

Wednesday 4th May, 2011

Shoalhaven pilots library initiative

Shoalhaven libraries have been chosen to pilot a nation wide library initiative to improve access for those with a visual disability to print material in digital formats.

The Department of Families and Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs has provided funding of \$1 million for the initiative, with the roll out being managed by the Australian Library and Information Association.

One of 60 libraries in the country to be chosen to take part, Shoalhaven Libraries put forward a submission that will provide them with 10 devices called Navigators that will be made available to loan to those with print disabilities.

Shoalhaven Libraries already supply some Navigators to sufferers of Macular Degeneration through the Macular Degeneration Foundation but will now be able to offer them to a much wider section of the community.

The Navigators, which are not much bigger than a mobile phone, have the capacity to store over 45 hours of material that can then be borrowed and played without the need of headphones.

Shoalhaven Libraries Manager, Ms Noela Lim is excited to be piloting the project. "as we already supply some of our users with these devices, we are confident in already having the systems and skills on board that we can deliver the initiative successfully."

The players are easy to use, with little maintenance needed. They compliment the many other services provided by the library to those with disabilities in our community, like the Home Library Service, Books on CD, and MP3s, Playaways and Large print.

Shoalhaven library would like to hear from any one with a print disability who would like to take part in this initiative and borrow a navigator.

For further information on the library initiative you can contact Robin Sharpe on (02) 4429 3710 or email Sharpe@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

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