The Library’s contract with the National Library of Medicine (NLM) to serve as the Regional Medical Library (RML) for the ten-state Greater Midwest Region (GMR) ends on April 30, 2011, and a new contract will begin on May 1st. The solicitation for the upcoming contract encourages GMR staff members to work with librarians in the region to build on and strengthen our outreach to minority health professionals and students as well as to librarians and health professionals who work with specific populations such as immigrants, minorities, AIDS patients, and other underserved and underrepresented groups.

In addition, the new five-year contract (2011-2016) will place more emphasis on assisting health professionals with health information technologies such as the implementation and meaningful use of electronic health records (EHRs). GMR staff will also be promoting librarian involvement in clinical translational science awards (CTSA) and solving issues related to e-science, such as the storage, curation, and sharing of the large computer-generated data sets that result from the type of research done at major academic medical centers. Another new program area will be the coordination of efforts across the region to preserve a reasonable number of print copies of books and journals for future access as libraries convert to electronic-only resources and are challenged to give up the space used currently to store legacy print collections.

As we wrap up the current five-year contract, we are not only looking forward to five more years of UIC Library of the Health Sciences (LHS) as the RML, but also looking back on the work that
was accomplished through the efforts of GMR staff and our Network Members who have received training, funding and other support to perform outreach throughout our ten-state region.

During the past five years, the GMR awarded 15 Consumer Health Subcontracts, 6 MedlinePlus Go Local projects, 6 Health Disparities Subcontracts, 9 Public Health Subcontracts, and 8 other subcontracts. In addition, 98 smaller funded amounts (awards) for Exhibits, Outreach, Professional Development, Professional Instruction, Technology, and Planning Assessment were also awarded.

Targeted populations of these projects included persons with disabilities, virtual world residents, senior citizens, refugees and immigrants, the clergy, low health-literacy groups, and health care providers. Funded topics ranged from public health, evidenced based care, parish nursing in the inner city, public libraries wishing to improve health information access, and providing customer service in a technology driven world.

For more information about the work of the GMR, see us at http://nnlm.gov/gmr/. For specific information about the projects funded, take a look at Funding Recipients. Maybe your name and organization will be proudly listed in the new contract years.

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