

News From the Public Health Information Group (PHIG)

HealthReach: Collaborating across the Atlantic on multilingual public health information



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Since meeting in Dublin during EAHIL 2017, the members of the Public Health Special Interest Group (PHIG) have held two online meetings bringing together European librarians interested in multilingual public health information with representatives of HealthReach (<https://healthreach.nlm.nih.gov/>). HealthReach, a national American collaborative partnership, has created a resource of quality multilingual, multicultural public health information for those working with or providing care to individuals with limited English proficiency. While HealthReach has relied primarily on American resources, our discussions identified both a need for this type of resource in Europe and the potential to work together to identify European consumer health information resources among the members of EAHIL.

The two online meetings, organized by the chairs of the PHIG, brought together European librarian participants from Norway, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, United Kingdom and the Netherlands with HealthReach representatives Laura Bartlett (Technical Information Specialist) and Michael Honch (Librarian). The objective was to identify potential opportunities for sharing American and European resources. After the HealthReach representatives presented their program and good discussion, participants showed interest in collaborating further.

Laura Bartlett from HealthReach will be present at Cardiff 2018 EAHIL giving us an opportunity to take this potential project forward into 2018. With the current situation of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers arriving in Europe, there is a growing need for quality health information in the languages of the newcomers. In addition to American and now European interest, HealthReach has generated interest among UNHCR and IOM as an information resource for refugee camps. We are asking all EAHIL Cardiff 2018 participants to join us at the Public Health Special Interest Group meeting to be held during the EAHIL Conference (PHIG Meeting time, date and place to be announced in the official EAHIL Cardiff 2018 programme).

PS. We are also expecting a guest appearance from former PHIG chair Sue Thomas. While officially retired, we are still hoping that Sue will be present at the last meeting as the PHIG members set off into uncharted waters without her wise and sensitive leadership.