

# SHARED LIBRARY SERVICES PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION HIGHLIGHTS



Access to up-to-date information and scientific resources is essential to support evidence-informed public health practice. PHO initiated the Share Library Services Partnership (SLSP) in 2012 to improve Ontario public health unit access to scientific resources and evidence, and to strengthen relationships and knowledge exchange among public health units.

Building on the existing public health library infrastructure across Ontario, four health unit libraries act as “hubs,” providing library services and supports

to 22 client health units without an in-house library. PHO provides funding, coordination and oversight of the partnership.

The evaluation examined the overall performance, outcomes, and impacts of the SLSP. Conducted by PHO’s Knowledge Services division in 2015, it was based on program statistics and administrative data, a hub health unit survey and focus group, an interview with the PHO Library Services Manager, and a client survey. The results will be used to inform future SLSP plans and decisions.

## HUB LIBRARY SERVICES

**22,187** Number of services delivered (2012-2015)

**9,506**  
Research and reference services

**8,291**  
Literature searches, in response to 876 requests

**380**  
Research consultations

**635**  
Responses to client reference questions

**200**  
Training sessions

**12,681**  
Technical services

**9,146**  
Resources from hub collections or open sources

**677**  
Articles from Virtual Library

**2,858**  
Inter-library loan articles, books, and reports

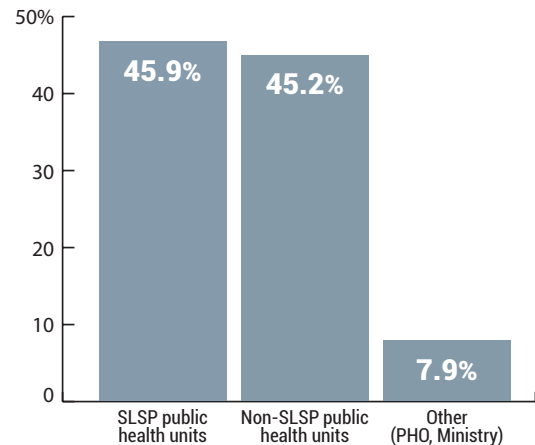
## VIRTUAL LIBRARY

PHO provides all Ontario public health units with full access to the Virtual Library (a suite of bibliographic databases and complementary full text content), at no cost.

**21,775**

Number of articles downloaded from Virtual Library (2012-2015)

Use of the Virtual Library



## KEY LEARNINGS

- **Effective shared service delivery model.** The SLSP has provided equitable, cost-effective, and comprehensive access to library services and supports for the 22 Ontario public health units that previously had no access to such services. It has increased resources, skills and

tools in hub libraries, and reduced their overall costs by coordinating acquisition of resources.

- **Enhanced evidence-informed public health practice.** The SLSP has improved the use of scientific information to support policy and program development in Ontario’s health units. It has also

helped connect health units working on similar projects across Ontario.

- **Changing the role of librarians.** The SLSP has expanded the role and impact of public health libraries and librarians on collaborative research and knowledge exchange efforts.



## MAIN FINDINGS

### Why clients use SLSP library services

- 76%** to access articles
- 73%** for a literature search
- 57%** to inform planning and decision-making

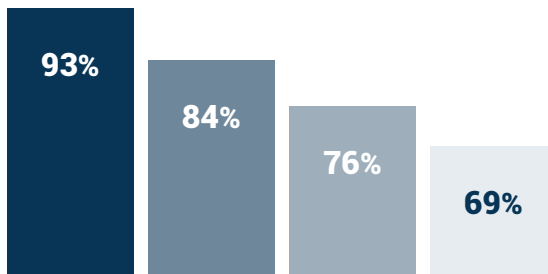
- “ This service is vital for those health units that lack these kinds of resources.”
- “ The SLSP is providing information which can change the way in which health units think about and use evidence.”

### Quality of SLSP services

- 94%** of hub library clients are satisfied with the hub library services, and report the services are useful
- 93%** believe that library personnel were knowledgeable, and provide the requested materials in a timely fashion
- 92%** are able to apply the information/resources at work
- 87%** say without using the services, they would have had a difficult time accessing the materials/resources

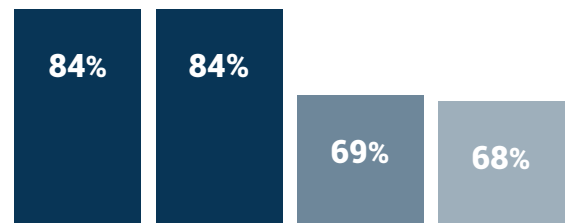
- “ It facilitated collaboration between my health unit and key stakeholders in the community.”

### SLSP benefits to public health professionals



- 93%** of clients say that SLSP services save time when seeking for resources
- 84%** believe SLSP services improve the quality of their work
- 76%** report SLSP services keep them up-to-date on research and current developments in their field
- 69%** say they are more knowledgeable about available library resources due to SLSP

### SLSP benefits to public health units



- 84%** of clients report that SLSP services promote health unit use of up-to-date information and scientific resources
- 84%** think the use of SLSP services increase their health unit's capacity for evidence-informed decision making
- 69%** think their health units eliminate the cost of purchasing resources by using the services
- 68%** say SLSP facilitates information sharing among their health unit staff



## NEXT STEPS

The evaluation recommends that the SLSP partnership be sustained and further enhanced to continue to facilitate and improve health unit access to scientific resources and available evidence. Continued training and enhanced communications will support increased awareness and uptake of library services.