AWHILES timeline of significant events

• 1972 AWHILES was founded by Robin Dannatt, Librarian at the Welsh National School of Medicine (WNSM), Cardiff. Robin Dannatt pushed for funding by the Welsh Hospitals Board to provide an inter-library loan service from the holdings of the WNSM Library to the medical libraries of all hospitals and postgraduate medical centres in NHS Wales.

• 1970s Literature searches were carried out using Index Medicus (print version), produced by the National Library of Medicine. Librarians had to look up individual subject headings because there was no way to combine subjects. Articles were only listed under three or four subject headings. A simple search on whooping cough in children could take many hours to complete.

• 1972 Archie Cochrane’s seminal book *Effectiveness and Efficiency: Random Reflections on Health Services* was published by the Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust. In 1993, Llandough Hospital Library was re-named the Archie Cochrane Library in his honour and houses the Cochrane Archive. Archie Cochrane is now regarded as one of the founders of evidence based medicine and he had previously worked at the hospital in the Medical Research Council Pneumocomiosis Research Unit.

• 1973 In AWHILES first year, the Welsh National School of Medicine Library issued 86 books, photocopied 874 journal articles and carried out 33 literature searches for AWHILES libraries across Wales.

• 1974 Area Health Authorities took over the responsibility of Hospital and Community Services from Hospital Boards and Local Authorities.

• 1974 WNSM Library had access to MEDLINE the world’s first internationally available online database and from 1978 offered a literature searching service to AWHILES libraries.

• 1976 NHS Regional Librarians’ Group was established and in 1980 Robin Dannatt was invited to represent the Welsh region.

• 1970s and 1980s One of the major ways of ordering inter-library loans from the British Library was through carbon triplicate forms which had to be typed or printed by hand. The turn around time for delivery was approximately one week.
• 1980 All AWHILES libraries were using card catalogues to record their book collections.

• 1980 Sir Douglas Black’s *Inequalities in Health* (the Black Report) investigated the inequality of healthcare. It demonstrated that although overall health had improved since the introduction of the welfare state, there were still widespread health inequalities, largely due to economic circumstances. This report is still regularly quoted today.

• 1981 The WNSM service to medical libraries was formally named the All Wales Health Information and Library Extension Services - AWHILES.

• 1981 Association of Welsh Health Librarians (AWHL) was established; to improve the conditions and career structure of all those working in the field of health information in Wales; to raise the standard of library and information services offered to health professionals; and provide opportunities for conference, discussion, study and research. Membership was open to all professionally qualified librarians and non-professional library staff working in and for health librarianship in Wales. Members came from a range of libraries including WNSM, College of Librarianship Wales, Welsh Office, hospital libraries, and the Combined Training Institute. Quarterly meetings and a newsletter kept members informed, which was important for those working alone in the smaller health libraries. The Association also organised a very successful inter-library document supply scheme between participating libraries, using the AWHL voucher as payment. A union journal list was compiled which was later transferred to a website. The voucher scheme continued until July 2007 by which time usage had declined as most health libraries were covered by the NHSWales Copyright Licence and the Association had also disbanded.

• 1982 Eight Area Health Authorities in Wales became nine District Health Authorities.

• 1984 The Welsh National School of Medicine became the University of Wales College of Medicine (UWCM).

• 1984 The quarterly journal *Health Libraries Review* was first published.

• 1985-1994 The online literature searching service carried out by librarians in UWCM on behalf of their own users and on behalf of AWHILES librarians was still in high demand. Librarians used a micro-computer and modem to connect to the database supplier e.g. Datastar. Search strategies were compiled in advance to ensure that as short a time as possible was spent online to avoid high charges. By 1986, six of the larger NHS libraries in Wales acquired their own terminals or micro-computers, to provide in-house services as user demand increased and the range of online databases grew.
• 1985 22 medical libraries participate in the AWHILES network.

• Mid 1980s AWHILES and AWHL discussed computerisation of library services e.g. circulation and catalogues.

• 1987 UWCM experimented with new CD-ROM technology purchasing a subset of MEDLINE and demonstrating it at the annual AWHILES meeting.

• 1988 Glan Clwyd and Prince Philip libraries offered their users MEDLINE on CD-ROM, and UWCM negotiated discounts on subscription costs for AWHILES members. Throughout the following years, the use of CD-ROM increased across Wales and in some cases the Postgraduate Dean provided funding for workstations, CD drives plus an initial one year subscription to MEDLINE. CDs arrived monthly by post.

• 1989 UWCM purchased a computerised library management system (LMS) – BookshelF.

• 1990 Robin Dannatt, Librarian, UWCM, retired, John Lancaster was appointed Librarian and Steve Pritchard became Deputy Librarian.

• 1990 NHS Community Care Act created the internal market with purchasers and providers. GPs could become fundholders.

• 1991 The annual AWHILES meetings evolved into annual conferences and the first was held at Gregynog, Powys.

• 1991 First wave of Welsh NHS Trusts were established. For example, Pembrokeshire NHS Trust.

• 1991 Project 2000 saw the move of nurse education from nursing schools in Health Authority areas to Higher Education.

• 1992 Glan Clwyd Hospital Library began a pilot to test extending the UWCM library management system to AWHILES libraries.

• 1992 The Hague Core Collection of Medical Books was published for library collections.

• 1992 Funding arrangements for NHS Wales hospital libraries changed. Funding was now channelled through the Postgraduate Deanery. This meant for the first time that there was support for a strategic approach to improving library and information services to the healthcare community in Wales.

• 1993 Professor Tom Hayes, Postgraduate Dean, raised the profile of AWHILES Libraries by appointing John Lancaster and Steve Pritchard respectively as Library Adviser and Associate Library Adviser.
to the Postgraduate Dean. They joined him on his annual Deanery commissioning visits.

- **1993** The introduction of minimum standards and reporting at commissioning visits raised the quality of AWHILES libraries and started the process of accreditation.

- **1995** The technological revolution in information technology transformed library spaces. Libraries purchased more computers so that library users could type their own reports and cases, create presentations and search the literature for themselves.

- **1995** The Clinical Effectiveness Initiative for NHS Wales was launched. *Towards Evidence Based Practice: a Clinical Effectiveness Initiative for Wales* was the first report from NHS Wales which identified a central role for libraries and information services in supporting and promoting effective health care. *Improving Access to Evidence and Information: A Clinical Effectiveness Initiative for Wales*, also published in 1995 by the Welsh Office, required that every Trust should develop a good multi-disciplinary library to serve not only medical staff but nursing, midwifery and other allied health professions as well.

- **1995** Trust Information Servers started to be developed across Wales.

- **1995** The South East Wales Institute of Nursing and Midwifery Education and the Institute of Healthcare Studies (formerly the Combined Training Institute) merged with UWCM. Their libraries, the Nursing and Healthcare Studies Library, University Hospital of Wales site and the School of Nursing and Midwifery Studies Library at Caerleon, joined the UWCM Library Service bringing with them the largest collection of nursing and healthcare books and journals in Wales. When their catalogues were later migrated on to the UWCM catalogue in 1997, these collections became available for loan across AWHILES (their journal collections had already been available via the AWHL scheme).

- **1996** The *Fresh Start* document in Wales merged the District Health Authorities and Family Health Services Authorities into five Health Authorities covering the whole of Wales.

- **1996** The first overnight stay conference for AWHILES librarians was held at Lake Vyrnwy Hotel, Powys.

- **1996** UWCM replaces Bookshelf with Libertas as the library management system.

- **1996/1997** AWHILES annual audit of library use by all professional groups commenced.
1997 Cymru Web Wales, NHS Intranet, was developed by the Welsh Health Common Services Authority to link Trusts, Health Authorities, general practices, the Welsh Office and Health Promotion Wales and the Clinical Effectiveness Support Unit among others through the Digital All-Wales Network (DAWN). MEDLINE and CINAHL databases were provided in the spring of 1997.

1997 In AWHILES 25th Anniversary year UWCM issued 1069 books and photocopied 7808 journal articles for AWHILES libraries.

1997 The New NHS: Modern and Dependable was published by the new Labour Government. Described as a ‘third way’ of running the service based on partnership and performance.

1997 AWHILES e-mail discussion list was established.

1998 The Secretary of State for Wales published Putting Patients First. This abolished GP fundholding. Primary care commissioning shifted to Local Health Groups.

1998 AWHILES journal retention co-operation scheme started.


1998 The first Health Evidence Bulletins Wales were published. The Bulletins provided summaries of the best available evidence across a range of topic areas.

1998 Better Health Better Wales was published by the Welsh Office. It highlighted the link between poverty and ill-health.

1999 Responsibility for health care and public health was devolved to the National Assembly for Wales from the Welsh Office.

1999 The agenda in Wales started to differ from England’s, with the most visible difference being the establishment of 22 Local Health Groups (LHGs) as committees of the Health Authorities, their boundaries being coterminous with Local Authority boundaries.

1999 In April, the remaining 25 NHS Trusts were reduced to 16, mainly through the merger of Acute and Community Trusts. For example, Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust was formed from Gwent Community, Glan Hafren and Nevill Hall Trusts.

1999 National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) was established.

1999 Out of the 24 Postgraduate libraries just four use the UWCM
1999 The Cochrane Library database and British National Formulary became available on NHS Cymruweb.

1999 The Health Information Management Group in the National Assembly of Wales approved *Better Information Better Health: A Review of Library and Information Services in NHS Wales; Final Report.*

2000 The Support Unit for Research Evidence (SURE), was established in UWCM to continue the work of the Health Evidence Bulletins Wales project (HEBW). The SURE team identify, evaluate and summarise current, reliable evidence and teach systematic review methods.

2000 John Lancaster left UWCM to become University Librarian at Limerick. Steve Pritchard was appointed Acting Librarian.

2000 AWHILES Libraries begin to create websites for their hospital intranets, advertising services and encouraging new membership.

2000 AWHILES libraries use e-mail and the Internet to improve the speed and efficiency of the inter-library loan service both between AWHILES libraries and with external providers such as the British Library and the British Medical Association Library. This meant that in many cases library staff could search the catalogue, order a request and receive it within the same day. This was a huge leap forward in service delivery for library users.

2001 UWCM Library, in a partnership project with AWHILES libraries, Trust IT and the Postgraduate Deanery (who provided a substantial part of the purchase price to ensure the all-Wales dimension of the project), implemented the migration from Libertas to Voyager, a new generation web-based library management system. The system went live on 3rd December 2001 with a total of 11 libraries utilising the full functionality, with plans for the remaining AWHILES libraries to join over the next few years.

2001 *Improving Health in Wales – A Plan for the NHS with its Partners* was published by the Welsh Assembly Government.

2001 Steve Pritchard became Director of Library Services, UWCM, and Dr Alison Weightman was appointed Deputy Director of Library Services and Associate Library Adviser to the Postgraduate Dean.

2001 Professor Tom Hayes, Postgraduate Dean and long-time advocate of library services retired and was succeeded by Professor Simon Smail.

2001 First AWHILES training day for Library Assistants was held at
Llangammarch Wells, Powys.

• 2001 NHS copyright in Wales is covered by the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) Licence for the NHS in Wales.

• 2002 AWHILES libraries started the process of HELICON Library Accreditation.
• 2002 Roadshows took place across Wales to advertise the web based Health of Wales Information Service (HOWIS).

• 2002 In March, the first AWHILES Voyager Welsh Health User Group meeting was held. In September, Helen Wright, Assistant Librarian, Singleton Hospital Library, Swansea NHS Trust, was appointed as Chair and Sue Hancock, Assistant Librarian, Morriston Hospital Library, Swansea NHS Trust, as Secretary to the group. Meetings were held on a quarterly basis.

• 2003 The five Welsh Health Authorities were abolished. Their role in commissioning services transferred to 22 Local Health Boards. 13 NHS Trusts were complemented by one All Wales Ambulance Trust.

• 2003 National Public Health Service for Wales was formed.

• 2003 North Wales Clinical Librarian Project started (see Glan Clwyd Hospital Library history).

• 2003 AWHILES Librarians were put in charge of Athens accounts for NHS Wales.

• 2004 University of Wales College of Medicine (UWCM) merged with Cardiff University (CU). Steve Pritchard became Cardiff University Librarian and Meg Gorman, Nursing and Healthcare Studies Librarian, took over the role of Dean’s Library Adviser.

• 2004 AWHILES Librarians were made honorary Cardiff University Site Librarians. This allowed AWHILES librarians access to electronic resources on behalf of their users with Cardiff University affiliations.

• 2004 Cardiff University (CU) completed a Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) funded project to provide a Citrix based IT service to all the hospital based libraries. This service enables CU undergraduates on placement to access CU IT resources using WYSE terminals which are located in each library. Students can log on with their Cardiff University usernames and gain immediate access to internet resources. This project was ground-breaking in the UK and won the University Computing Information Staff Award (UCISA) for Excellence in 2004.

2004 17 out of 24 NHS Wales libraries used Cardiff University LMS Voyager, with approximately 180,000 items available for loan.
AWHILES libraries now able to borrow items from all the Cardiff University site libraries.


- **2004** Graduate Entry Medical Programme provided jointly by Cardiff University and Swansea University commenced.

- **2005** Sarah George, Librarian, Neath Port Talbot Library, Bro Morgannwg NHS Trust, became Chair of the AWHILES Voyager User Group, which was renamed the AWHILES User Group to reflect the broadening scope of the meetings.

- **2005** Steve Pritchard retired and Janet Peters was appointed as Cardiff University Librarian.

- **2005** The Access to Knowledge Project started. This project was part of the Informing Healthcare initiative which involved extensive advertising and promoting of the NHS Wales e-library for health. The resources available through the e-library dramatically increased to include over 300 electronic journals.

- **2005** The establishment of the North Wales Clinical School (medical education) increased investment in libraries. Extensions were made at all three locations in North Wales. Clinical Schools had already been established in Swansea (2001) and Gwent (2003).

- **2005** The Modernising Medical Careers (MMC) programme restructuring postgraduate medical education, was launched in the United Kingdom.

- **2006** The 2005/6 General Medical Council Quality Assurance for Basic Medical Education (GMC QABME) Report for the School of Medicine, Cardiff University, commended ‘the link between the University facilities and NHS Wales facilities [which] was considered a model of good practice, which enabled students to have access to resources held by any hospital in the Principality’.

- **2006** A representative from the National Public Health Library Service was invited to attend AWHILES meetings to reflect their role in supporting training grade doctors in the National Public Health Service.

- **2006** E-mail and photocopying/scanning equipment became
AWHILES libraries could request documents from each other and receive them within minutes.

- **2006** Registration of all training grade doctors in Wales on the Cardiff University computing network to enable access to Cardiff University e-resources.

- **2006** AWHILES placement library membership card was introduced for Cardiff University medical students to use when on placement throughout Wales.

- **2006** Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) Health Libraries Group Wales was launched.

- **2006** Professor Simon Smail retired and Professor Derek Gallen was appointed as the Postgraduate Dean for Medical and Dental Education.

- **2007** All AWHILES libraries were using Cardiff University’s Library Management System (Voyager), making a National Union Catalogue for health care libraries - a unique achievement within the United Kingdom.

- **2007** Andrea Thomas, Library Services Manager, Pembrokeshire & Derwen NHS Trust, became Chair of the AWHILES User Group.

- **2008** Library partnerships (CyMAL supported) were established across Wales to encourage partnership working. Typically, they included further education libraries, public libraries, NHS libraries and university libraries.

- **2008** In February, the second part of the Cardiff University Library Review was published which covered the Cardiff University health libraries and services to AWHILES: *Review of University Library Service Phase 2: Report and recommendations of the Heath Park and All Wales Review Group*. The review group was chaired by Emeritus Professor Simon Smail.

- **2009** AWHILES librarians were appointed to the NHS Wales e-Library Board and User Group.

- **2009** The role of Associate Dean for Postgraduate Education and Support was created within the Postgraduate Deanery, which included responsibilities for library issues. Dr Peter Donnelly was appointed as the first post holder and on his promotion to Deputy Dean in 2010, Dr Siân Lewis became the Sub Dean for both Quality Assurance and Postgraduate Educational Support.

- **2009** Reorganisation of NHS Wales created seven Health Boards and three Trusts. This resulted in several libraries becoming part of
larger organisations with multiple libraries, with the resulting challenge of creating one seamless service.

- **2009** Medical School established in Swansea University which took over sole delivery of the Graduate Entry Medical Programme.

- **2009** The AWHILES User Group changed its name to the AWHILES Partnership and Eryl Smith, Library Services Manager at Glan Clwyd Hospital Library, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, became Chair. Sue Hancock is still the secretary to the group.

- **2010** AWHILES librarians started to develop an information skills e-learning package for the NHS Wales e-learning service www.mle.wales.nhs.uk

- **2010** The AWHILES partnership newsletter was launched, edited by Richard Bailey, Library Services Manager and Siân White, Deputy Librarian at the John Spalding Library, Wrexham Medical Institute.

- **2010** The Chair of AWHILES initiates production of a detailed Annual Report on activities in AWHILES.

- **2010/2011** Trainee doctor responses in the 2010 and 2011 General Medical Council (GMC) National Training Survey rated Wales as best in the UK for access to libraries.

- **2011** In January, Cardiff University (CU) School of Medicine launched the C21 project, which is working towards the introduction of a new undergraduate medical curriculum in 2013. It is planned that final year students will spend most of their fifth year on placement, to better prepare them for their foundation posts and improve patient safety.

- **2011** A baseline exercise was undertaken across AWHILES using the NHS England Library Quality Assurance Framework (LQAF).

- **2011** The new Health Library opened at Cardiff University, combining the Sir Herbert Duthie Library, the Nursing and Healthcare Studies Library and the School of Nursing and Midwifery Studies Library, Caerleon.

- **2012** A new logo was adopted during the Fortieth Anniversary AWHILES conference to represent the AWHILES Partnership. This was designed by Nathan Owen, Senior Library Technician, Ysbyty Gwynedd.

- **2012** On 13th July 2012 there were 199,093 items available from the four Cardiff University health libraries and the AWHILES NHS library network.
During the Fortieth Anniversary year Cardiff University issued 927 books to AWHILES libraries. This lower figure than 1997 is probably due to the fact that most AWHILES libraries book stock has improved since the mid 1990s.

Fortieth Anniversary history of AWHILES was published in October 2012. The need for an AWHILES archive was recognised! The timeline was compiled by Richard Bailey, Meg Gorman, Helen Wright, Eryl Smith, Rosemary Soper and Tricia Chapman.