BOOK USERS SURVEY – MAY 2019

• Survey sent to all VHLC member libraries to promote
• 218 responses
• Most responses received from staff at Peninsula Health, St Vincent’s Hospital, Epworth and Cabrini
On average, how often do you read professional information in book format?

- Regularly (at least once per week): 36.87%
- Occasionally (2-4 times per month): 35.02%
- Rarely (less than once per month): 24.88%
- Never: 3.23%

In which formats do you read professional books?

- Electronic (e-book) - downloaded to a device: 48.17%
- Physical copy - paper format: 77.98%
- Online - directly on the Internet: 63.76%

Do you prefer particular book formats in which to read certain kinds of subject matter?

60.19% YES 40.74% NO

Respondents offered comments in free text. A definite preference for one format was indicated in 79 responses as per below.

Preference reasons expressed in some way included:

- Physical books are easier to read – less tiring than screen reading
- Easier to bookmark, flip back and forth with physical books
- Retain more information reading from print
- Physical books more portable
- Electronic or online more accessible
- Online can chase up references and search more easily
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Preferred subject matters to read in print - formats

Subject matters preferred to be read electronically - formats

Over the last 5 years, have you stopped reading professional books in print format?
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Conclusions:

Many hospital staff are still reading professional information in book format and prefer to do this for a variety of reasons.

Many staff also read books in electronic format, and some prefer this format.

Health libraries should consider the format preferences of users for books where practical and appropriate.
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Conclusions:

The sentiments expressed in this survey in many ways mirror results from a recent paper from Edith Cowan University:


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