



The Atlantic Provinces Library Association

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Energizing Our Spring MHLA Meeting with Lightning Talks

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Submitted by Jackie Phinney, Robin Parker, Alex Goudreau, and Katie McLean

In the fall and spring of each year, the Maritimes Health Libraries Association (MHLA/ABSM) comes together to promote member connections with health library colleagues at various organizations. Meetings typically alternate between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia locations, and on April 22nd, 2016, the spring meeting was held in Halifax at Dalhousie University's new Collaborative Health Education Building.

As a matter of custom, we start with a business meeting during the morning followed by an afternoon of continuing education for our members. For our most recent spring meeting, the MHLA/ABSM Executive decided to try a new format; instead of recruiting a speaker to provide a continuing education session, we invited our members to submit ten-minute lightning talk proposals in advance of the meeting. These talks could serve as a test-run for any upcoming conference presentations or could describe noteworthy projects going on at their library. Presentation slides were optional and for those members who could not attend in person the talks would be broadcast live using Adobe Connect, as well as recorded for those who were not available on the day.

Eleven members prepared presentations on exciting initiatives happening within our professional community and their slides provided excellent detail for the audience to follow along. Topics included the Nova Scotia Health Authority's new shared catalogue, information literacy instruction on the move, examining systematic review

teaching materials online, and more. Several of these presentations were previews of papers and lightning talks at upcoming regional and national conferences such as APLA’s annual meeting and the joint conference for the Medical Library Association/Canadian Health Library Association/International Clinical Librarian Conference held in Toronto in mid-May. These previews brought the projects of interest to our members who may not be attending the other meetings. Our members in the audience enjoyed the opportunity to ask questions of the presenters, the presenters had some excellent practice with their talks with helpful feedback from the audience, and the moderator was very busy keeping everyone on schedule!

Within a week after the event, we sent a Google survey to our members asking for their feedback on the event, along with the link to the recorded webcast. All survey participants unanimously agreed it was a great experience and they would welcome the opportunity to include member lightning talks at future MHLA meetings. Respondents also noted they wished there had been more time for questions and discussion, which reaffirms that this association is crucial for continued collaboration and knowledge sharing among health sciences librarians and library staff in the Maritimes.

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Atlantic Provinces Library Association
Dalhousie University
Kenneth C. Rowe Management Building
6100 University Avenue
Suite 4010 PO BOX 15000
Halifax, NS
B3H 4R2

contact@apla.ca