



Discussion Questions and Suggestions

Discussion Questions

1. Explain the difference between the general reference interview and the medical reference interview.
2. Why is it important to remain "neutral" when providing medical reference information?
3. How far can/should librarians go in answering health reference questions?
4. How should you respond to the patron who asks about your own medical experiences or for your medical advice?
5. What is the significance/importance of using disclaimers (verbal or written) when providing consumer health reference?
6. Where do you find consumer/health/medical books in your public and/or academic libraries?
7. What is the one medical resource you couldn't live without?
8. How can libraries best deal with the increasing costs of health reference materials and their declining budgets?
9. What can you do to help consumer health clients if your library lacks funding for a lot of print consumer health resources or electronic databases?
10. What do you wish they had told you in school about answering health questions?

Good discussions happen if...

- you (the site coordinator) are organized, comfortable, and prepared.
- the participants are welcomed, informed, and made comfortable.

General recommendations

- Provide drinks and snacks (or direct students to vending machines, if available).
- Introduce yourself and provide an overview of the teleconference before starting discussions.
- Go over pre-conference questions, and then ask participants if they have questions of their own.

Scheduling recommendations

- Have participants arrive at least 30 minutes before the teleconference to pick handouts.
- Allow participants at least 5 minutes to review the handouts.
- Schedule a time for discussion, both before and after the teleconference.
- Make sure that you have reviewed all handout material **BEFORE** the day of the teleconference, especially the discussion questions.
- Provide participants with certificates of attendance **AFTER** the post-conference discussion.