Victorian Health Libraries Consortium – advice for health library managers

Purpose
The purpose of this document is to offer health library managers an introduction to membership of the Victorian Health Libraries Consortium (VHLC).

Overview
VHLC provides a gateway to the health library sector for vendors. Our role is to liaise with vendors, providing guidance and feedback as offers are made to Victorian (and interstate by agreement) health libraries. VHLC is not a buying group.

The Victorian health sector consists of hospitals, health organisations, colleges, corporate health libraries, and non-government health libraries. VHLC also extends deals to interstate health libraries in consultation with publishers. Hospitals are the largest proportion of this group.

VHLC membership and structure
A library is considered a member of the VHLC if the parent organisation has a current subscription to at least one VHLC deal. The Consortium Management Group (CMG) is the committee of VHLC members. CMG members are listed on the VHLC website https://vhlcblog.wordpress.com along with the CMG meeting dates. Library managers should consult the VHLC Terms of Reference, available on the website https://vhlcblog.wordpress.com/documents/, for details of VHLC governance.

VHLC deals
Vendors work with a member of the VHLC consortium management group (Deal Manager) to present a deal for VHLC review. When both parties are in agreement, the deal will be circulated as an offer. Once a deal has subscribers, it becomes a managed deal. The Working with VHLC – advice for vendors document, available on the website https://vhlcblog.wordpress.com/documents/, lists the principles that underpin deals supported by the VHLC.

Top 5 points for Health Library managers
In July 2017 the CMG circulated a short survey to health libraries. The purpose was to learn more about the health library sector, particularly in relation to resource requirements & budgetary flexibility to acquire or maintain resources. The following points are the key outcomes for health library managers:

- Consider cancelling underperforming subs to purchase new resources
- Consider subscribing in 18-24 months’ time – to make savings, negotiate a favourable deal, get publisher to create a deal, market to your users
- Only sign a licence when you are happy with the conditions, ie ILL, perpetual access, educational packages, renewal rate, etc.
- You can propose your own mini-consortium, just ask a CMG member for ideas
- Learn more about vendor relationships by talking to CMG or your peer library managers