

## Professional Organization Between Medicine and Health Sciences Librarian in Turkey: University and Research Librarians' Association Medical and Health Sciences Platform

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### Abstract

In Turkey, libraries and information centers can be divided into four categories according to their functions: public, school, university, and private. Libraries that focus on the field of medical and health services are located in hospitals and universities. The concepts of clinical librarianship and general library services are not yet widely used in hospitals. For this reason, the number of libraries in hospitals is very low. The libraries which provide the most comprehensive service in the field of medical and health sciences are the university libraries under the universities in Turkey.

Academic libraries in Turkey are part of higher education institutions. Library and information science specialists working in these libraries are required to complete the Information and Records Management undergraduate education. The Department of Information and Records Management is an undergraduate education program that trains specialists for institutions such as libraries, archives, and information centers. The course content includes elective or compulsory courses for students who want to specialize in medical and health sciences.

Libraries in the field of medical and health carry out activities to improve health services, education, and research, as well as professional practices. It also ensures that these resources are accessible to all by promoting evidence-based knowledge. The field of medical and health is a dynamic field open to rapid changes and developments. Librarians and information scientists working in this field should place a strong emphasis on continuing professional development and training in their roles. Diversity in professional practice thrives when librarians and information professionals share examples of practice in professional settings. Professional associations play an important role in application sharing and cooperation.

An important function of a library association is to encourage the professional development of specialists and the setting of standards. Associations organize

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seminars/conferences to exchange ideas and share experiences in improving library service. At the same time, associations allow the formation of working groups specializing in a certain subject and the establishment of a professional communication environment.

There are many international associations that direct librarianship and information management services in the field of medical and health sciences. In 1987, the Medical and Health Sciences Working Group started its activities within the body of the University and Research Librarians Association (UNAK) in Turkey. The working group, which continued its activities until 2010, carried out activities and studies that brought together librarians and information science experts working in this field in Turkey. In 2020, the working group met again with librarians working in the field of medical and health sciences before the pandemic to make the activities of the working group more active. The name of the working group was changed as medical and health Sciences Platform and some professional project objectives were determined. With the start of the Covid-19 pandemic just after the meeting, the importance of medical and health science librarians was once again understood. The activities of the association have been carried out online from 2020.

Since 2020, the ÜNAK Platform for Medical and Health Sciences has organized numerous webinars to support the professional development of librarians. In these webinars, which were held with the participation of national and international speakers, a systematic review and meta-analysis seminar series was also conducted. Professional communication platforms were created and from 2020, the frequency of communication with colleagues working in the field of medical and health sciences has increased. It is aimed to develop cooperation studies with international associations operating in this field.

In this study, the activities of associations in the field of medical and health sciences in the librarianship profession in Turkey will be explained. Rapid changes and developments in the field of medical and health sciences librarianship increase the importance of professional associations. Library practices carried out in environments such as hospitals, universities, and research centers are developing with professional sharing. In Turkey, these studies continue to develop based on studies and standards of international professional organizations.

**Keywords:** Librarianship, Library Associations, Medicine and Health Sciences, Turkey