

# NHS SHALL Group

24 May 2011

## Report on the Commissioning Handbook

### Progress

- Resources are being added regularly by Anne Gray.
- A search template is being developed and will be shared with Champions in late May. It is hoped that this will encourage Champions and other librarians to share details of their searches.
- Changes to NHS Evidence and the removal of the Commissioning Specialist Collection have resulted in many broken links in the Handbook. We are in the process of removing these links, and are aiming to replace these with hints and tips on how to search NHSE for relevant material.

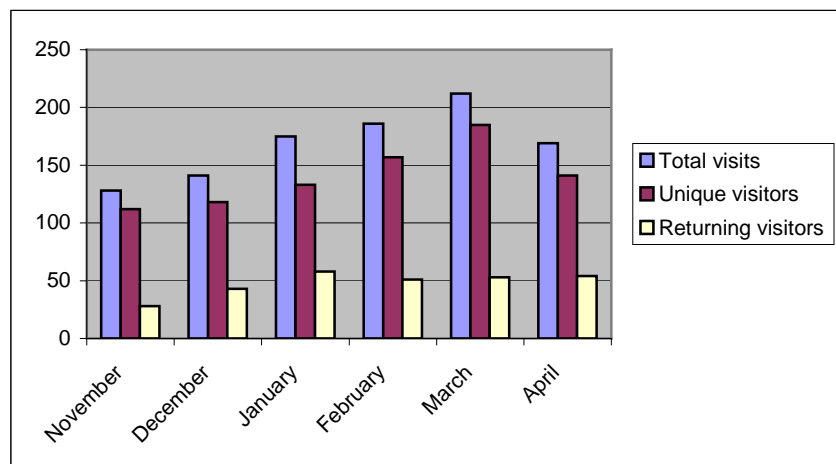
### Activity from 1 November to 30 April

#### Visits

In the period, there have been a total of 1,011 visits from 796 unique visitors.

In general there has been a gradual increase in activity from all visitors, with a slight dip in April, coinciding with Easter.

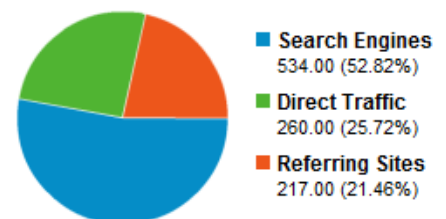
Visits from returning visitors have been fairly static since November.



### Traffic sources

In this 6 month period, most website traffic has come through Google searches.

A number of observations can be made about visitors from different sources:



#### Search engine traffic

- search engines provide a steady stream of visitors, however it is likely that this group of visitors is not predominately made up of the Handbook's target group
- the majority of visitors are searching for general commissioning topics. For example "commissioning cycle" is the highest search term bringing 47 visitors
- the bounce rate (the percentage of visitors viewing one page only) for search engine visitors is high (59.60%)

#### Direct traffic

- the bounce rate for direct traffic is 47.69% - better than for search engines

- those who are returning visitors are using the site extensively with an average of 10 pages per visit and a bounce rate of 36.8%
- it is likely that this group of visitors is largely made up of the Handbook's target group

### Referring sites

- The bounce rate for visitors from referring sites is 34.10%. It seems that these visitors are therefore finding the Commissioning Handbook most useful.
- It is likely that this group of visitors is largely made up of the Handbook's target group.
- The most important referring sites were:
  - Library.nhs.uk – 74 visits
  - Networks.nhs.uk – 50 visits
  - Libraryservices.nhs.uk – 29 visits
  - Institute.nhs.uk – 13 visits
 Links from www.library.nhs.uk are now broken.
- Most referring sites have a national coverage, with only a few people linking in from regional lists.
- Changes in the NHS Evidence site have resulted in the loss of a valuable referring link. It would be valuable to identify alternative sites where links can be added. This work has already started by creating a link on [www.libraryservices.nhs.uk](http://www.libraryservices.nhs.uk), already resulting in 29 visitors up to the end of April.

### The value of the Commissioning Handbook

A survey took place in October 2010 to elicit feedback on the Handbook. In total, 70 people started filling in the questionnaire, 45 of which were first-time users. Despite the small number of regular users being represented, we did gain an insight into the value of the Handbook.

We asked respondents about the previous time they used the Handbook. 15 people answered this question, with the following results:

- 3 people found information that answered a specific commissioning question
- 13 people found information that helped their understanding of the commissioning process
- 2 people discovered a link to a resource they weren't previously aware of

Comments provided in the questionnaire indicated that the Handbook is a useful tool, especially for those new to providing support to commissioners. For example:

- I should use this resource more as there is an enormous amount of very good work here, however, there are still gaps. With the changing landscape it could become even more useful for us and I hope it continues.
- Excellent tool to complement NHS Evidence's specialist library<sup>\*(see below)</sup> on commissioning.
- I am not involved in supporting the commissioning side of the NHS but this is a very useful document to explain the context in which many people are working and in terms of giving useful support. I do hope it is maintained
- I manage a mental health library thus haven't had the need so far to use the commissioning handbook to date however I took the time to look at it and see it is a useful tool that I may well use in the future as the role of our Trust changes
- The Handbook is very useful and comprehensive and great as a learning tool. Perhaps the only change I'd make is to add a 'quick ref' type section for the links to resources etc which might be useful?

- tips on searching for commissioning type questions very useful.

\*Now that the Specialist Library on Commissioning is no longer available, it is likely that the Commissioning Handbook will even more useful for locating commissioning-related resources.

### **Concluding remarks**

- The gradual increase in visitors and activity is encouraging, and the Handbook's target audience continue to utilise the handbook.
- The feedback gained in October indicates that the Handbook is a useful tool, particularly in this time of change. Recent changes in NHS Evidence are likely to make the Handbook even more valuable, helping librarians find resources now that the Specialist Library on Commissioning is no longer available.
- The Handbook will be a key tool for library services participating in the Primary Care Commissioning 'ask an expert' pilot project, and it has been agreed that the two projects should be linked
- These findings point to the following future priorities:
  - Developing the Handbook in response to changes in NHS Evidence
  - Promoting and developing the Handbook in conjunction with the Primary Care Commissioning 'ask an expert' pilot
  - Collecting and publishing search strategies
  - Increasing the number of referring links on other relevant sites

### **Recommendation for the SHALL Service Development Group**

It was previously agreed that SHALL would fund the Handbook for a six month period, from 1 December 2010 to 31 May 2011, then for a further six months until 30 November 2011, if it was agreed that the Handbook continued to be used and useful and that the investment is justified.

Ongoing development and maintenance of the Handbook for the period 1 June 2011 – 30 November 2011 will cost £1750, and on the basis of this report and its conclusions, it is recommended that the Service Development Group agrees to this funding.

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May 2011