

TITLE: Librarians: An Essential Part of the Public Health Workforce

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STUDENT SUBMISSION: No

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: People involved in public health who are concerned about the inability of the general public to distinguish between fake news and real information.

ABSTRACT: Public health campaigns suffer when the general public refuses to believe credible health information, such as around issues of vaccination or fluoridation. Public health marketing and media experts work to craft excellent messaging in ways that can be best heard by these audiences. However, the best messages will go unheard if individuals have not developed critical thinking and information literacy skills over time. Librarians from all sectors (school libraries, public libraries, university libraries, and health sciences libraries) are key to helping people develop these information literacy skills. As such, impacts on library infrastructure and funding ultimately impact public health. The public health workforce should therefore make sure to include libraries and librarians in considerations of the systems and agencies that all work together to support shared improved population health goals.

In addition to highlighting libraries' role in public health, this session will include discussion of efforts already underway in both public and academic libraries to increase health information literacy and health information resource awareness in the general public.

OBJECTIVE(S): After attending this presentation, attendees will be able to describe how librarians support public health and how a stronger library infrastructure can ultimately impact population health.

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