Aim:
The aim of this service is to put you in contact with a librarian when you need some urgent help in finding database information after hours. The service makes use of time zone differences between countries, so that a librarian who is at work in another country will be able to answer your query. This service is currently provided between the United Kingdom and Australia.

The service has been set up using online chat forms to assist health professionals answer questions relating to patient care that cannot wait till normal office hours. A list of participating libraries can be found under Membership on the website:


Contacts:

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Your library’s contact details:
Background
Health professionals in both the United Kingdom and Australia have online access to a collection of bibliographic databases and full text products through the Internet. These databases, of which the majority are the same between the two countries, are available to users on a 24 hours, 7 days a week basis. This out-of-hours access, while a positive feature, becomes problematic if expert help is needed in performing a search out-of-hours. This project proposes to take advantage of global time differences to offer out-of-hours librarian support for users of the databases. The service was trialled by health libraries in South Australia and South West Region of the National Health Service in England and was launched in 2005. Chasing the Sun now has participating libraries from most Australian states.

Using the service:
- Go to the Chasing the Sun link on your library’s website.
- Fill in the details required on the form (your name and institution, with your email address)
- The email address will need to be one you can access in your work environment.
- Type in your question being as concise as possible and click Enter. It’s that easy!

The Chasing the Sun service
- The service will operate during business hours of the participating countries;
- The service is for urgent assistance for out-of-hours database searching relating to patient care that can not wait until normal business hours;
- The Chasing the Sun librarians will assist patrons to search for answers to clinical queries using resources available to them;
- Patrons will receive a response within 30 minutes and more than one response is possible.

The Chasing the Sun service will not:
- Assist with password difficulties;
- Provide assistance for general problems with IT or computer connectivity e.g. if databases are not working;
- Provide assistance for assignments or research purposes.
- Provide the full text of documents, such as journal articles, owing to copyright and licensing restrictions.

A few tips about using a chat service
- A new window will open for the chat session. Maximise the window so that you can see everything on the screen easily.
- Remember that it’s a live chat session. The speed of the response depends on many things, including the speed of the internet, and how fast you can type.
- Don’t click on End Session, or you’ll be cut off.
- Remember that if the librarian needs to look something up for you, it may take time. Please be patient.
- You will have a transcript of the chat session sent to the email you specified. If you don’t have an email address, you can make up a false one e.g. joe@noemail.com. However, you will not receive a transcript of the session.
- The librarian will probably ask you questions to expand their understanding of your query. Please be as detailed and specific in your answers as possible.