

the reading agency

Research project to scope activities run by public libraries to support health and well being

The Museums Libraries and Archives Council has commissioned a new piece of research scoping public library activity in the area of health and well being. This work will be delivered by The Reading Agency working in partnership with LISU, and supported by Professor Neil Frude.

The aim is to gain a better understanding of the potential value libraries are able to contribute to communities' health and well being by examining the extent of different types of health related library activity. There will be a particular focus on activity organised in partnership with health service providers.

The research will provide MLA with a comprehensive library activities overview, based on existing written evidence and in consultation with Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) and stakeholders. KOLs will include library, local authority, patient, health and social care representatives.

It is intended that this research will also inform the development of a coherent public library health and well being offer and investment in future outcomes/impact research.

Methodology

The work will consist of three phases:

Phase 1 Desk research and interviews with KOLs

The objectives of the KOL interviews will be

- To help build the evidence framework of libraries' health related activities and contributions
- To capture perceptions about current partnership arrangements with health and social care sectors
- To identify key issues on the development of a library health offer
- To inform investment in future impact research in this area

Phase 2 Survey of all library authorities in England

Phase 3 Case studies

Timescale

It is anticipated that this project will be delivered between January and May 2010.

Outputs

The main output from the research will be a final report to MLA incorporating evidence gathered in all three phases and presenting a profile of current health and well being activity across the public library service in England.