

# Reaching the target groups

## – an information strategy for a hospital library

Hospital Libraries of Sörmland County Council, Sweden

### Conclusions

A conscious effort to reach and activate the staff of the County Council regarding the hospital library's resources has resulted in improved skills among health staff in the Swedish Sörmland County Council, in information retrieval, skills development and research. This investment shows the importance of including information, promotion and training, as well as good infrastructure and available e-resources, within the prioritized operations of a hospital library.

### Background

In order to establish a sustainable regional growth and stimulate the development of a high quality health care, an R & D Centre was created in 2006 by the Sörmland County Council. To this organization the County's four hospital libraries were added and merged into a single activity. A new mission was formulated which focused more than previously on the libraries' role of being a resource for the County Council employees involved in training, skills development and research.

### Information strategy

To raise awareness of what libraries can offer, and encourage more people to use their resources, the Hospital Libraries in Sörmland created a strategy. In 2009 a campaign of targeted marketing, outreach and locally adapted training was conducted. People in the health sector often have no time or opportunity to visit the physical library. Emphasis was therefore put on letting employees choose the time and place for the information meeting. The majority chose their own workplace. For two years, the libraries visited nearly 100 staff meetings.

The employees chose in advance from a menu what they wished to learn more about, and how much time they were willing to set aside for this purpose. For each occasion a unique presentations was prepared. The idea was that the presentations should be an experience, even for those who did not have an immediate interest in the content. The presentations were as much about building the brand of hospital libraries, as providing information about the library services.

### Evaluation

The campaign has been going on for two years. 17% of the county employees have been visited by library staff in their workplaces. The response has been very good. In the autumn of 2011, the initiative is due for evaluation. It is important to determine whether hospital libraries should make information, promotion and education the basis for their operations, in providing support to the County Council employees regarding training, skills development and research. Those of us who work in the Hospital Libraries in Sörmland are confident that we already know the answer.

