, Assuit
Dr Saeed Afify Hussein, Cairo
Ms Safaa Mahmoud Ahmed, Zagazig
Dr Sahar Aly Mohamed, Cairo
Dr Sahar El Sayed Mohammed, Pathologist, Cairo
Ms Sahar Mohamed Gamal, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Sahar Muhamed Ibrahim, Librarian Officer, Cairo
Dr Salah Aly Ismael, Sohag
Dr Salah El Din Aly, Specialist of Parasitology, Cairo
Mr Salah Hassan Khalil, Office Manager, El Menya
Dr Sameh Fekry, Bany Swaif
Mr Sameh Gomaa El Rashidi, Professor of Aquatic Animal medicine, Cairo
Dr Sameh Hassan Morsy, Cairo
Ms Samia Aly Ismail, Library Director, Assiout
Mr Samir Abdel Mooti
Mr Samir Gamal Ahmed, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Sanaa M. Abo Al Naga, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Sawsan Mohamed Khairy, Library Director, Cairo
Dr Shawky Salem, Chairman, Cairo
Dr Sherif Hashem, Cairo
Mr Sherif Louis Tanaś, Library Director, Cairo
Dr Soheir Abu Rya, Cairo
Ms Soheir Ahmed Amin, Librarian Officer, Cairo
Ms Soheir Al Sayed Basyouny, Librarian, Al Monofya
Dr Soheir Mohamed Nassar, Ophthalmologist, Cairo
Dr Soliman Ibrahim Fouda, Professor of Microbiology, Cairo
Ms Sondos Mohamed Taha, Pharmacist, Cairo
Ms Sonia Abd El Azim, Librarian, Cairo
Ms Sonya Abdel Reheem, Librarian, Cairo
Dr Tarek Abdel Latif, Manager of CMC Committee, Cairo
Dr Tarek Mohamed Aziz, Doctor, Cairo
Dr Thanaa Ibrahim Saleh, Director, Cairo
Mr Wael Nabil, Marketing Specialist, Cairo
Ms Wafa Hassan Mohamed, Database Officer, Cairo
Dr Wafaa Amin
Ms Wafaa Amin Greiss, Library Director, Cairo
Ms Wafaa Mahdy, Cairo
Ms Wafaa Saber Mohamed, Librarian, Cairo
Dr Wagdy Abdel Moneim, Doctor in General Administration of Chest Diseases, Cairo
Ms Walaa Aly Abd El Maksoud, Librarian, Cairo
Mr Walid Khalil Abdullah, Librarian, Cairo
Dr Yasser Abdel Ghany Mohamed, Cairo
Mr Yasser Morsy Mohamed, Librarian Officer, Cairo
Dr Youssreya Mohamed Ibrahim, Assistant Professor of Critical Care, Mansoura
Mr Youssuf Al Atfy, Library Development Projects Manager, Cairo
Ms Zainab A. El Salam Khalil, Library Director, Cairo
Ms Zainab Ahmed Saber, Cairo
Ms Zainab Mohamed Zaki, Cairo
Dr Ziad Abdel Hakim Mohy El Din, Cairo

**IRAQ**

Dr Bassim G. Antwan, Manager of Medical Training Unit, Baghdad
Dr Ghassan A. Razak Saleh, Head of Administrive Training Section, Baghdad
Mr Nawar G. Elias, Engineer, Baghdad
Dr Ohan F. Yonan, Head of Research and Audiovisual Section, Baghdad
Mr Zaid Abdul Majid, Professor, Baghdad

**ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN**

Ms Fereshteh Bakhshalian, Health Information Education and Training Manager, Tehran
Dr Kia Pakravan, Informatic Expert, Tehran
Dr Mohammad Bagher Rokni, Assistant Professor (Scientific Editor in Medical Journals), Tehran
Mr Mohammed H. Zarrintan, Professor Tehran
Ms Nahid Ramezan Ghorbani, Tehran
Mr Neshait S., Tehran
Dr Omid Beiki M.D
Dr S.M. Sadjjadi, Associate Professor, Shiraz

**JORDAN**

Ms Alice Haddadin, Medical Librarian, Amman
Mr Jamal Yousef Bodair, Head of Department of Circulation, Amman
Mr Mazen Malkawi, Technical Officer, Amman
Ms Muntaha Najjar, Librarian, Amman

**LEBANON**

Ms Aida Farha, Reference Librarian, Beirut
Ms Fadia Shoucair, Supervisor, Beirut
Ms Hilda T. Nassar, Director, Beirut
Ms Omayma Rammal, Assistant Librarian, Beirut

LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA
Mr Musbah Ali Abujnah, Librarian, Tripoli
Mr Osama Fituri Abushagour, Librarian, Tripoli

MOROCCO
Mr Ahmed Hajji, Head Librarian, Rabat

OMAN
Mrs Huda Al-Shibli, Librarian, Muscat
Mr Mansoor Al Shabibi, Head Medical Library, Muscat
Mr Mohammed Said Al-Wardi, Director, Muscat
Dr Naima Jabr, Chairman, Muscat

PAKISTAN
Mr Ahmed Nazir, Karachi
Mr Ajmal Rizvi, Karachi
Mr Amtul Aziz Shazia, Karachi
Ms Azra Qureshi, Librarian, Karachi
Ms Farah Naz Cheema, Chief Librarian, Lahore
Mr Hamza Akram, Karachi
Mr Imran Ahmad Shaikh, Karachi
Mr Khawaja Mustafa, Library Officer, Karachi
Mr Muhammad Khurshid Alam, Chief Librarian, Karachi
Mr Syed Ahmed Naqvi, Manager, Karachi

PALESTINE
Dr Hosney Makbul, Director, Nablus

QATAR
Ms Dianne Cmor, Qatar

SAUDI ARABIA
Dr Abdulmohsen Alzalabani, Director, Riyadh
Dr Mohamed Abdel Hamid Muawwad, Library Automation Consultant, Riyadh
Ms Wafa Fakhereddin, Jeddah
Mr Youssuf Abdullah Alsuaibani, Vice Dean, Riyadh
SUDAN
Ms Siham Yagoub Khalil, Head of Documentation Unit, Khartoum

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC
Mrs Alia Omran, Damascus
Dr Naser Boukaly Hassan, Damascus
Dr Subhi Nizam, Library Programme Director, Damascus

TUNISIA
Mr Foued Gardalli, Tunis
Dr Mondher Letaief, Tunis
Ms Shadlia Hamdi, Librarian, Tunis

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
Dr Ahmed Taha, Library Specialist in Research E-information Services, Abu Dhabi
Ms Ebtissam Al Rumaithi, Abu Dhabi
Mr Ghalib J. Haboubi, Head of Community Medicine Dept., Abu Dhabi
Mr Hakim Bishawi, Medical Librarian, Abu Dhabi
Dr Khedr Awad, Abu Dhabi

UNITED KINGDOM
Mr Ahmad A. Khudair

YEMEN
Mr Abdul Hakeem Al-Silwy Abdul Ghafoor, Medical Librarian, Sanaa
Dr Khaled Saeed Al-Aghbari, Secretary General, Sanaa

WHO Secretariat
Mr Tomas Allen, WHO/HQ
Mrs Yvonne Grandbois, Coordinator, Library and Information Networks, WHO/HQ
Ms Marie Paule Kabore, HLT, WHO/AFRO
Mrs Anchalee Chamchuklin, WHO/SEARO
Dr Mohamed Abdi Jama, Deputy Regional Director, WHO/EMRO
Dr Najeeb Al-Shorbaji, Regional Adviser, Health Information Management and Telecommunications, WHO/EMRO
Dr Kassem Sara, Regional Adviser, Regional Adviser, Health and Biomedical Information, WHO/EMRO
Mr Hatem Nour El-Din, Librarian, WHO/EMRO
Mrs Nada Zahra, Secretary, WHO/EMRO
Ms May El Sayed, Secretary, WHO/EMRO
Ms Nancy Hassan, Secretary, WHO/EMRO
In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

MESSAGE BY
DR HUSSEIN A. GEZAIRY

Your Excellency,

Colleagues

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the First National Congress of Egyptian Medical Librarians and the Fourth Regional Conference on the Eastern Mediterranean Region Health Sciences Virtual Library: Role in e-Learning and Building the Information Society. After three successful regional conferences held in Beirut, Tehran and Karachi, it has become a tradition to organize a national congress along with the regional conference, making it a national event also, with participation from all types of health care and medical education and research institutions. The National Congress of Egyptian Medical, or Health Sciences, Librarians is organized for the first time in Egypt in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Population, the Egyptian Universities Network of the Supreme Council of Egyptian Universities and the National Scientific and Technological Information Network of the Higher Council for Research. The Congress has a comprehensive national agenda to discuss the current situation, challenges and possible solutions facing libraries in hospitals, primary health care centres, faculties of health sciences, research centres and the private sector. The conclusions and recommendations of the Congress will constitute a basis for future development of these libraries and information centres. The level of participation in the Congress is a clear sign of the commitment that national institutions have towards development of the electronic library, its role in e-learning and its potential contribution to the building of the information society in Egypt.

The main theme of the Fourth Regional Conference is the role of the Eastern Mediterranean Region Health Sciences Virtual Library in e-learning and in building the information society. The progress that has been made in building the virtual library with its digital content and electronic access has been manifested by a number of achievements. Among these are the significant increase in the number of libraries connected to the Internet in the Region, the number of libraries with access to electronic information resources, the number of libraries that have participated in the Union Catalogue of Medical Journals in the Region and the number of libraries that are networked. For the first time, the collective resources of the Eastern Mediterranean Region Virtual Library have become a primary source of information for researchers, academics and practitioners. A few years ago we said that the success of the network would be measured by the degree of involvement and contribution of participating libraries. This success has been characterized by the increasing number of journals approaching us to be indexed in the Index Medicus for the Eastern Mediterranean; the demand for document delivery services coupled with the ability of the participating libraries themselves to satisfy the needs; the extensive use of the network systems and tools, including the medical library handbook and the software; and the
growing use of the Listserv as a forum for discussion and exchange of information and services.

Dear Colleagues,

Libraries and information centres have always had a role in education, research, decision-making and management. The growing trend in e-learning and the expansion of electronic libraries and digital collections as part of virtual libraries goes hand-in-hand. E-learning refers to the use of the Internet technologies to deliver a broad array of solutions that enhance knowledge and performance. It is based on three fundamental criteria:

a) e-learning is networked, which makes it capable of instant updating, storage, retrieval, distribution and sharing of instructions or information;
b) It is delivered to the end-user via a computer using standard Internet technology;
c) It focuses on the broadest view of learning—learning solutions that go beyond the traditional paradigms of training.

E-learning encompasses all forms of computer-assisted learning and computer-based training, and goes beyond that to include use of the networking technologies, such as the Internet, intranet, extranet and other virtual networks. It is based on the utilization of information and communications technology (ICT) for purposeful knowledge and skills, which are not limited to an educational framework or teaching requirements. Many benefits have been cited for e-learning for the simple fact that learning materials are developed once and used an unlimited number of times in multiple sites by multiple users. As a result e-learning lowers cost; the content is more timely and dependable; and the learning opportunity is available at the convenience of the learner. Furthermore and as long as the electronic network is up and running and the material is accessible, the learner can use this material any time day, or night; it makes learning universal, it helps in building communities of practice and it is scalable.

If we ask ourselves: To what extent can e-learning be supported by digital and virtual libraries? Where do e-learning and e-library meet? Is there a clear-cut distinction between the two? The answers are clear. There is no e-learning without an e-library. The e-library resources are the resources needed for e-learning. The e-library is the place where e-learning materials are available, managed and accessed. The health science librarian by virtue of managing these resources is part of the e-learning formula. The e-learner needs electronic access to information resources regardless of their location and regardless of time difference. That’s what the virtual library does for its users. The role of the library in creation and stimulation of virtual communities, and in improving ICT skills and information literacy programmes has been enhanced through networking of libraries and through going digital.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

An information society is a society where information is the main capital as part of the knowledge economy. It is a society in which information and communication
technology represents the major tool for conducting business, provision of services, running transactions, research, education, learning and leisure. The Internet is becoming an increasingly vital tool in the information society. More health care professionals in the Region are connected to the Internet and more are actually providing health care services via the Internet. The virtual library has helped these professionals to be part of the growing information society. The library (physical or virtual) is an open institution that has made a major contribution to bridging the digital divide and to helping in creation of the information society. This bridging has been at both local and global levels. Discussion of the information society with specific reference to c-health will contribute to the ongoing effort to develop a global strategy for c-health in the Organization. We see the virtual library in the Region as a major component in the c-health movement in support of health care delivery.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Looking at the scientific programme of the conference and the list of speakers, I am confident that the value of the presentations— the discussions, the conclusions and recommendations will go beyond these three days and beyond those who have participated in the conference. Sharing of experience and learning from our mistakes with an eye on what’s going on elsewhere has proved to be the best way to go forward. I am quite sure that the diversity of experience of participants from the Region and the presence of colleagues from headquarters and other regional offices will enrich the discussion and establish long-term working relations. The presence of headquarters and regions in this conference to discuss the global health library project will provide first hand information on the need for this type of project, the constraints faced and the possible contributions by health sciences libraries in the Region.

I wish you all success and a pleasant stay in Cairo, and God bless you.