

Kindle-d on-the-go Health News Project Report



Beginning in September of 2009, the Long Island Library Resources Council (LILRC) began lending out 2 Amazon Kindles (2nd generation) to medical librarians, with the aim of utilizing an emerging technology for discovery and innovative dissemination of health-related information and news.

Initially, our target audience for this project was hospital and health sciences libraries in Nassau and Suffolk Counties of Long Island, but it also expanded to include any type of library interested in health-related news and/or acquiring knowledge about eBook reader technology.

Using the grant funding, we purchased two Kindles, downloaded health-related information and news onto the devices, and circulated them to libraries free of charge for a 21-day loan period. The devices also contain selected readings on how libraries are currently implementing these types of devices into library programs and services. A project blog* was created to provide updates, information on resources available on the Kindles, and user guides. Our project goal was to provide librarians with the opportunity to learn from and test an emerging technology and secondly to test with patrons how dissemination of information using eBook readers may or may not be beneficial to their representative institution prior to investing monies.

During the six-month project period, the two Kindles circulated to three hospitals, one academic institution, and one public library. Participants were asked to fill out a survey and rate the Kindle's physical features and content. More importantly, participants were asked to provide feedback on how they used the device and whether or not they would consider using the Kindle at their institution. In two instances, the loaning of the Kindles proved to be a successful marketing tool for the medical libraries, with two separate yet equally interesting outcomes as follows:

Borrower 1: Hospital library participant used the Kindle as a marketing tool during National Medical Librarians Month to get hospital staff, faculty, residents, and students into the library to test the device and provide demonstrations not only on the Kindle, but on other resources available from the library. Due to the interest in the device, library usage increased as a result, and the librarian was able to use the Kindle as a marketing tool to get new patrons into the library.

Borrower 2: Medical center library tested the device both within the library and also within the institution itself. She got approval to purchase three Kindles; two of which will be circulated to dialysis patients and one device for library use.

As the two cases above demonstrate, the Kindle was experienced by numerous people at each institution. Rather than looking at our data quantitatively, to evaluate the success of our project, we looked at the borrowing institution's innovation and ability to be creative in marketing library services using the Kindle. Although Borrower 1 did not decide to purchase Kindle(s) for their institution, the device was a great tool in drawing in new patrons that may have not otherwise visited the library and then alternatively teaching them about the resources that are currently available.

Other participants cited various reasons for not considering the use of the Kindle to deliver health-related information at their institution including:

- Cost; too expensive
- Issues concerning the theft of the device
- More evidence that other libraries have successfully implemented the technology.

As of March 1, 2010, the project period has ended. However, as we already have an established equipment loan program, the Kindles have been incorporated into this program, and will continue to be loaned to interested libraries in our region.

* Anyone interested in this project is welcome to visit the project blog online at:
www.kindledhealthnews.wordpress.com.

Free Health Literacy for the Public Health Professionals

To help public health professionals respond to the problem of limited health literacy, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have launched a free "Health Literacy for Public Health Professionals Online Training" program. The purpose of this training is to educate public health professionals about limited health literacy and their role in addressing it in a public health context.

This is a web-based course and can be accessed 24/7 by any computer with Internet access. It takes 1.5 to 2 hours to complete. Trainees can earn a variety of continuing education credits. You can access the training program from:
http://www2a.cdc.gov/TCEOnline/registration/detailpage.asp?res_id=2074.

For a link to CDC's and other HHS' agencies' health literacy sites, check out AHRQ's Health LIteracy and Cultural Competence Resource Links at: <http://www.ahrq.gov/browse/hlitres.htm>.



May is Older Americans Month

Each year the Administration on Aging (AoA) issues a theme for Older Americans Month to assist our National Aging Services Network of state, tribal, area agencies on aging, and community services providers plan for activities that might take place in May or throughout the year. This year's theme "Age Strong! Live Long!" recognizes the diversity and vitality of today's older Americans who span three generations.

AgeStrong!LiveLong!

For additional information, please visit the AoA's website at: <http://www.aoa.gov>.

Chronic Disease and the Internet: New Pew Internet Project Report

The LILRC *HealthLine* is published 5 times a year by the staff of the Hospital Library Services Program. We appreciate contributions of news articles. Please notify us of significant events such as personnel changes, publications, construction, moves, and addition of innovative services or any news items that may be of interest to your colleagues.

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According to a new report from Pew Internet Project, "U.S. adults living with chronic disease are significantly less likely than healthy adults to have access to the internet (62% vs. 81%). The internet access gap creates an online health information gap. However, lack of internet access, not lack of interest in the topic, is the primary reason for the difference. Once online, having a chronic disease increases the probability that someone will take advantage of social media to share what they know and learn from their peers."

For access to the full report, visit the Pew Internet Project website at:
<http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/Chronic-Disease.aspx>.