Teach and Tell: Access Services' Frontline Role

in Patron-Centered Activities

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Background

Background:

- The George F. Smith Library of the Health Sciences serves all schools, programs, and departments that are a part of the Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences campus. It is a major research library in the health sciences for the state of New Jersey

- Within the George F. Smith Library, the Access Services departments include:
    - Circulation Department
    - Interlibrary Loan Department
    - Media/Computer Center

- Access Services staff stand at the convergence of users and services and are armed with core functional skills
    - Despite this, they have traditionally played a passive role in patron-centered outreach
    - Their current service attitude is to be static instead of proactive, and waiting to be asked instead of reaching out

Objectives

Objective: To see if Access Services could move into an active role in the bigger picture of promoting library services to enhance academic learning and research

How?

– What are the things Access Services staff can do?
– Can Access Services staff teach?
– Is instruction the sole scope of Information & Education Librarians (reference)?
– If we're going to teach, what is the expertise of Access Services?

Creation of the Teach and Tell Program

- The "Teach and Tell" project began with identifying each Access Services Department's (Circulation, ILL, and Media/Computer) unique services and expertise.

- Potential projects were identified for each target population:

  - New students needed stress-relief programs during exam periods;

  - Research faculty and students lacked awareness of ILL services;

  - New residents and first year students needed help with technology and connectivity set up.

- The three departments each then developed their own specialized activities based on their individual expertise to meet these demands:

  - *Pop Your Stress Out!* (Circulation),

  - *Need an Article or Book?* (ILL)

  - *Technology Briefing: Go Mobile* (Media/Computer).

- Additionally, the Access Services Department and the Information & Education (I&E) Department jointly launched the program "Spreading Health Awareness with Resources and Education" (SHARE) to educate students, researchers, physicians, and other patrons about the availability of health resources and library services.

Pop Your Stress Out! (Circulation)

Purpose: To reduce student anxiety and stress during finals

– Stress Relief Corner was set up in the library lobby

– Pop your stress out with bubble wrap

– Make yourself a stress-relieving flour ball

– Relaxing music with calming background images were displayed on the big screen

Results: Many students commented that the stress release effort helped relieve exam pressure and encouraged that the activity be repeated annually.

– *Benefit for library*: increased communication and interaction with students.
– *Benefit for students*: increased awareness of library services

Need an Article or Book? (ILL)

Need an Article or a Book? -- ILL Info Session

- ILL Info tables were set up on the Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences campus for students, faculty, researchers, residents, and staff. Table sessions were provided once a week from August to September

- A poster and brochures were created to introduce how to get an article and how to borrow a book via ILL services

- Group trainings and one-on-one trainings were conducted at the ILL info table.

Results

- Approximately 200 students, faculty, and researchers attended the ILL Info Session; approximately 300 brochures were distributed.

- The program significantly helped increase awareness of library ILL services.

Technology Briefing: Go Mobile! (Media/Computer Center)

With their expertise in technology and user support, the Media/Computer Center staff developed Technology Briefing: Go Mobile!

- Wifi setup for laptops, iPhones, Samsung Galaxy, and other mobile devices

- Email setup for iPhones, iPad, iPod, and other mobile devices

- Web and mobile devices printing

- Remote Access (Volunteer faculty member, UH residents)

Results

- The technology briefing was vital to nearly the entire population of new students who crowded the Media Center during the first few weeks of the semester

- RBHS (Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences) IST now sends students to the library for tech support

- The program contributed significantly to raising awareness of library services and to promoting a positive image.

SHARE (Joint effort between Access Services Department and Information & Education Department)

SHARE: Spreading Health Awareness with Resources and Education – a NN/LM funded program

Objective: To reach out to our community of physicians, faculty, students, nurses, patients and their families to raise awareness of consumer health information, and to promote Rutgers Health Sciences Libraries' resources and Library services

Method:

– Jointly executed by the Access Services and Reference Departments due to their respective strengths in knowledge of library services and faculty instruction

– Weekly **information table sessions** to promote library services and other selected resources (i.e., MedlinePlus, HealthyNJ, and other consumer health resources)

– On-the-spot ad-hoc training sessions on resource searching strategies and on utilizing available library services.

– Weekly 3-hour SHARE information table sessions from Aug. 2015 to Aug. 2016 at various locations at the University Hospital, RWJ Hospital, and Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences campus

SHARE: Partner Support

- Library Administration
  - Obtain support from administration

- University Hospital, WRJ Hospital
  - Hospital Education & Professional Development Office

- Medical School Facility Office
  - Letter of support to use the building facilities

- Institution Research Board (IRB)
  - Assessment plan
  - CITI Training

SHARE: Spreading Health Awareness with Resources and Education – a NN/LM funded program

Results

- SHARE was positively received by the community

- Of the total 1,070 SHARE table and training session attendees, approximately 92% participated in a demo and 17% stayed for training.

- Almost 100% of participating nurses, patients, and their family members stayed for demos.

- Handouts and bookmarks from the information tables were in high demand

  - Physicians and nurses took large quantities of handouts and bookmarks to distribute to patients in their offices

 - Participants across the board took home handouts to share with friends, family, and neighbors
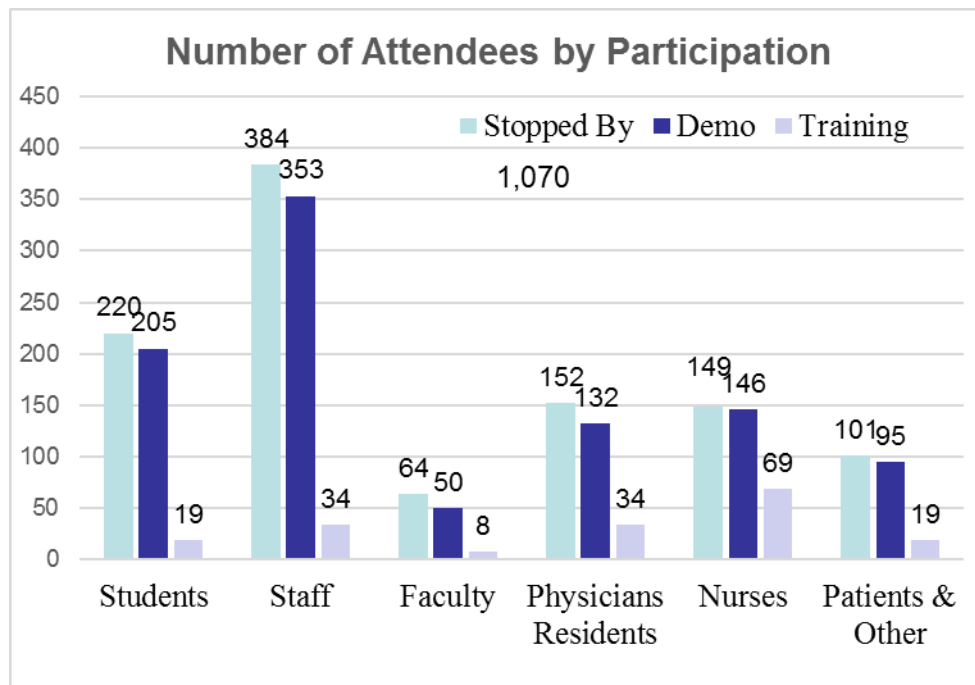
Notes:
1) *Statistics shown are from the SHARE Information Tables and Training Sessions only. An additional 596 attendees from the Rutgers SHRP Wellness Fair and the Rutgers Oral Screenings &Health Fair are not included in this figure due to participants unknown status*
2) *Statistics cover Aug. 26 2015 to May 14, 2016 (grant final report date)*

SHARE: Spreading Health Awareness with Resources and Education – a NN/LM funded program
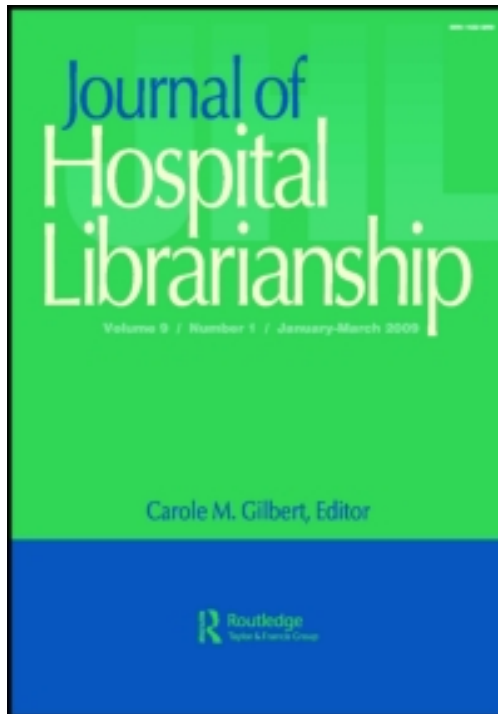
Results (cont'd)

- The percentage of participants who were aware of these online resources, especially MedlinePlus®, increased from 53% prior to the session to 89% after the session

- 87% stated that MedlinePlus® is the number one consumer health resource they will recommend to others.

- Feedback from supporters suggested that SHARE materials be made available in multiple languages

- Visitors suggested the program be promoted via the university hospital's digital signage and social media channels

- Mini-med program organizers invited librarians to talk about consumer health education to mini-med students, opening up additional potential channels for the librarians' outreach efforts

Number of responses to evaluation questions
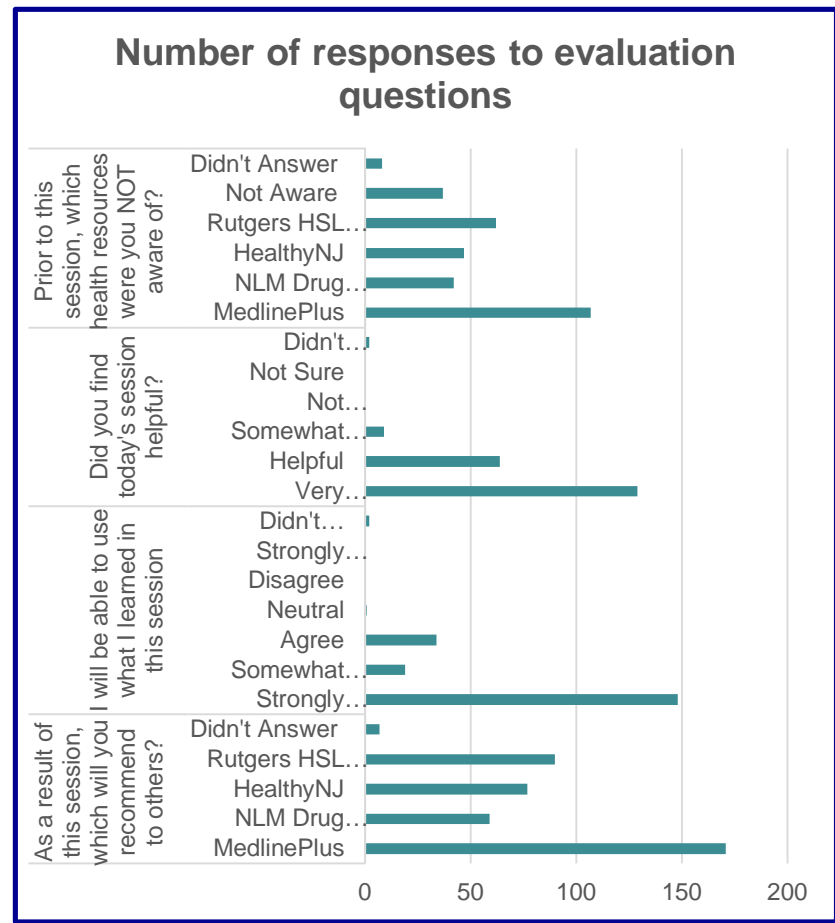
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SHARE: Spreading Health Awareness with Resources and Education — Librarians ' Role in Patient Education, A Case Study

- http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15323269.2016.1221280

- http://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/mVI7Y2wHKnW3T4mthIDB/full

Tech and Tell -- Access Services' Frontline Role in Patron-centered Activities

Conclusion:

- The Tech and Tell project demonstrated that Access Services can go far beyond its traditional, passive desk function.

- The success of the project built confidence and motivation among the staff to take on more active roles in patron-centered activities.

- The project elevated Access Services to get involved in the bigger picture of enhancing academic teaching, learning, and research.

- All these outreach activities of the Access Services staff contributed significantly to raising awareness of library services and to promoting a positive image.

Future Recommendation:
- Choose initiatives and activities best suited for each group
- Plan ahead
- Encourage, encourage, encourage

Thank you!

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