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# Bibliographic Instruction in a Pediatric Teaching Hospital

Susan Fowler, MLIS

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Medical Library



## Objective

The impetus for establishing a library in-service was based on observations of nursing students on clinical rotations at the hospital having trouble using the hospital library. The objective was to implement a bibliographic instruction session at the start of rotations and to measure acceptance by clinical educators and effectiveness on students' ability to use library resources.

## Methods

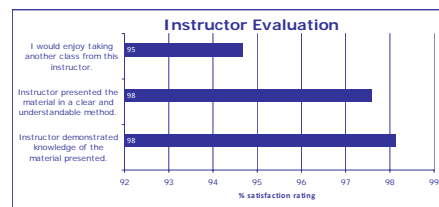
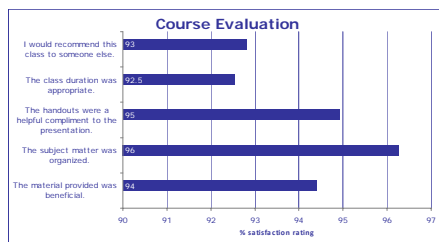
A one hour workshop covering use of PubMed, CINAHL, MedlinePlus, and basic library use intended for nursing students on clinical rotations at a 230 bed pediatric teaching hospital was developed. Clinical educators were sent an email offering flexible hours for when the workshop could be scheduled. Handouts with screen shots detailing steps in using each resource, PICO worksheets, and flyers on basic library information were distributed in class. Evaluations comprised of eight Likert scale questions on the class and instructor and a ninth question for additional comments were distributed and collected at the end of each workshop. Nursing students' library use after workshops was observed. Verbal responses from students and educators were collected. How often the workshop was requested by clinical educators and how many were requesting a second or third workshop for new groups of students was tracked.

## Data

In the first year of implementation...

27 in-services conducted for 224 nursing students

75 paper evaluations were randomly selected for analysis



## Comments

A representative sample of comments from formal evaluations...

"This class was very helpful & the information was beneficial. It was presented in a very organized way. The handout was wonderful!"

"This was very helpful and will help with our research. Thank you!"

**"Every nursing student should take this class."**

"The class was informative but short enough to keep my interest!"

"I wish we had taken this at the start of the semester!"

## Acceptance

Over 70% of clinical educators who scheduled an in-service scheduled subsequent sessions for new groups of students. Comments in general have been positive. However, overall acceptance by educators has been mixed.

## Time

Several educators have commented that there isn't time for their students to attend a library in-service. Either the time required to learn how to use resources necessary for locating articles is still committed by the student or, not knowing there is a better way, time is wasted on unskilled searching – doing things like hand searching journals. Without that time formally planned for, students face visible frustration in using the library.

## Previous Training

A recent study by Carlock and Anderson showed that to be most effective, at least one follow up session is necessary for students to retain skills. While students may have already had instruction on searching databases through their schools, the in-service at SLCH can provide valuable follow up.

Carlock, Danielle and Anderson, Jonna (2007). Teaching and assessing the database searching skills of student nurses. Nurse Educator, 32(6), 251-255.

## Lessons Learned

### Class Handouts

Due to printing costs, there was a period when class handouts were changed from color to black and white and from two slides per page to six. Dissatisfaction with this change was revealed in low scores for handouts on the formal evaluations. When handouts were changed back, scores improved.

### Time Saved – An Unexpected Finding

The 2008 winter semester saw a deep decline in number of in-services requested. In turn, an unexpected result was discovered. In contrast to students who had been in the library in-service and required a ten minute refresher, students who had not been in the in-service required a full hour of instruction before moving on with their actual search. Instead of teaching eight to ten students in one hour, the librarian was teaching one to two students at a time, quadrupling the amount of time spent teaching. The library in-service program was not implemented with the intention of saving time but this event revealed that it did.

## Various Backgrounds

Students come to the in-service with various levels of exposure to library resources that range from none to a previous library instruction session at their school. The librarian learned to ask some background questions:

- Who has used PubMed?
- How about CINAHL?
- Have you had formal instruction in these tools?
- Who showed you these tools, a librarian, your instructor, or was it an online tutorial?
- Have you used MeSH or subject headings in your searches?

Based on the answers, the librarian shaped the content covered accordingly.

## Future Plans

### Pre-test

To get a better sense of how much information searching skill has increased as a result of the in-service, a pre-test will be developed and instituted. Since the time of the in-service is limited to one hour, the pre-test will need to be short.

### Degree Level

From observation, it appears that the type of the degree being sought by students effects what they need from online resources. A standard for what should be covered according to the degree sought by student groups will be developed.

### Policy

A new policy has been developed that requires nursing students to have taken the in-service in order to get further assistance in the library using resources. This policy will save the librarian time and will hopefully increase the number of sessions scheduled. A paper tutorial, taking students step-by-step through searching PubMed, is still available. Hospital staff are still welcome to schedule 1:1 sessions.

**Library In-service**  
Help Your Students Succeed

**What?**  
Most nursing schools have no formal process for instructing nursing students how to use the library. Give your nursing students a head start with a 60 minute in-service at the beginning of their SLCH clinical experience.

**What?**  
The librarian provides instruction on...

- PubMed database searching
- CINAHL database searching
- Locating full text articles
- MedlinePlus.gov
- When to use which resource for what

**What?**  
Reserve a time that best fits your students' needs and schedules. Do not shy away from early morning, late evening, or weekends.

**Why?**  
Participation leads to use of the library that is...

- Confident
- Effective
- Efficient

**And the result is successful performance on...**

- PICO papers
- Concept maps
- Patient related questions

**For students who have not attended the library in-service, assistance will only be provided through print tutorials.**

**How?**  
Email the librarian at [bernard.becker@slch.org](mailto:bernard.becker@slch.org) or call 314-454-2768 with a couple of times and she will do her best to accommodate your pending class availability.