



5 July 2002

Beula B. Horak, President
Washington Medical Librarians Association
Medical Librarian, St. Joseph Hospital
2901 Squalicum Parkway
Bellingham, WA 98226

Dear Ms. Horak:

You for your letter about the medical librarian position at the King County Library System. We appreciate and share the interest of the Washington Medical Library Association in the provision of informed professional consumer health reference service for the constituents of our service area.

We recognize the need of the public for accurate health information and informed guidance in navigating the complex resources now available.

Although we will no longer designate a reference librarian as exclusive Consumer Health Librarian, we have retained a senior level reference position for subject referrals, including medical information questions, as a part of our centralization of system reference and expansion of our eAnswer live chat reference service. One of our goals is for more of our front-line reference professionals to increase their knowledge of health information resources, especially our subscription databases and internet resources. Our Electronic Resources Librarian has been directed to increase the emphasis on health information resources in the database-training curriculum that is a part of our on-going staff development program. We realize that on some occasions a more complicated inquiry will need more concentrated attention, and have provided a referral process to a system reference specialist to assist line staff when this need arises.

We are continuing to evaluate and improve our print and non-print health information resources and are committed to providing our public with timely access to the best available information in this area. I hope you and your colleagues will continue to direct patrons to King County Library System when they are seeking health information assistance.

Finally, let me say that it would be impossible to replace Maureen Carleton. Her work in direct reference and her work in developing medical reference resources was tremendous. We can offer that if there are programs or projects that you believe should include KCLS, contact Barbara Pitney, our Coordinator of Reference Services. As mentioned before, health and medical information is important to KCLS and the patrons we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Bill Ptacek'.

Bill Ptacek
Director

- COMMUNITY LIBRARIES
- Alcona-Pacific Auburn
- Bellevue Regional
- Black Diamond
- Boulevard Park
- Burien
- Carnation
- Covington
- Des Moines
- Duwell
- Fairwood
- Fall City
- Federal Way Regional
- Federal Way 320th
- Foster
- Issaquah
- Kennore
- Kent Regional
- Kingsgate
- Kirkland
- Lake Forest Park
- Lake Hills
- Maple Valley
- Mercer Island
- Muckleshoot
- Newport Way
- North Bend
- Redmond Regional
- Richmond Beach
- Sammamish
- Shoreline
- Skykomish
- Skyway
- Snoqualmie
- Tukwila
- Valley View
- Vashon
- White Center
- Woodinville
- Woodmont