

From resource sharing to partnership: the case of the Belgian Federal Health Library (VDIC)

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The Vesalius Documentation and Information Center (VDIC), the Health Library dedicated to Belgian federal civil servants, was launched in 2006. Bringing together all departmental libraries related to the Ministry of Health allowed to share existing resources and reduce redundancy; set up a portal that gives a central access to all e-journals and a common library catalogue; create a central service for the provision of articles' copies; and thus enhance efficiency and make better use of the public funds. Rapidly, other institutions (all government and health related) applied to become partner. This raised a new challenge for the VDIC manager, i.e. switching from a model of resource sharing inside the same institution to a model of cooperation with external partners. A new model was thus necessary to describe the value of the VDIC collection and services; and how each potential partner can provide input, either resources or manpower. In this paper, we describe how this model was gradually elaborated in collaboration with three semi-governmental agencies that joined the VDIC in 2006.