A Consortium Developed Poster to Teach Evidence-Based Health Care. (Poster)

Kristine A. Petre MLS, CM, AHIP
Lehigh Valley Health Network, kristine_a.petre@lvhn.org

Linda M. Schwartz MDE, AHIP, CM
Lehigh Valley Health Network, linda_m.schwartz@lvhn.org

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A Consortium Developed Poster to Teach Evidence-Based Health Care

Kristine Petre, MLS, AHIP Easton Hospital Easton, PA
Linda Schwartz, St. Luke’s Allentown Campus Allentown, PA

Abstract
A Pennsylvania hospital library consortium recently participated in a MLA Journal Club on Evidence-Based Health Care (EBHC). The practice of EBHC has become prevalent in medical education. Increasingly residents and attendings are exposed to the concept of EBHC and seek the assistance of medical librarians to help develop proficiency in EBHC. The Journal Club was designed to help the librarians become more familiar with EBHC. During these sessions, the attendees agreed that more needed to be done to promote EBHC. The librarians developed an EBHC poster with informational brochures. The poster and brochures are generic, allowing their use in all hospitals. The poster includes the steps of EBHC, the PICO method and rating healthcare literature in terms of clinical relevance. Brochures consist of a glossary, reference sources, study designs, clinical questions and the literature classification chart. After the posters were in place, each library tracked the number of brochures used, documented traffic at the poster and the frequency of EBHC reference questions.

Needs
Cooperating Hospital Libraries of the Lehigh Valley consists of 16 hospital libraries in the Lehigh Valley area. The library staff sizes range from 1 part-time staff person to 2 full-time librarians with support staff. Recently some of the librarians participated in a MLA journal club on Evidence-based Medicine. We chose EBHC because this mode of practice is becoming more prevalent in Medical Education. Since residents are being taught this approach, we wanted to become more familiar with EBHC so we can assist them.

CHL Response
During the journal club sessions, the group wanted to do something to help promote EBHC. We decided on a poster with three brochures of information. We wanted the poster to be generic so it could be used in each hospital, but still flexible to allow for facility specific information (i.e., logos, different Medline products). The poster will list the steps of EBHC, the PICO method to focus the clinical question, and the “literature wedge” (see Fig. 1). We also noted, “For further information contact your medical librarian.” One brochure is a glossary of terms, the second is reference sources, and the third consists of study designs, and the “literature wedge.” A poster was placed in each library. The library staff of each library tracked the number of brochures used and noted how many questions they received. They also observed the traffic at the poster for the first week that the poster was on display.

Results
The poster and brochure usage varied from institution to institution (see Fig. 1). Surprisingly the smaller institutions had more traffic than the larger ones. Some possible explanations for these results include:

* Some institutions are promoting EBHC and others are not.
* Smaller libraries have a smaller staff and tend to see what is going on more easily.
* Library patrons in smaller libraries with part-time librarians tend to rely on “self help” and look for tip sheets for help guides.
* Some institutions are much busier than others (both staff and patrons) therefore the display may go unnoticed.
* Many libraries have after hours access or only part time staff coverage, therefore it would be difficult to take accurate note of the traffic.

Some libraries also promoted EBHC through other activities. These activities included:

* A resident research meeting that covered how to write the clinical question.
* A library committee that included a demo of the Cochrane library.
* A column devoted to EBHC in the library newsletter.
* A memo to all physicians letting them know the display was in the library.

Summary
As institutions and physicians adopt the practice of EBHC, medical librarians will have to find new ways to assist them. Our library consortium has developed a poster display and brochures that effectively support the use of EBHC.