

# **Promoting Health Information Access through Community Partnerships**

Margaret Ansell

Susan Harnett

Jane Morgan-Daniel

**Health Science Center Libraries**

**University of Florida**

# Introduction

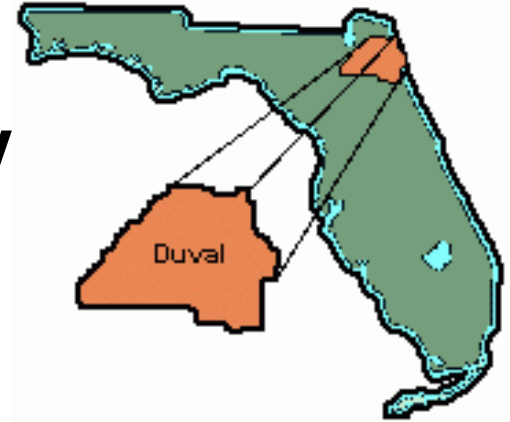
- Funded by a Health Information Outreach grant from the NNLM SEA RML.
- A partnership between University of Florida's Health Science Center libraries and the Jacksonville Public Library



# Project Objectives

- To collaborate with local public libraries and community health care providers
- To assess health information needs of public library staff
- To identify barriers in providing health information
- To teach critical evaluation of health information resources and strategies to combat limited health literacy
- To increase public services staff's confidence in providing health information to the public

# About the Community



## Duval County, Florida

- 42<sup>nd</sup> of 67 counties in Florida for Health Outcomes
- 18% of population reports only fair or poor health
- 16% are uninsured
- Higher than national averages of:
  - Smoking
  - Obesity
  - Sexually Transmitted diseases
  - Food insecurity

# Jacksonville Public Library

- Population Served: 813,518
- Twenty branch libraries
- In 2017:
  - 3.4 million visitors
  - 5.1 million items circulated
  - 236,518 program attendees
  - 638,725 reference questions answered
- Patron Profile
  - 66% have lived in Jacksonville <10 years
  - 59% annual household income <75k
  - 16% have children in the household



# Public Services Staff Training

## Associates (non MLS)

- Four part webinar series covering the Reference Interview, basic sources, evaluating sources and ethics and public service
- Six hour training provided by Librarians, including role play scenarios and hands on database activities
- Shadow reference staff and mentorship

## Circulation Staff

- No specific training to respond to reference requests
- Refer reference requests to reference staff and associates

## All Staff

- Complete a monthly exercise focusing on a library tool or resource

# Methods

Planning & Preparing Effective Training



# Assessing Health Information Needs

## Online Questionnaire

An online questionnaire was distributed via email to public library staff to assess their professional health information needs.



## Focus Groups

Two focus groups were conducted to understand barriers public library staff face when providing health information to patrons.



# Curriculum Development

Using information from the online needs assessment and the focus groups, the team developed a training workshop focusing on:

- Identifying accessible, authoritative health information resources
- Critical evaluation of consumer health information websites
- Understanding the impact of health literacy on patients, caregivers, and the community
- Assisting LHL patrons by utilizing communication strategies and appropriate resources.



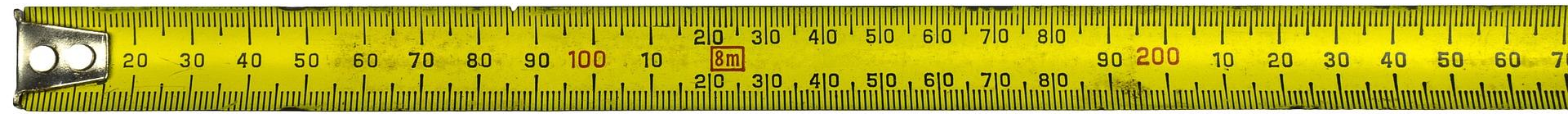
# Evaluation

## eHEALS

Participants were surveyed before and after the training on their perceived knowledge, comfort level and skills in finding, evaluating and applying electronic health resources to health problems.

## Satisfaction Survey

NNLM Training Evaluation assessed participants' satisfaction with trainers and content.



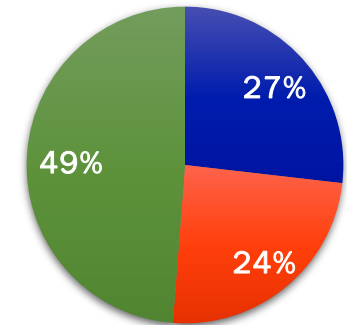
# Results

Understanding & Meeting the Information Needs of Public Library Staff

# Needs Assessment

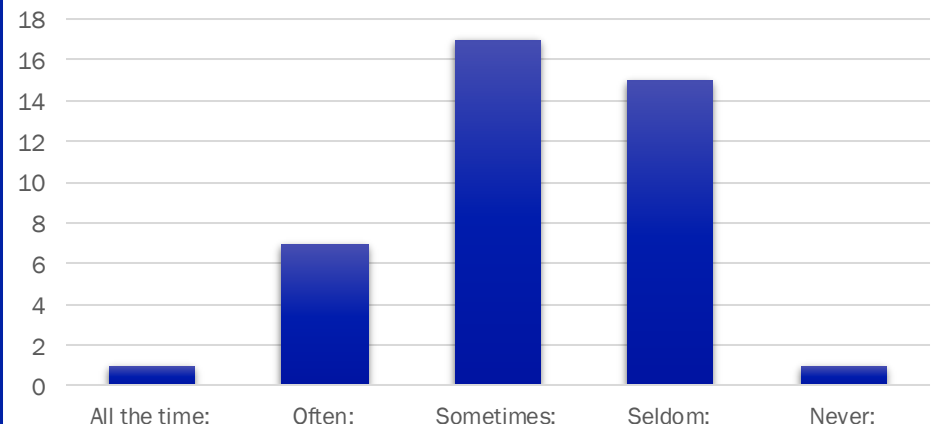
- **41** complete survey responses, **4** participants in focus group
- **Topics of interest:** mental health, CAM, drug use, exercise/nutrition, chronic disease, wellness
- **Level of confidence:** varied depending on the health topic
- **Sources of health info:** personal experience, library databases, popular consumer health websites.
- **Specific concerns:** role of librarian in answering health questions, privacy of patrons, complexity of information for low tech/health literate patrons, amount of information available

Do you have enough info on health topics?



■ Yes: ■ No: ■ Sometimes:

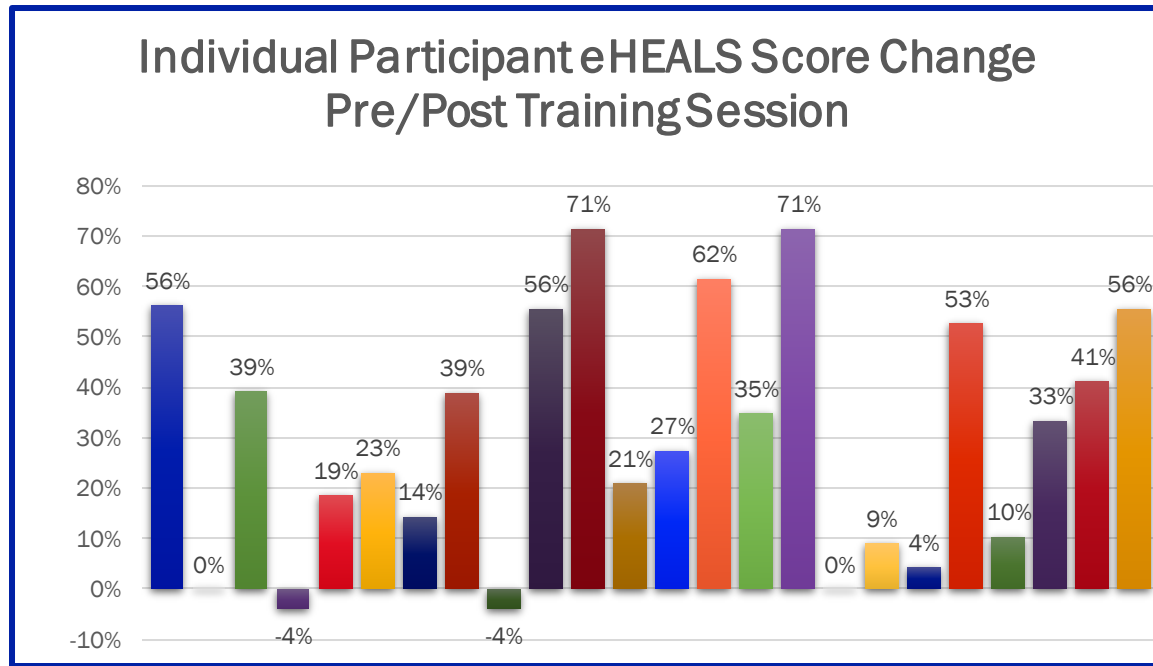
How often do your users ask for assistance with health information?



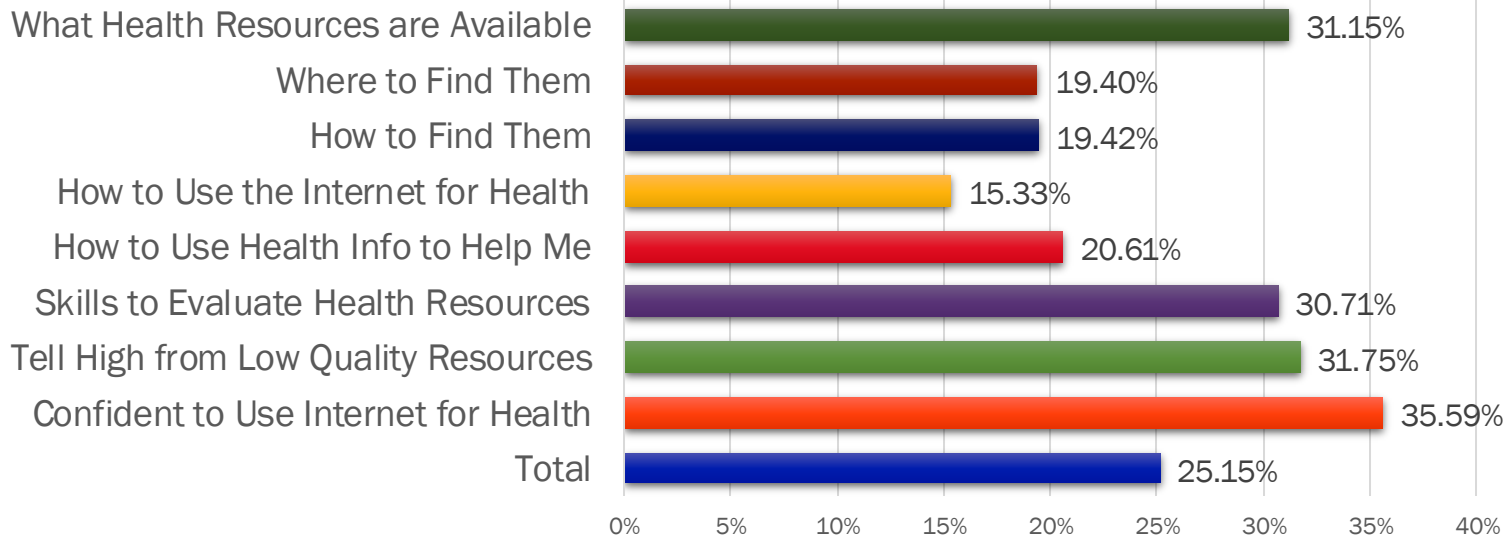
# Training: Demographics & Satisfaction

- 27 participants
- **Even mix of 3 types of participants:**
  - Librarians (MLS)
  - Associates (no-MLS, work reference regularly)
  - Circulation Staff
- **Trainings well received:**
  - All participants said they learned about at least one new resource and skill they would use through the training.
  - All participants either “somewhat” or “strongly” agreed with the statements that the training improved their ability to find useful online health information, and that they plan to use and tell others about at least one resource or tool introduced in the training.

# Training: eHEALS Scores



## Total Improvement by Question & Overall



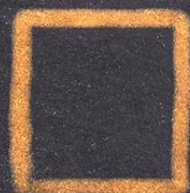


# Discussion

Lessons Learned and Future Directions for Training Public Library Staff.

# Lessons Learned

- ✓ Health science librarians can be valuable professional development partners to public libraries
- ✓ The trainings empowered participants to more confidently provide health information to their patrons





# Lessons Learned

- ! Preparation: customize sessions for individual libraries, by ensuring the content complements the audience's prior training
- ! Address participants' concerns regarding answering sensitive health questions (information limits, levels, & ethics)





# Future Directions

- New modules on:
  - Conducting tactful reference interviews
  - Instruction skills for teaching patrons how to navigate health websites
  - Ask Me 3: encouraging patrons to ask questions
- Create information pathfinders for reference staff
- Explore potential for closer collaboration with public libraries (recurring training, collection development, information resources advice)
- Reaching new audiences through upcoming NEFLIN webinar

# Any Questions?

Margaret Ansell  
Nursing & Consumer Health Liaison Librarian  
[meansell@ufl.edu](mailto:meansell@ufl.edu)

Susan Harnett  
Medical Information Services Librarian  
[sharnett@ufl.edu](mailto:sharnett@ufl.edu)

Jane Morgan-Daniel  
Community Engagement & Health Literacy Liaison Librarian  
[morgandanie.jane@ufl.edu](mailto:morgandanie.jane@ufl.edu)

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