

Learning Resource Center Project Year 1 Workplan

This workplan outlines tasks and activities that all information coordinators will be responsible for during the first year of the LRC Project. Questions or problems with completing any of the activities in the workplan should be directed to Mark Storey – mstorey@igc.org, Irina Carnevale – icarnevale@igc.org, and your regional ICT Coordinator.

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1. LRC Setup

The following tasks are related to the initial setup of the Learning Resource Center:

A. Set up the LRC room

The Learning Resource Center consists of 3 core components -

1. at least three computer workstations (with a printer, scanner, and an LCD projector) connected to the Internet,
2. a bulletin board, and
3. a cabinet, bookshelves, or a table which you can use to store software, CD-ROMs, books, and any other printed materials you collect through the LRC.

These core components can be combined with a variety of other resources, including additional computer workstations, books and print materials, furniture, and any other items that your institution might be able to contribute to the LRC. You should feel that you can build the LRC as much as your capabilities will allow. The LRC itself is not intended to be simply an AIHA-sponsored project; the LRC belongs to your institution and you should try to develop it in order to meet your needs.

B. Establish a work routine

Once you have all three of the core components, you--the Information Coordinator--need to establish how to organize your work routine. You must decide how you will balance your time as

well as staff access to the computer. You can accomplish this in a variety of ways. For example, you can simply train staff on how to use computers and the Internet so that they can access the workstation independently. If demand is too great (such that too many people want to use the computers), you will probably need to establish a process to receive and manage information requests from staff so that you can do searches for them. The routine that you use may need to change over time, based on changes in staff demand for use of the facilities as well as changes in staff abilities to use the computer independently. In reality, you will probably need to provide a combination of both staff training and information requests in order to adequately meet the needs of your institution.

Managing the LRC and its associated training and outreach functions requires a variety of skills as well as a great deal of time. The most successful LRCs have typically divided the responsibilities for various LRC activities among two or more different staff. You should try to divide staff training and information searching duties among the LRC Evidence-based practice (EBP) Specialist, Technology Specialist and other staff assigned to support LRC activities. For more information about the roles, responsibilities and qualification of each assigned staff, please see LRC Staffing information at <http://www.aiha.com/index.jsp?sid=1&id=7979&pid=7976>. Contact and other information about the Information Coordinator, EBP Specialist and Technical Specialist should be included in the Staffing Nomination form and submitted to Mark Storey, Irina Carnevale and your regional ICT coordinator. If staffing assignments at your LRC change over time, please be sure to send an updated Staffing Nomination form to reflect staff changes.

C. Establish office hours

Once you decide how you want to organize your LRC work routine, you will need to establish regular office hours so that staff will know when they can come to use the LRC. The LRC should be available to staff for a minimum of 20 hours per week. Information coordinators (who are only required to work 15 hours per week on the project) are nonetheless encouraged to try to keep the Learning Resource Center open and accessible for up to 40 hours per week, if possible.

There are several different ways that might allow you to keep the LRC accessible for 40 hours while you only work on the project for 15 hours per week. You can arrange to alternate your schedule with LRC EBP and Technology Specialists. Also, you can train another staff member, who can assist you in keeping the LRC open. Another option is to ask another staff person to help out by simply monitoring room usage (perhaps by using a sign-up sheet). Finally, you may choose to work in the Learning Resource Center all the time, but be available for designated office hours to help staff only for a certain number of hours per week. Then, for the remaining hours, you can perform any other responsibilities you have at the partnership institution. Please keep in mind, however, that the computer provided by AIHA should be accessible to staff for a minimum of 20 hours per week. (If the information coordinator is currently working on another computer, it may be helpful to move this computer to the Learning Resource Center so that the coordinator can do work while other staff are using the Learning Resource Center computer.)

D. Set up a bulletin board (or two)

As part of your outreach efforts, you should set up a bulletin board in a central location so that staff can learn about new resources available through the LRC. You can post articles about the capabilities of the Internet, news about new CD-ROMs that you have received, announcements about upcoming training sessions, and health and medical resources that you download from the Internet. You should also be sure to post the office hours of the LRC so that staff will know when they can come by. It may be useful to put up one bulletin board in a central location and a second bulletin board near the LRC. If you do not have bulletin boards, AIHA can provide these for you. If you do need AIHA to provide a bulletin board, please contact your AIHA Regional Office representative.

E. Create a system for storing print materials and software

In addition to receiving a variety of reference manuals, CD-ROMs and software from AIHA, you will probably be collecting a variety of other print materials—including information that you print out from the Internet. You should try to use a bookshelf, cabinet, and/or a table in order to store these materials. For printed papers, it may make sense for you to use folders or binders to easily store information by subject. Ideally, you might have bookshelves where you can display books and other printed materials, and then use a cabinet or desk drawer to store software and CD-ROMs. (For security reasons, you should probably keep software diskettes and CD-ROMs locked away when you are not present in the room.)

F. Get help from others

As mentioned above, it may be easier for you if you will have other staff who can provide assistance in maintaining the LRC. If your institution is very large, with many different departments, it may make sense for you to find one person from each department who can serve as a liaison. After you have trained each of the liaisons, these people can then manage information requests for each of their departments while you provide general support for staff who want to learn to use computers themselves. You can also enlist the help of the EBP and Technical Specialists to help maintain the LRC or to work directly with other staff on EBP issues, technical training, etc. Another approach might be simply to find another person who is interested in learning about computers as well who you can train and then ask to help in keeping the LRC open and accessible. As you get started with the LRC, you may not need to find an assistant right away. As demand grows over time, however, you may want to think about different approaches to find additional staff support.

G. Coordinate with individuals involved with the AIHA partnership

In addition to providing a general information and communications resource for staff at your institution, the LRC is intended to promote the goals and objectives of your health care partnership. Your partners in the U.S. will probably be sending messages to coordinate partnership activities, and you will need to be sure that these messages get to the proper people. You should also make a special effort to keep the partnership coordinators at your institution aware of the LRC and offer your support and services. This can include offering to find information that would be useful for specific partnership initiatives. You should also be sure to contact your US partners to let them know that you are able to receive messages from them. (If you do not have the e-mail address of your US partners, please contact Mark Storey or Irina Carnevale.)

In summary, LRC Setup includes the following tasks:

- Set up the LRC room
- Establish a work routine, including procedures for receiving information requests and staff training
- Establish office hours
- Set up a bulletin board (or two)
- Create a system for storing print materials and software
- Get help from others
- Coordinate with individuals involved with the AIHA partnership

Timeline: Information coordinators should complete all LRC Setup activities **as soon as possible**. Once these activities are completed, they should send the LRC Setup Report form to AIHA to verify completion.

2. Improving Internet Access

AIHA regional office staff will be coordinating with Information Coordinators to discuss Internet connectivity problems and possible solutions. For example, AIHA can help to support the installation of additional phone lines, direct Internet connections, or radiomodems (if these are affordable within the LRC's existing budget). If you are having problems with the Internet connection such as frequent disconnections, inability to get connected, or slow connection speed, please coordinate with AIHA regional office staff to try to find a workable solution.

Timeline: Since the local communications environment is constantly changing, it will be important to try to keep aware of new opportunities to improve your connection. AIHA staff will periodically assess all of its partners Internet connections and determine whether anything can be done to improve conditions. However, information coordinators can discuss different options with AIHA regional staff at any time.

3. Outreach activities

One of the primary responsibilities of the Information Coordinator--especially at the beginning of the LRC project--is to educate staff about the capabilities of computers, the Internet, and the LRC. Outreach activities can include a variety of different types of activities, including one-on-one conversations with staff, presentations at meetings, and distribution of handout materials. It may be useful to prepare a special brochure about the LRC, which describes the different resources that are available (Internet access, CDs, training services, info requests, etc.). (AIHA has produced a sample brochure that you may want to use in order to start creating your own.) In addition to using the LRC Bulletin Board (see above), Information Coordinators should coordinate special outreach efforts that target the unique needs of staff at your institution. Info coordinators may choose to prepare written materials for distribution to specific groups of individuals (nurses, neonatologists, etc.), prepare oral presentations about the Learning Resource Center or about the Internet, or plan any other types of activities that are appropriate to staff.

As time goes on, you may also want to extend your outreach to other institutions in your local community. This can include giving presentations about the work of the LRC or about the types of resources available through the Internet at regional conferences. You may also want to send out copies of your LRC brochures to other institutions. While staff at other institutions may not be able to come and use your LRC regularly, it is good if you can show other institutions the benefits that they can get from the Internet.

Timeline: Outreach activities should begin immediately after LRC setup is complete, and should continue regularly throughout the length of the project. Progress and activities should be reported in the LRC Project Monthly Activity Reports.

4. Staff Training and Information Requests

Information Coordinators should provide one-on-one or small group training to staff at their institutions who are interested in learning to use computers and accessing the Internet. Staff training sessions can be organized in a variety of different ways. This includes informal training where you simply sit at a computer with another staff person and show them how to accomplish different tasks. Or, you can design a formal curriculum that you can deliver over a several week period. You can try out different approaches and find out which is most effective for you and your colleagues.

For guidance on what you should include in your training sessions, please refer to the LRC Project Minimum Training Proficiency Guidelines on AIHA's web site at:
<http://www.aiha.com/index.jsp?sid=1&id=7981&pid=7976>

(Please note that some of the skills included in these guidelines will be covered during future AIHA information coordinator training workshops.)

Since not all people are going to be able to use computers and the Internet, information coordinators should also provide information search services for staff.

Timeline: Staff training and information requests should be an ongoing activity at the LRC. Information coordinators should keep track of the total number of staff trained and information requests received at the LRC and report this regularly in their LRC Project Monthly Progress reports.

5. LRC Open House

As a way of increasing the visibility of the Learning Resource Center within your institution and within your local communities, information coordinators should coordinate with their AIHA ICT Coordinator to organize and schedule an LRC Open House. The purpose of the Open House is to make staff and local communities aware of the resources and capabilities of the LRC. The Open House can include a variety of different presentations and activities, including:

- An overview of LRC resources and capabilities such as e-mail, Internet, CD-ROMs, training, teleconsultation, videoconferencing, information requests. (Be sure to mention the official hours when people can come and use the LRC.)
- A review of your LRC's achievements-examples of how the LRC has helped staff at your institution and/or others within your community; statistics on how many people have been trained, etc.
- If the people who are attending the Open House are from a particular specialty or background, you may want to give a specific presentation about useful links and resources in that specialty.
- You may want to include a small training/working session for people who are interested in staying.
- Background about AIHA and the LRC project.

In addition to staff from your own institution, you should plan to invite representatives from the following types of groups and organizations:

- Leaders from health and medical institutions within your region
- Leaders from various social and educational institutions within your community
- Representatives from AIHA Centers and Schools and initiatives within the partnership
- Representatives from local NGOs and funding organizations (like Soros and IREX)
- Officials from your local government and health departments
- Representatives from the local mass media
- AIHA/USAID/US partners representatives

Your AIHA Regional ICT Coordinator will be available to assist you in planning for your Open House.

Timeline: An LRC Open House can be conducted at any time from **October 1** through **July 1**. After conducting the Open House, you should submit an Open House Report Form to Mark Storey, Irina Carnevale, and your regional ICT coordinator.

6. Staff EBP Survey

Using a standard Web-based questionnaire developed by researchers at the University of Wisconsin in Eau Claire and AIHA staff, LRC staff will periodically survey health professionals within their institutions in order to measure their knowledge and beliefs about evidence-based practice. (This survey is also being used among physicians and nurses in the United States and Australia). AIHA plans to use this survey as one of its primary evaluation tools for the LRC project.

Timeline: AIHA will conduct the Staff EBP Survey periodically (approximately once every 1-2 years) throughout the life of the project. LRC staff will receive advance notification of when staff will need to complete the survey. Each staff person will need to spend between 20-30 minutes to complete the survey on-line. AIHA would like LRC staff to try to ensure that at least 40% of the clinical staff at their institution completes the survey. AIHA will send out more detailed instructions with deadlines before each survey. The survey is located at:
<https://sol.cs.uwec.edu/AIHA-EBMSurvey>

7. Practice Standard Review

Through the LRC project, AIHA is trying to promote evidence-based practice (EBP) as a means for staff to change health care practice at their institutions by using the best available research evidence. This principle can be applied by virtually any type of health care institution—clinical, educational, health policy, or public health. For more information about EBP, please see <http://www.aiha.com/index.jsp?sid=1&id=7946&pid=5143>. To encourage the adoption of evidence-based practice, information coordinator and/or EBP specialist are required to select a health care practice, policy, or standard and perform a review of the evidence available for this procedure. To be effective, the review process should involve a group or committee of staff at the institution. After selecting the health care practice to be analyzed, the committee should review all available evidence (research articles, etc.) and then discuss the questions included in the review template. Based upon this discussion, the committee should draw a conclusion about whether the practice under review is shown to be effective, or if another practice is more effective, or if another practice is equally effective but less expensive. Information coordinator and/or EBP specialist should be able to support the work of this committee by finding appropriate information resources and helping to report the results and conclusions of the review. Reviews should be documented thoroughly and include a bibliography of the research that was included. In addition to the guidelines and forms you will need for the Practice Standard Reviews, you can find copies of already submitted reviews on AIHA's Web site at:
<http://www.aiha.com/index.jsp?sid=1&id=7992&pid=7976>

For assistance in conducting practice standard reviews, please contact Irina Ibraghimova at ibra@aiha.sovintel.ru.

Timeline: One practice standard review should be submitted by **September 1** to Irina Ibraghimova, Mark Storey, Irina Carnevale, and your regional ICT coordinator.

8. Institutional EBP Survey

To determine the status of EBP and methods for standardizing practice at your institution, you are required to complete the EBP Survey every year. The survey asks about the mechanisms for the implementation of practice guidelines, quality control, and monitoring of clinical effectiveness established at your institution. We recommend you complete this survey in consultation with other colleagues. You should also keep your copy of this document because you will be asked to update it annually.

Timeline: The baseline EBP Survey should be submitted together with the LRC Setup Form **as soon as the LRC has been setup** to Irina Ibraghimova, Mark Storey, Irina Carnevale, and your regional ICT coordinator.

9. LRC Access Survey

To evaluate the impact that your LRC is having on the improvement of health care in your community, information coordinators will need to complete the LRC Access Survey. This survey collects some basic data about the community served by your LRC – the number of staff at your institution, as well as staff and non-staff access to the LRC. AIHA requests this information once a year from all LRCs in order to reflect changes in access patterns.

Timeline: During the first year of the LRC project, the Access Survey information is included in the LRC Institutional Capacity and Technical Assessment Form (Part 7), which should be completed and submitted to AIHA prior to the establishment of the LRC. If you have not provided information in the Part 7 of the LRC Institutional Capacity and Technical Assessment Form, the LRC Access Survey should be submitted by June 1 to Mark Storey, Irina Carnevale, and your regional ICT coordinator.

10. Partnership Web Page Creation

During this year, you are required to create a basic Web page for your partnership institution. This task can be completed by the Information Coordinator, the Technology Specialist or any other staff person or volunteer interested in this area. In addition to various Web design tutorials available on the Internet, you can use materials available on the AIHA Web site: <http://www.aiha.com/index.jsp?sid=1&id=5148&pid=5143> or <http://www.aiha.com/index.jsp?sid=1&id=8061&pid=8006>. If you have any questions during your Web page development process, please contact Natasha Schweiger, ICT Analyst at nschweiger@mindspring.com.

Timeline: A basic institutional web page should be created by **September 30**.

11. Web Links Directory (Electronic Library Index) Creation

Information Coordinators should work on creating and maintaining a series of Web links by using their Web browser (Netscape or Internet Explorer) to create "Bookmarks" or "Favorite" sites. Information coordinators can then organize these links by categories (e.g., Web search engines, general medical sites, medical journals, emergency medicine links, health management education sites). Your bookmarks can then be saved on the LRC computer so that staff who are using the LRC computer can easily access useful sites. Additional details and helpful advice about creating your Web Links Directory (or Electronic Library Index) can be found on AIHA's Web site by going to: <http://www.aiha.com/index.jsp?sid=1&id=5147&pid=5143>

Timeline: Information coordinators should create an initial directory of bookmarks by **March 1**. You should continue to maintain your directory as you find new, useful Web sites and links.

12. Monthly Reports

Monthly reports are required from all Information Coordinators. These should be completed on the **5th of each month**. For example, your report for October should be submitted by November 5. Monthly reports can be submitted by using AIHA's Kiev Office Web site at: <http://www.aiha.kiev.ua/lrc/lrcmre.html>

Timeline: Information coordinators should start submitting monthly reports immediately after they have set up the LRC.

13. Partnership Workplans

In addition to the requirements outlined in this workplan, information coordinators who are affiliated with current AIHA partnerships are responsible for fulfilling the obligations identified in their partnership workplans. Information coordinators should meet with partnership coordinators during partner trips in order to discuss the partnership workplan activities and to ensure that the LRC is providing support in meeting partnership objectives. Copies of these workplans are available from your AIHA regional office.

14. Other Activities

There are no other specific requirements for the LRC project in the first year. However, there are several other activities that you may want to start working on or at least thinking about. These activities will be addressed during the workplan and training workshops for the 2nd year of the project.

A. LRC Sustainability / Fundraising:

It is AIHA's goal that after the end of the partnership, the LRC will be financially self-sustainable. There can be several approaches to sustainability. These include the following possibilities:

- (a) The partner institution is able to afford the costs of Internet access and equipment maintenance independently with existing resources.
- (b) The LRC applies for grants from other funding organizations to expand the scope and activity of the LRC.
- (c) For some institutions, it may be possible to implement ideas for providing fee-based information and communications services to members of the local medical community in order to cover the costs of maintaining Internet access.

If your institution is interested in exploring options such as submitting grant proposals or providing fee-based services, please feel free to contact AIHA staff to discuss your ideas. All information coordinators will begin dealing with these issues in next year's project workplan.

B. Databases / Information Systems

In many U.S. hospitals and universities, advanced information systems link a network of databases to all departments so that information can be easily shared and accessed by all. Such a network allows institutions to improve operating efficiency and decision-making capabilities. For many AIHA partners, the LRC represents the beginning of what may eventually become an information systems department because they bring to their institutions a new focus on information technology. Many institutions are already creating and using computer databases to improve the efficiency and monitoring of critical health and financial data, and it is hoped that such initiatives can continue to occur under the auspices of the LRC project. Information coordinators may want to begin thinking about how databases can be usefully utilized at their institutions. Database training and information systems planning will be themes of future information coordinator training workshops.

15. Schedule of LRC Project Requirements

LRC Activity/Requirement	Deadline
LRC Setup Improving Internet Access Outreach Programs Staff Training and Information Requests LRC Open House Staff EBP Survey Practice Standard Review EBP Survey LRC Access Survey Partnership Web Page Creation Web Links Directory (Electronic Library Index) Monthly Reports Partnership Workplan Participation	As soon as possible As soon as possible Throughout the year Throughout the year Before July 1 To be announced July 1 With LRC Setup Form June 1 September 30 March 1 5 th of each month Throughout the year