CHAPTER 8

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It is difficult to imagine a more pressing need than the networking of HSLs in the state. Information must be collected, stored and retrieved from many sources and from afar. Costs for obtaining these information especially in the biomedical and health sciences are sky rocketing year after year with no increase in library budgets. Networks helps to free HSLs from budgetary constrains.

Networking is an agent which speeds progress and yet caters to human needs. It required the support of all health professionals, government, management of medical schools and above all from health sciences librarians and their constructive thinking in order to bring about the procedures that will result in the most significant uses of network facility. Perhaps a truly adequate system can be achieved only through the creation of a kind of public utility for information handling such as network as discussed above for the state of Karnataka.

Without hope one shall live in desire. Sometimes wisdom means to carry on with the emotions.

The growth and rising of reading materials require that attempts to make all health sciences libraries adequately self sufficient be replaced by the provision of selective
collection devoted to the most appropriate and useful materials particularly in a large developing nation like India and a big state such as Karnataka.

An information system based on selective collection and resource sharing is analogous to a health care system based on primary, secondary and tertiary levels of care that the State institutions are providing.

Once the Union or Regional list of periodical holdings becomes available, duplication of less frequently used titles can be avoided in libraries where cost of such titles exceeds demands and additional subscriptions where demand justifies new titles or duplicate of titles.

The overall impression gathered from the survey is that the situation is terrible, embarrassing, disgusting and that something must be done right away if the medical and allied health libraries is to be improved thereby improvements in education, research and finally improvements in patient care which is due of all communities in Karnataka.

Therefore more than ever, a solution must be sought to correct the above deficiencies. The only way towards the improvements in libraries is through a Network facility with huge resources- finances, personnel, collection, etc. And once all these resources are available, the users will be able to get all information they require through the librarians and
will advocate the libraries in the education. Any budgetary cuts to these essential institutions will be negated by the user community.

The librarians will find themselves with new responsibilities and then try to become worthy of the positions they will hold. The Network will work to its full potentials and they users will be trained in locating information from various sources and retrieving these from different reading materials. Once the user community is happy with libraries, the management will gauge the effect of libraries on the intake of students and then be able to allocate sufficient funds to manage these learned societies.

Having known the health sciences librarians of the state, particularly the of the medical college libraries and having visited these colleges, once can argue that there is a lot needs to be done if India as a whole and Karnataka as a State could constructively contribute to the aim of "Health For All by 2000". It is doubtful first because of the education patterns have deficiencies; the libraries are passive in nature and services defective and unsatisfactory. These two problems have added to the continuing problems.

If the education is to be need based and responsive to the community requirements, the patterns of biomedical and health education must change to include proper and regular
usage of libraries by providing mechanisms at the University levels and by inclusion of library usage in curriculum of professional education. By this the nation could gain its objectives by 2000.

To achieve this, the libraries must be active agents and so are the librarians. The role of the governments and the management of medical colleges is extremely important that has to be reminded them often. The present situation in the health sciences libraries of Karnataka as documented has serious deficiencies. The medical and health education required that the libraries play important role.

Karnataka must find ways to evolve itself as the First Indian State to have contributed to the National Interest by taking appropriate step and action to ensure that the proposed network is established. Once it is done, the remaining Indian States will see the effects of this facility on the entire biomedical and health care mechanisms. The other states will follow suit in a very near future the dream to have a sound national health sciences library network will be realized and emerge.

It is very difficult if not impossible to predict with any certainty what the future will bring. The best way to secure the future of the professionals and the professions is to do the best today. It will be to make a firm commitment and
resolution in regards to re-evaluating and re-defining the needs of the health professionals. It will surely help change libraries and their services to the health professionals thereby affecting every aspect of biomedical and health education in the communities of Karnataka.

The dreams of the future accomplishments are elements of life. It is important however, that for these dreams to be realized careful and realistic planning must occur. The foundations must be built from knowledge, application and hard work towards this endeavor. The libraries and the health professionals are ready for the change. Are the librarians and management ready for this change?

Look to this Day!

For Yesterday is but a Dream,
and Tomorrow is only a vision;
But today well lived makes every,
and Tomorrow is only a vision;
But today well lived makes every,
Yesterday a dream of happiness,
and every tomorrow a vision of hope.

The Salutation of the Dawn
From Sanskrit