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Information for Librarians concerning ACTION for Health Research Project at Vancouver Public Library

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ACTION for Health

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Information for Librarians Concerning ACTION for Health Research Project at Vancouver Public Library

The ACTION for Health Research Project is associated with both Simon Fraser University and the Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute. Since it is academic research through SFU, the project is bound by the university's ethics requirements as defined by the SFU Ethics Review Committee.

Consent Procedures

The project has received clearance from the Ethics committee to have Librarians administer a survey to patrons asking health-related questions. The committee is still reviewing age restrictions (specifically patrons under 14) for the project. If there are age restrictions, we will inform Librarians by September 6th.

Before administering the survey, Librarians must ask patrons if they are willing to complete the survey as part of a research project. Basically, we need **verbal consent** from the patron before they complete the survey. If the patron agrees to participate in the survey, the librarian must inform the patron that:

- they can elect not to answer any of the questions if they choose;
- they will remain anonymous;
- the information from the survey will not be attached to their library card, and that only Research staff from the project will have access to the surveys once they are completed;
- completed surveys will be kept in a locked filing cabinet accessible only to Research staff.

[This information is also printed on the first page of the survey].

If the patron says they do not want to participate, Librarians are requested to record the patrons' question (on the Patron Recording form), and that's that.

Once the survey is completed, please make sure the survey is put into the box provided. The surveys will be collected at end of day by research staff.

Feedback Form

SFU Ethics Committee requires that participants have an opportunity to provide feedback about the procedures undertaken for research projects. Completion of the form is optional. On the last page of the survey patrons are informed they can ask a Librarian for a Feedback form for the Ethics Committee and/or an Information Sheet for Subjects (which outlines the project and the procedures to be followed). We will provide the Library with copies of these forms. Please hand them out as needed.

Patrons should send the form to the address on the bottom, or if they place them in a sealed envelope, the research staff can forward them to the Ethics Committee.

Rationale for Survey Questions

The majority of survey questions have been taken from other surveys, which means the questions have been tested and therefore are considered 'validated questions'. Using validated questions also means this project will have data sets that can be compared to other survey data sets. Some questions have been modified from the original. Question 6 is the only original question that has been created for this survey.

Questions have been included on the survey to:

- get a better understanding of patrons' health information needs (what type of information they're looking for, and for what specific health need);
- determine who patrons' are collecting the information for;
- examine where patrons' are getting their health information from;
- understand who (or what) the patron utilizes as an information intermediary for gathering health information;

- examine patrons' level of health literacy (as correlated to information seeking strategies);
- find out who is using the Internet to seek health information.

Questions 13-27 are included on the survey to examine how demographics play a role in patrons' health information-seeking behaviours and their level of health literacy, particularly in regard to Internet use. For example, other studies have shown that households with children under 19 have higher rates of home Internet use. We've included question 19 to examine whether having children under 19 in the household also increases patrons' use of the Internet to gather health information.

Rationales for individual questions are included in the document 'Selected Questions'.