

## ALIA Health Libraries Australia (HLA) Executive

### Statement of Support to Health Libraries and Health Library Workers



26 March 2020

The ALIA HLA Executive along with the ALIA Board of Directors supports the safety and well-being of library workers and the health sciences communities we serve. We join [ALIA](#), [CAUL](#), [MLA](#), [CHLA-ABSC](#) and other professional library associations in advocating for the safety of our members, colleagues, health care workers, and the general public.

We believe that health libraries have an important role to play in the unfolding COVID-19 pandemic in Australia, by connecting clinicians and others to vital information services and resources. We applaud the decision many organisations have already made enabling library workers to continue to provide vital library and information services remotely.

Most library services and information resources, including access to the library staff, are available online and from any location with an internet or phone connection. While we acknowledge that decisions are based on institutional needs and contexts, the HLA Executive advocates that organisations maintain a health library service. This is due to the added value that information professionals can add in the context of a new and rapidly evolving health crisis where the information landscape is constantly changing.

Examples of library services being delivered remotely include, but are not limited to:

- answering urgent clinical queries and providing vital evidence-based information in real time via online chat, email, phone and other online reference tools at the point of clinical care, while also supporting educational services;
- maintaining 24/7 continuous online electronic access to critical, current authoritative and trusted published literature, as well as sourcing electronic journal articles from a collaborative international network of libraries;
- offering consultations with expert information professionals for clinical and other reference questions, literature searches, document delivery and data management;
- providing virtual instruction for using information resources on how to teach virtually and use online collaboration tools like Zoom, Webex, etc.;
- working with our vendor and publishing partners to ensure that systems enabling the scholarly body of knowledge remain accessible;
- collaborating internationally with health library colleagues to assist health services in COVID-19 affected regions.

The HLA Executive applauds the thousands of library workers and information professionals who have been working countless hours to support their organizations during this unprecedented time.

ALIA Health Libraries Australia Executive

\*\*\*Please note this statement has been adapted from the *MLA Statement of Support to Libraries and Library Workers*\*\*\*