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WHEN THE STARS ALIGN: SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES OF INTERPROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION FOR ELEARNING AND INSTRUCTION FROM A HEALTH SCIENCES LIBRARY

EMILY B. KEAN, DON P. JASON III AND EDITH STARBUCK

BACKGROUND

The University of Cincinnati Academic Health Center is comprised of four colleges: The College of Allied Health Sciences, the College of Medicine, the College of Nursing, and the James L. Winkle College of Pharmacy. The University of Cincinnati Medical Center—the region’s only verified Adult Level I Trauma Center—is also located adjacent to the Academic Health Center campus. The Donald C. Harrison Health Sciences Library serves the Academic Health Center and UC Medical Center. Liaison librarians and clinical informationists regularly collaborate with faculty and hospital partners to deliver library instruction both in traditional face-to-face formats and in a growing online environment. Two recent initiatives demonstrate this successful approach at interprofessional collaboration.

INTERPROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION

Health care, especially health care education, has a rich history of valuing interprofessional education and collaborative practice. In a 2013 publication from the Institute of Medicine, the Global Forum on Innovation in Health Professional Education describes the benefits thusly:

...interprofessional education provides students with opportunities to learn and practice skills that improve their ability to communicate and collaborate. Through the experience of learning with and from those in other professions, students also develop leadership qualities and respect for each other, which prepares them for work on teams and in settings where collaboration is a key to success. This success is measured by better and safer patient care as well as improved population health outcomes. (p. 7)

These attitudes and general acceptance of interprofessional collaborative initiatives situate the librarians and informationists employed in a health sciences setting for success. Interprofessional collaboration is not only expected, it is encouraged and embraced. This approach and mindset is now being more widely adopted by librarians and information professionals as other areas of librarianship position themselves to be “...seen as a valued partner and collaborator, instead of being seen solely as a service provider” (Burton, Lyon, Erdmann & Tijerina, 2018).

Liaison librarians are available for each of the four colleges supported by the Health Sciences Library; clinical informationists support the needs of the medical center and the larger research community. At the University of Cincinnati Health Sciences Library, the librarian and informationist liaison relationships have a long history of success. Leslie Schick, Senior Associate Dean of the University of Cincinnati Libraries and Director of the Donald C. Harrison Health Sciences Library describes this rich history of collaboration:

When I began in 1983, we had several librarians involved in clinical librarian programs (we now would call these people informationists). Specifically, we did morning rounds with Internal Medicine, Surgery Research, Family Medicine. For questions that would come up in rounds, librarians would perform extensive literature reviews and put together packets with the most relevant articles; these packets were stored in resident libraries in the hospital. We also managed a small library for the Nursing Consultation department in the General Hospital (these were the Nurse Practitioners and Clinical Nursing Specialists). Librarians also did a variety of literature searching and other specialized services for the nurses in this department. All of these services gradually were discontinued as we began to provide ‘do-it-yourself searching’ services in the mid-1980’s followed by the advent of PubMed. In 2012, we hired our first informationist to re-develop some of these specialized services for our clinicians and researchers.

From the late 1960’s until 2008, there was a Nursing Library located in the College of Nursing. When that library’s collection was merged into the Health Sciences Library in 2008, we kept the services as constant as possible by providing a liaison librarian to the College of Nursing.” (personal communication, April 25, 2018)

Further exemplifying this history, currently some of the most prominent collaborative interprofessional relationships are between the librarians and informationists of the Health Sciences Library and faculty and staff in the College of Nursing, the James L. Winkle College of Pharmacy, and the UC Medical Center.

Collaborative relationships are nurtured and maintained in a variety of ways:

- physical presence of librarians and informationists in their representative colleges and hospitals, including office hours, serving on curriculum committees, and information- and education-related councils;
- overseeing graded elements of other faculty’s courses for information literacy components;
- presenting in classes and during meetings about library services and areas of potential partnership, such as extended literature reviews or co-authorship for systematic reviews.

The University of Cincinnati Library’s lean staffing model necessitates that our initiatives are driven by faculty-initiated requests; however, these collaborations directly meet the needs of the students and staff that the library serves.

Online Tutorial Librarian Collaboration

One such successful collaboration began with a request from a College of Pharmacy faculty member for online library tutorials for an incoming cohort. Due to the short turn-around time of the request, a collaborative approach with two librarians was utilized. As the content expert librarian wrote and formatted scripts, the second librarian recorded, narrated, and edited those scripts on a revolving cycle that allowed for simultaneous production.

A very minimalist approach to recording and editing was utilized to meet the deadline. The content librarian provided scripts for action and narration as well as PowerPoint slides that could be used during screen recording. The second librarian responsible for the technical components used the screen recording capabilities of QuickTime and the built-in MacBook microphone to record the content. Due to the concise narration provided by the content librarian, little editing was needed. Title screens and intro and outro music were added using iMovie and captioning was done in YouTube by uploading the scripts prepared by the content librarian and setting timings using YouTube’s subtitle editing function.

In two months, this resulted in a total of twelve tutorials including topics such as: off campus access; basic database search functionality; pharmacy-specific eBook resources; and a six-part series on starting a research assignment. Although the request was initiated by a faculty member from the College of Pharmacy, the content of the tutorials is not solely pharmacy-specific and can serve the needs of all of the students, faculty, and staff supported by the Health Sciences Library. At the conclusion of the Spring 2018 semester, these video tutorials have been viewed over 350 times and continue to be utilized by various members of the Academic Health Center community. As the number of distance learning programs at the University of Cincinnati continues to grow (with over 25 percent of university-wide distance learners attending the four Academic Health Center colleges), this collaborative approach between a content-area librarian and a librarian responsible for technical production is already serving to maximize library tutorial output to meet growing demand.

Evidence-Based Practice Workshop Development

The second successful ongoing initiative came as a result of the Health Sciences Library’s clinical informationist joining the UC Medical Center’s Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Council and being asked to collaboratively develop an EBP workshop. The literature documents how effective collaboration between clinical educators and librarians can be, especially in regards to evidence-based practice education. Schulte and Sherwill-Navarro (2009) discuss how “librarians are natural partners for this education and have key skills that can help both nursing educators and students become information literate and appreciate the role

of research in daily practice” (p. 57). The overall aim of the workshop was to increase nursing staff’s comfort level with EBP principles, such as developing PICO questions, conducting effective literature searches, and evaluating articles based on research type.

The two-hour workshop was developed and co-taught in collaboration with the hospital and library staff. The clinical informationist (liaison to the UC Medical Center) and the research and education librarian (liaison to the College of Nursing) developed and taught content related to PICO question formulation, database search techniques based on the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy, distinguishing popular versus scholarly resources, and appraising literature based on the evidence-based pyramid. Central members of UC Medical Center’s EBP Council were responsible for developing and teaching content on evaluating evidence in accordance with the Johns Hopkins Medicine Evidence Appraisal Tools utilized by the UC Medical Center’s professional development initiative, commonly known as the “Clinical Ladder.”

Two pilot test sessions were held for attendees from the UC Medical Center, which yielded positive post-assessment survey findings (Table 1).

Table 1: Evidence-Based Practice Workshop Post-Assessment Survey Results
<Placeholder; Editors will place Table here in final doc>

Question one of the post assessment stated “I am familiar with resources available at the hospital for PICO question development”; the average pre-test score was 5.08 and the average post-test score was 8.92—a 76% improvement. Question two stated “I am comfortable reviewing literature and assisting others with literature searches”; the average pre-test score was 4.31 and the average post-test score was 8.15—an 89% improvement. Question three stated “I can distinguish between research and non-research sources”; the average pre-test score was 5.69 and the average post-test score was 8.46—a 49% improvement. Question five stated “I can identify available opportunities for learning at the hospital and the library”; the average pre-test score was 5.85 and the average post-test score was 8.15—a 39% improvement.

Based on the successful outcome of the initial pilot offerings, the Evidence-Based Practice workshop is now offered on a monthly basis in the Health Sciences Library. This monthly offering has been retitled “Introduction to Literature Searching” and is offered to all four of the colleges supported by the University of Cincinnati Health Sciences Library, in addition to the physicians, nurses, and research staff of the UC Medical Center. To better accommodate academic distance learners and second- and third-shift hospital employees, a recording of the lecture component was completed and is shared via multiple online platforms, including the university-wide Kaltura site and the medical center’s online education portal. Ongoing plans include incorporating the lecture recording into a digital learning object, which will incorporate quizzes and learning checks and be marketed and made accessible to all library patrons.

OUTCOMES

These two initiatives have not only demonstrated successful results of interprofessional collaboration, but they have also provided modules for ongoing future success. The partnership utilized by the librarians in the pharmacy online tutorials example is now the basis for ongoing digital content creation in the Health Sciences Library. The previous success of the UC Medical Center and librarian/informationist collaboration has resulted in the formulation of a new four-part, sixteen-hour workshop offering which provides continuing education credits to staff nurse participants. The successful collaboration of content experts (librarians, informationists, faculty, and hospital staff), in-person and online instructors, and librarians with technical design skills has allowed the librarians and informationists of the University of Cincinnati’s Health Sciences Library to achieve more in a shorter time frame than they could on their own, while also demonstrating their value to the surrounding Academic Health Center community.

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Table 1: Evidence-Based Practice Workshop Post-Assessment Survey Results

	Mean or Averages per Questions		% Change
	Pre Analysis	Post Analysis	
Q1	5.08	8.92	76%
Q2	4.31	8.15	89%
Q3	5.69	8.46	49%
Q4	7.31	8.54	17%
Q5	5.85	8.15	39%
Q6	5.85	8.77	50%

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