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Point of Care Tools and Libraries: 12th Annual Health Sciences Lively Lunch

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Point of Care Tools and Libraries: 12th Annual Health Sciences Lively Lunch

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In 2012, the 12th annual Health Sciences Lively Lunch was a hosted but "no holds barred" session held at a restaurant near the conference site. Participants heard about and discussed point of care tools in the health information setting. After greetings and a short introduction by Bahnsen, who represented the host sponsors of this lunch, Kubilius provided a short synopsis of the annual update handout she prepared on health sciences scholarly publishing developments that occurred since the previous Charleston Conference of 2011.

Klimley then provided a survey of the point of care tools landscape that she entitled: "Point of Care Decision Tools: An Environmental Scan". Her presentation highlighted why this topic is pertinent now, what evaluations have been published about these tools (some reports are not in journal literature and only available at a high cost), funding issues, and desirable elements that include integration of these products into clinicians' workflow and inter-operability with electronic medical records. The products in the marketplace range from being evidence-based to expert based. Klimley highlighted salient points from articles in the library, clinical, and legal professional literature. Sharing examples of marketing techniques as well as product advertisements, she illustrated how varied the claims and testimonials about products of this type can be. She raised questions about who can and should pay for these tools: libraries, hospitals, cost sharing arrangements, or even individual users. Pricing varies, and calculations can be determined by FTE (head) counts, teaching versus non-teaching facility designations, or by hospital bed counts. There are institution-level differences as to who negotiates and reviews licenses for these types of products. Simmering issues of concern include overdependence on one single information source

by current clinicians and those in training and potential conflict of interest by paid contributors to these products. Klimley had reviewed about a dozen articles in the legal literature, which, among other things, raised the issue of informed consent liability, the "best practice at a point in time" argument, and the argument that these tools should be aids, but not substitutes, for medical judgment. Also, users are reliant on functions and designs in software and point of care tools can be categorized by the FDA as "medical devices". In spite of looking at some aspects of the current landscape critically, point of care tools, Klimley concluded, still have a bright future and will impact patient care.

Bleic moderated the lively discussion session that followed the presentation. Participants expanded on some points made by Klimley and also expressed concerns about the impact of point of care tool costs on library budgets, which often forces librarians to feel they are "robbing Peter to pay Paul". Some critiqued the business practices of some vendors or the way their representatives communicate with libraries. It was mentioned that sometimes these types of resources are used as recruitment tools (by residency programs especially), and in one case, a library was pressured to reinstate a cancelled product. At some institutions, licensing and financing of such products is handled outside the library, for example, by the medical center. Licensing matters can be a "legal knowledge" challenge, and for some point of care product licenses, the addition of sites, such as affiliated hospitals, can be a problem. The lively session was interspersed with information sharing on new developments regarding known point of care tools and discussion about new products that seem to be trying to make inroads into this marketplace.