



**Evidently
Better**



NHS
Mersey Care
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Mersey Care Evidence and Library Service Annual Report 2024-25

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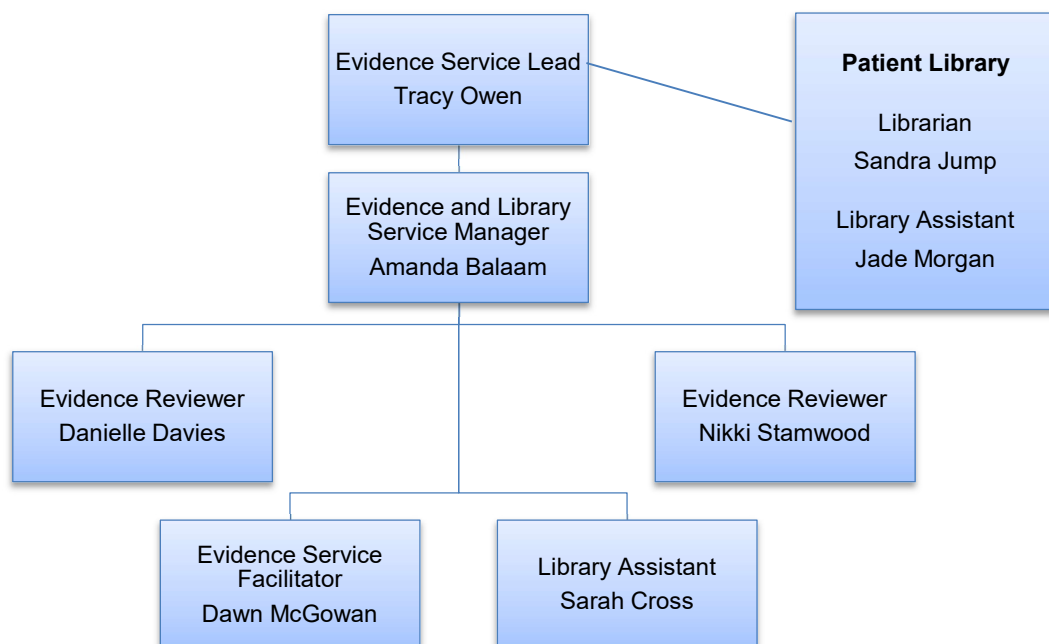
Introduction

Evidence is fundamental to the learning, research, and quality improvement agendas within Mersey Care. Over recent years, our staff have become prolific users of evidence-based resources. The healthcare sector faces unprecedented demand and severe challenges caused by the pandemic, leading to the development of new ways of structuring services and working remotely. Therefore, easy access to high-quality evidence to support clinical and corporate change has never been more important.

This report highlights the activities of the Evidence and Library Service over the past year, demonstrating how we have supported the organization and managed the changes within our service as a small team in a large organization.

The Evidence and Library Service

The Evidence and Library Service comprises a team of six dedicated information professionals committed to curating, procuring, and providing high-quality evidence to meet the needs and curiosity of Mersey Care. We strive to remove barriers to access, ensuring that all our resources are available at the point of need for anyone within the Trust. Additionally, the Evidence Service Lead oversees the Patient Library in the High Secure Service.



Our services include:

- Easy access to evidence and resources for anyone working with or affiliated with the Trust.
- Conducting evidence reviews and literature searches to support clinical and corporate improvement.
- Participation in inductions for all staff new to the Trust.
- Participation in events targeting specific staff groups, e.g. Resident Doctors, Preceptors.
- Providing training in information skills, evidence retrieval and critical appraisal.
- Offering current awareness services in mental and community health, intellectual disability, dementia, suicide prevention, and depression/anxiety.
- Maintaining three physical libraries at Hollins Park, Maghull Health Park, and Rathbone.
- Providing agile workspaces at all sites with free printing.
- Collaborating with research colleagues to compile research projects conducted within the Trust.
- Provision of a library service to High Secure patients.

Review of the Strategy and Action Plan 2024-27

1. Support Perfect Care
 - All ELS staff have attended QI training to ensure consistency across our service.
2. Empowering individuals and teams to access and utilize high quality evidence.
 - Resources and services are promoted widely across the Trust using various platforms e.g. social media, newsletters, and targeted emails.
3. Strengthening and developing skills to enhance CPD
 - Bespoke training sessions are available to all Trust staff.
 - ELS staff have attended relevant training.
4. Informing best practice
 - The evidence review service provides evidence to support clinical practice and inform management decision-making.
 - Current awareness bulletins promote the latest information.
5. Aligning with Trust values and goals
 - Developing a wellbeing offer to all staff, including a fiction collection and mindfulness jigsaw at all sites.
 - Rearrangement of Ashworth to create a reading area.
 - Collection review to support new services has been delayed due to financial constraints.

Activity Levels

138 Evidence Reviews
saving staff an average of
35 hours each than if they
had carried out the review
themselves

437 Items issued for loan
and **341 renewals** from our
physical stock

We have created 90 **bulletins**
covering the topics of
Learning Disability and Autism,
Depression and Anxiety,
Suicide Prevention, Dementia
and the Community Bulletin

Purchased 143 **new books**
which had been requested
by our users and
9 journal collections, 5
individual journals & one
clinical decision making
tool - giving access to
thousands of titles

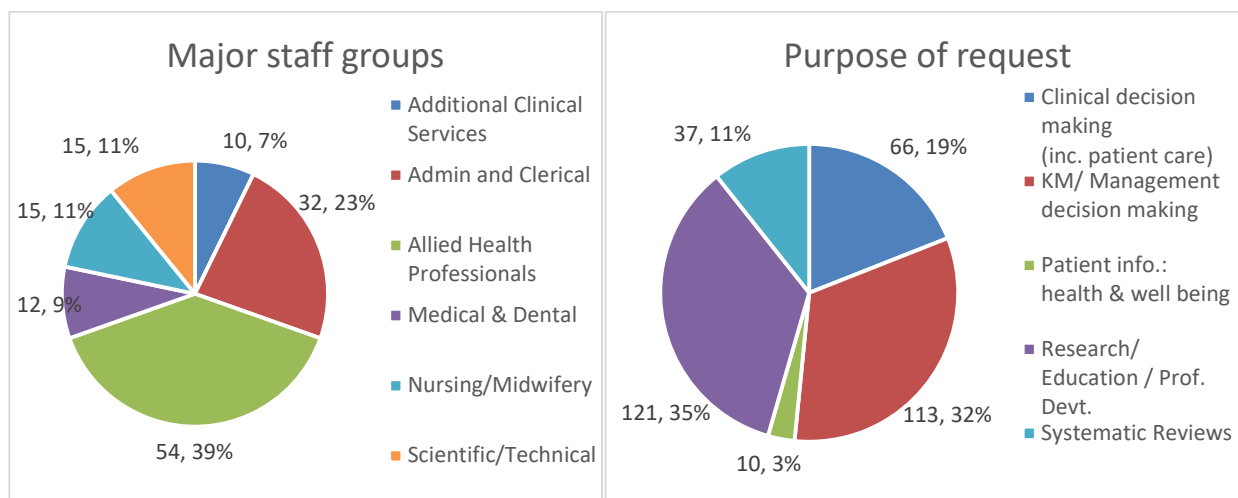
Compared to 2023–24, evidence reviews have multiplied by 81.5%, reflecting a dramatic rise in activity, this reflects a growing commitment to care guided by evidence-based approaches and best practices. Utilising our dedicated information professionals to carry out these reviews, safeguards clinical staff's time, ensuring patient care remains the priority.

The downturn in bulletin numbers compared to last year is due to a pause in production during June, July, and August, caused by staffing constraints and shifting service priorities. 130 were created in the financial year 2023-24 compared to the 90 this year.

There has been a substantial increase in the number of books loaned over the past year, with a 107% rise compared to the previous period. Although renewal figures have seen a slight decline, this trend suggests a higher volume of new loans, indicating increased engagement with the collection.

The number of new books purchased has declined, primarily due to ongoing financial constraints. As a result, we have made the difficult decision not to renew certain journal subscriptions that were underutilized, allowing us to reallocate resources more effectively.

Evidence Reviews:



Allied Health Professionals continue to represent the largest group of staff requesting Evidence Reviews, followed by Nursing and Midwifery staff. This year, we have also received requests from Scientific and Technical staff (11%) and Additional Clinical Services staff (7%). The primary purposes for these requests have altered compared to the previous year, making direct comparisons more challenging. Notably, there has been an increase in requests related to Research, Education, and Professional Development (35%). Additionally, 32% of requests were for Knowledge Management and Management Decision-Making — a category that was not recorded in the previous reporting period.

Inductions and Training:

1450 people have received Evidence and Library Service inductions over 39 sessions. This increase of 822 people from last year is due to the fact that we are attending more of the division inductions that are now taking place face-to-face. These include the Mental Health Care, Secure Care and Community Care divisional inductions, as well as events targeting specific staff groups.

124 people have been trained in the following areas:

Topic of training	Number trained
Literature searching skills	58
Supporting research	40
Systematic Review support	13
Introduction to the ELS	7
Database alerts	5
Critical Appraisal (new)	1

This year has seen a significant rise in engagement with our Evidence and Library Services. Evidence reviews increased, reflecting a stronger commitment to evidence-based care, while book loans more than doubled.

Although bulletin production dipped due to staffing constraints, inductions and training participation grew substantially, especially with the return of more face-to-face sessions.

Despite financial pressures limiting new purchases, we've focused resources where they're most impactful, ensuring continued support for staff development and informed decision-making.

Library Sites

While our digital presence is robust, our three physical libraries continue to play a vital role, serving as a hub for storing our physical collections and providing agile workspaces for people to operate from. They are visited by a team member at least once a week to manage stock loans and ensure site maintenance.

Wellbeing areas have been created in the libraries at Maghull Health Park and Rathbone Hospital, with a collection of fiction books available, along with a jigsaw for staff to complete.

Resources

During the year, a complete stock check was undertaken across all 3 physical sites. This resulted in a significant number of books being identified as missing, and their record removed from the system (1 site is still to have the records deleted). In addition, subsequent weeding of the stock has been completed at one site. Over the course of the year nearly 900 books were deleted.

We added 329 items to our stock, bring the total stock across the ELS to 10301, nearly 16% of these are eBooks.

Prior to the implementation of financial constraints, £3,179 was utilized for new book purchases. Additionally, £75,906 was invested in e-journal collections and individual journal titles, ensuring broad access to a wide range of scholarly content and facilitating easy access to a substantial number of articles.

Regional and National Context

The Band 5 and above ELS staff attend a number of the LIHNN (Library and Information Health Network North West) subgroup meetings: Cheshire & Mersey Librarians Group, Mental Health Librarians Group, and Clinical Librarians, Trainers and Searchers Group. This allows opportunities to share knowledge, expertise and skills for the benefit of all our services.

The Evidence Service Lead is a member of the LIHNN committee and the CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals) North West Members Network, and acts as Treasurer for both of these.

The ELS Manager is a member of the CILIP HLG (Health Libraries Group) Special Interest Group committee, and acts as Secretary.

Future Developments

Support Perfect Care: The Perfect Care Goals are met and sustained. Quality improvement will be systematic across our services.

- Quality improvement techniques are becoming embedded in our team.

Empowering individuals and teams to access and utilise high quality evidence: Trust staff access and use evidence and knowledge resources.

- There is an increased usage of purchased resources and Trust staff are aware of the service.

Strengthening and developing skills to enhance Continuing Professional Development: Trust staff possess the skills and knowledge to conduct research and effectively translate evidence into practice.

- Staff engaged in research can access a comprehensive array of services, encompassing research orientated updates along with a schedule of pertinent courses.

Informing best practice: The Trusts decisions are supported by evidence-based practice.

- Research, innovation, evidence-based and best practice will be supported by expert evidence reviews.

Aligning with Trust objectives, values and goals: The Trusts CARES values are maintained.

- Staff's wellbeing will be supported through targeted events.
- Digital transformation and partnership working within the trust will be supported.
- A proactive service from expert and knowledgeable Evidence Service staff, to both clinical and non-clinical staff, offering bespoke support will be developed.