



Almost Heaven ... Exploring New Vistas: MAC 2008, Morgantown, WV Posters Session III

Library Liaisons: Collaborating, Connecting, and Engaging – Strategies for navigating steep mountains, scenic valleys, and raging rivers

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Objective: Over the last six years, our library services have grown to encompass a variety of outreach, education, and research support initiatives that have enhanced our ability to collaborate, connect, engage, and disseminate information to our affiliated users. One of our key initiatives is our library liaison program as it has developed into the backbone of all of these services. This paper describes our core programmatic themes, the context in which they developed, our rules of engagement and strategies for success, and the methods we use for tracking, evaluating, and enhancing these services.

Methods: Seven years ago, our library began focusing on developing new outreach and education initiatives to meet the needs of our affiliated users, who increasingly were accessing our resources from remote locations. A liaison plan was created and librarians were assigned liaison roles for specified schools and/or programs. A variety of services have been developed, including a scholarly circuit librarian program, theme-based lecture series, special interest groups, and special events like a technology fair. Liaisons also taught instruction sessions and participated in outreach activities targeted at their specified areas. Our revamped liaison program has supported improved understanding of user needs, promoted the integration of library research into the curricula, and kept users apprised of developments occurring at the library.

Results: Organizing outreach, training, and research support activities around liaison responsibilities has created more opportunities for liaisons to interact with their assigned departments.

Conclusions: Using the liaison program as the backbone of our services has helped to build liaison relationships by increasing their visibility.

Crossing the Great Divide: Reconnecting with Our Users

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In June of 2006, Laupus Library moved from the Brody School of Medicine (BSOM) building into the new Health Sciences Building, a short 3 minute walk away. Although the new building doubled the physical space of the library and allowed for more study space, a state-of-the-art computer lab and classroom, they did not come.

So, what to do? Take the library to the users!

Some programs were continued, such as site visits to offices, email announcements of classes, and new book lists.

New outreach efforts were added such as attendance at grand rounds and journal clubs. We have taken our library orientations and classes “on the road,” teaching almost exclusively in the areas where our faculty and students work. We continued our participation in the hospital’s Best Practice Committee and added the ECU Physicians’ committee. We now sit on several Curriculum Committees and an EBM Working Group within the school.

Last semester we held office hours at Brody twice a week. We presented classes in the Brody computer classroom. It’s been a slow start. Attendance has not been what we would like, but we believe the concept is sound and we are looking at student schedules, locations, etc. to see what we can do to increase usage. We are working on a series of classes that would take residents and fellows from a Medline search to publication.

We know our efforts are paying off because our stats are climbing and we spend a lot of time at BSOM where “Everybody knows our name”.

Websites at the Bedside: Choosing and Evaluating Websites for Your Patients and Families

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- Susan Keller, MLS, Medical Librarian, Children’s National Medical Center

Purpose: This poster will describe the work of the interdisciplinary patient and family education council. The poster will describe the process of identifying health-related websites that are reliable, safe, and written with an awareness of health literacy concerns. In addition, the poster will describe a “website of the month” poster education effort to let more nurses know some websites they can safely recommend to their patients and families.

Background: As the health care system becomes more consumer-driven, patients and families are being asked to take more responsibility for their own health. As a result, they need more health information that is appropriate and specific to their needs, cultural background, and literacy level. Pediatric nurses are in an ideal position to suggest reliable sources where patients and families can turn for health information.

Explanation: As least twelve different websites will be profiled over the next year. Some of these websites will be selected from national and specialty organizations and experts in health literacy. Websites will also be evaluated according to guidelines such as those found in the National Library of Medicine’s “Medlineplus Guide to Healthy Web Surfing”. These guidelines insure that the website is current, authoritative, unbiased, and based on research—not opinion.

Outcome: The nurse, as well as other health care staff, will be directed to safe, current, authoritative, unbiased, and research-based websites which will educate patients and families.

Reaching High and Far to Improve the Value of the Library's website

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Objectives: To describe the development of the new library website, with a primary focus on increasing the usefulness and value of the site.

Methods: During the summer of 2006, Himmelfarb Library began re-envisioning the Library's website. Over time it had become an unwieldy collection of lists of resources and web pages, and the main section focused on news/announcements rather than resources and services. Both staff and patrons had difficulty finding information on the site and new patrons were overwhelmed. With the growing numbers of electronic journals, texts and databases purchased by the Library, it became increasingly important to refocus attention on these valuable resources.

Results: The Library's web committee spent the next year and a half creating a new website in a collaborative, iterative process that focused on usability and patron needs. Subcommittees addressed the development of specialized portals, the redesign of the services section, and the renewed focus on our electronic resources. Multiple rounds of usability testing sessions (involving both the web coordinator and reference staff) were held with faculty and students to determine the optimal locations for links, refine the wording, and streamline the physical appearance.

Conclusions: In August 2007 the new website was launched to widespread acclaim. Patrons praised the clean design and easy access to electronic resources. Library staff loved the revitalized focus on collections and the prominence of commonly requested web pages.

As new informational pages are developed, the web committee strives to maintain the clean design and usefulness that resulted from valuable patron input.

Reimagining Service without the Desk

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Question: Can a roving service model serve the needs of an academic library technology help desk?

Setting: The Learning Resources Center in a mid-sized academic health sciences library had traditionally maintained a walk-up service desk. Statistics pointed to a change in questions from frequent, short, directional inquiries to fewer, longer consultations on technology issues. The addition of technology-enabled small group teaching rooms far from the desk added new challenges and complexity to the old service model.

Participants: Assistance from the service desk is available to any Library patron, including medical and nursing students, teaching and clinical faculty, and Health System staff. Service staff include LAs and technology specialists.

Method: Our solution involved technology, change management, and flexible staffing. Through a phased approach, we first offered both desk and roving service, then roving service only. Various methods for patrons

to summon assistance were enabled, from IM, to house and cell phones, to recognizable badge holders for service staff. A recognizable brand and library-wide signage promote the service. The roving service person carries a smartphone.

Main results: The pilot was made permanent. Numbers of interactions and consultations stayed consistent. Patrons remarked that they appreciated getting help without giving up their rooms or computers. Staff value the flexibility of moving about the library and providing consultations. When relocation of the department occurred, service was continued without any disruption. Challenges included the physical desk, which continued to attract patrons though closed. Early difficulties with cell phone technology had to be overcome.

Conclusion: The motivation to try a different service model came from the trend in academic technology centers and libraries to consolidate and modernize help desk-type services. Our model works in an environment where patrons are physically present, such as a public lab, learning commons or multi-story library.

How High and How Far? Exploring Several Methods of Reaching Library Patrons Through Chat Reference.

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Program: It is important to explore new ways of reaching out to users. This poster presents several methods of providing chat service used in recent years including:

- a subscription product (Velaro)
- free Instant Messaging accounts
- the addition of “widgets” to library Web pages in order to improve entry into chat

Main Results: The number of chat questions has risen steadily, with a marked rise in activity when “widgets” were adopted. Although the number of chat questions continued to rise after that time, fewer questions arrived via the subscription product. The subscription product was subsequently dropped.

Conclusions: If staff possess moderate technological skills (familiarity with Instant Messaging, the ability to view and adapt code in a Web page), then “free” chat services are viable options for reaching out to patrons. As with other library services, assessing the quality of interactions is just as important as assessing the quantity.

A Cost Saving Strategy on the Horizon: Deep Discount Pricing on Society Journal Site Licenses Based on Professional Membership Expenses

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Objective: In response to a 100% price increase in January 2008 for society journal site licenses, the System Librarian for Bon Secours Richmond Health System initiated a cost analysis of FY07 expenses for professional memberships throughout the entire health system. The main objective of the cost analysis is to reduce costs for site licenses to society journals. The theory being - hospital expenses for professional

memberships entitle the hospital to deep discount pricing on the site licenses for the associated society journals.

Methods: The entire FY07 health system expense data for professional memberships was acquired from material management at corporate office and analyzed with Excel. Professional membership expenses that had been paid as a reimbursement to employees were manually researched within the online invoice system in order to identify the target membership society. An Excel pivot table report was developed to arrange the membership expenses by society including the expense details and sum total.

Results: The cost analysis identified both the total expenses to distinct societies for professional memberships, and expenses coded improperly to the professional memberships account. Total membership expenses for many societies exceeded thousands of dollars, confirming the potential for cost savings and justifying further development of the project.

Conclusion: The System Librarian and Consulting Librarian are seeking ways to implement the cost saving strategy, including: establishing corporate finance/purchase policy; collaborating with other libraries, agencies, and businesses; and approaching health professional societies to negotiate new site license costs. The poster will cover the background, methods and results of the project, as well as current state of the cost saving strategy.

Opening Heavens Gates: The Significant Powers of Collaboration to Win the Cancer Battle

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Objective: This poster describes the collaboration of an academic outreach librarian with a statewide cancer coalition in its efforts to join forces for cancer control, eliminate preventable cancers and minimize the burden of cancer.

Participants: Coalition partners: non-profit organizations, academic institutions, public health agencies, government offices, community based organizations, individuals, private businesses and health care organizations.

Program: The outreach librarian was able to provide leadership, information services and to work with programs that make a difference. Projects included: Selection of cancer resources to post on the coalition Website. Chairing the coalition's Treatment Action Team and helping determine priorities including documenting cancer patient navigation programs and services. Programs and descriptions will be posted to the organization Website and publicized to promote easier access to cancer care and support. Identification of cancer care facilities without navigation programs will follow along with promotion of the development of such programs. Another goal is for cancer patients to have access to appropriate, effective cancer treatment and care by increasing utilization of evidence based guidelines for cancer care. A physician and other Action Team members are working to determine which facilities are reaching benchmarks on two specific cancer standards of care and plans are to promote ongoing efforts of all facilities to meet these benchmarks. Team goals include increasing access to and utilization of cancer clinical trials through postings to the Website, links to other sites and promotion of access through the patient navigators and other health care professionals.

Conclusions: Project results indicate positive outcomes with quality Websites identified, and patient navigation program identified, documented and shared. Promotion of evidence based guidelines usage will be done and clinical trials information shared. Coalition members will promote results to many organizations and individuals.

What are the information needs of personnel involved in disaster and humanitarian response efforts?

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Setting: Two libraries in Bethesda, MD supporting the academic and research interests for both military and civilian populations.

Participants: Military and civilian personnel involved in past disaster and humanitarian response both in the US and abroad

Methods: As part of a Qualitative Research class, two pairs of librarians interviewed (4) individuals to determine the types and formats of information they need to effectively respond to relief efforts. One librarian was designated as the interviewer and the other as the observer. Interviews lasted 30 minutes or less, and were tape-recorded and transcribed using MS Word. The transcribed interviews were grouped by topics around central themes.

Main Findings:

Four themes emerged from our review and discussion of the interviews:

A. Technology can be uncertain

The nature of disaster response makes the use of technology for information retrieval difficult. Internet access can be sporadic; communication lines may be blocked; hard drives may be stripped.

B. Centralized Access to information is important

Since responders have, at most, 24 hours to prepare for disaster response, a centralized access point for information would facilitate information access.

C. Grey literature

Interviewees reported that they often used nontraditional literature sources such as UN reports, survey instruments, government documents, NGO reports, etc. helpful in disaster response. This information is often difficult to find as well as obtain.

D. No one resource is appropriate for all disaster or emergency situations

Interviewees noted that their information needs in emergency and disaster situations vary greatly depending on the nature and location of the disaster.

Conclusions: In order for libraries to provide useful information for individuals responding to disaster and humanitarian events, we will have to creatively address their unique information needs.

Librarian on a mission: teaching physicians in a developing country

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Program Objective: Train a physician group to access authoritative online healthcare resources for physicians and their patients

Setting: Welfare Society educational seminar; Odessa, Ukraine, State Medical Library

Participants: Librarian, Wake Forest University Health Sciences; Librarian, Odessa State Medical University; Jewish Healthcare International (JHI); physicians attending seminar in Odessa, Ukraine

Program: For the past decade, JHI has sent healthcare volunteers on medical/humanitarian missions three times a year, providing seminars and consultation to physicians at a Jewish Social Welfare Society in Odessa, Ukraine. For the first time, a librarian participated, lecturing, with a translator, on locating and evaluating free Russian and English medical information on the Internet. She also networked with the Deputy Director of the Odessa State Medical Library to discover resources available to these community physicians. Prior to the trip, she researched internet medical resources, consulted with Russian-speaking physicians and native Russian-speaking librarians, and prepared a PowerPoint presentation, highlighting Eurasia Health Knowledge Network, WHO-Hinari, PubMed, and more.

Main Results: The librarian presented training to local and regional physician attendees on several recommended websites, each with links to Russian- and English-language professional and consumer health literature. Internet access for these physicians continues to improve, and these resources should be valuable. The librarian at the Odessa State Medical University provided the password for WHO-Hinari access to free journals for these physicians. This was a good first step and the librarian from Wake Forest and JHI are continuing to pursue opportunities to improve Internet medical information use in the Former Soviet States.

Conclusion: Good Russian-language health information is available online, and physicians in developing countries welcome assistance in finding quality resources.

No Longer Far Off On the Horizon: Creating Quick and Easy Department-Specific Websites Today.

- Lois Culler, Director, Health Sciences Library, Inova Fairfax Hospital

Participants: Elizabeth Samuel, MSLS and Lois Culler, MSLS

In 2007 the Inova Fairfax Hospital Health Sciences Library selected SydneyPlus Information Manager as our new integrated library system (ILS), providing us with an Internet-based, hosted solution with various levels of security. Using this system, library staff are able to design and maintain both the portal and underlying database independently, without requiring Information Technology (IT) support. Once our new ILS was launched we were approached by the Inova Cultural Competence Department with their need for a searchable database of medical interpreters. A second need arose with the discontinuation of a content management system that had contained an in-house database of Inova-produced patient education materials. Working with our ILS vendor, the library was able to create mirror websites running off the library database (borrower records for the interpreter search and bibliographic records for the patient education handouts), but with separate security and their own look and feel. A CME website providing online access to CME program content such as live streaming video and MP3 audio files is the next departmental website under consideration. The development of these websites marries traditional library content management functions with newer library functions such as systems access issues (electronic access, authentication issues) to provide quick, easy, low-cost answers for smaller projects that would otherwise languish for years. Though somewhat outside the typical library tasks, these specialized portals all have as their foundation the delivery of

various types of information to end users. The collaborative nature of these projects is ideal for boosting the value of library services in the eyes of each department served.