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Introduction

Health libraries need to be prepared to undertake the challenge of hiring and training new personnel who will be able to competently participate in translating available knowledge into clinical practice and supporting evidence-based decision-making. When employing the most likely scenario of age of retirement (62 years of age), 16% (1,440) of the current professional librarian labour force are predicted to retire over the next 5 years (between 2004 and 2009).¹

Methods

The challenges that exist as a result of expected retirements in the profession and potential strategies to ensure a viable workforce through the development of a training program for new health librarians are described and reviewed.

Providing library services by qualified library professionals is key to assuring a well-trained and well-informed clinical work force. Finding authoritative and relevant information about complex clinical cases and

other high-impact areas of patient care and patient safety requires the expertise of experienced searchers who understand a variety of search engines and interfaces. The results obtained by untrained or unsophisticated end-user searchers are, at best, of questionable quality and, at worst, dangerous.² To fulfill these evolving roles in this ever-changing environment, health sciences librarians will need a range of technical and inter-personal attributes.

Roles and qualities needed:

- the desire to mentor to give new professionals and pre-professionals training opportunities outside the traditional library school curriculum,
- promote the value of the profession, and place qualified professionals in places of responsibility;
- analytical skills to transform information into knowledge;
- people skills to provide those seeking health information a non-threatening human contact, a human touchstone in the electronic maze of medical terms and therapies.³

Results

There are opportunities to improve the knowledge base of health librarians to support evidence-based decision making by incorporating the elements of evidence-based practice and knowledge translation concepts into a new curriculum. Almost all MLIS students have the opportunity to take a one-semester research methods course. About half of the ALA-accredited programs require such a course, but because of the brevity of such programs and the variety of careers on which such graduates embark, it is not reasonable to expect them

all at graduation to be highly skilled in both using published research and conducting original research.⁴

The Canadian Library Human Resource Study team highlighted eight elements necessary to address the status of human resources in libraries across the country: recruitment, retirement, retention, rejuvenation, repatriation, re-accreditation, remuneration, and restructuring.¹ From saving hospitals thousands of dollars per year to saving

patients' lives, hospital librarians fulfill many mission-critical roles in today's hospitals. These roles include that of expert searcher, educator, community outreach provider, promoter of EBM, information disseminator, effective user of information technology, website manager, patient safety information provider, and supporter of innovation and research. Support of clinical care and education in the hospital is of the utmost importance.²

Study	Setting	Model of Training	Characteristics
Gosse, 1997	Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC), Nashville, TN	The VUMC Learning Paradigm for Health Sciences Librarians	Developed a unifying model for training that accords credence to developing their learning plan - engages in self-directed learning; trainees are proactive and take the initiative in learning.
Lyon, 2003	Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC), Nashville, TN	The EBM Biomedical Library (EBL) Molecular Biology Module	In-house 8-week biopharmatics training program for medical librarians that is aimed at - broadening knowledge and increasing their ability to respond to discipline-specific questions - has multiple levels and employs various strategies
Lyon, 2004	Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC), Nashville, TN	The EBM Biomedical Library (EBL) Molecular Biology course	12-week library-based training of the new biopharmacist course - series of lectures, online modules supplemented with reading materials - proactive learning is identified as one of the foremost factors of success
Scherer, 1999	The Library of the Health Sciences (LHS) at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), Chicago, IL	A cooperative program between the Library (LHS) and the UIC College of Medicine (COM)	Designed a professional development program for librarians which aimed to - support both librarians' skills and the EBM curricular initiative at the UIC College of Medicine (COM) - support for librarians in successful collaboration in EBM curricular
Scherer, 2006	The Library of the Health Sciences (LHS) at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), Chicago, IL	A train-the-trainer collaboration model between librarians and medical faculty	Described the train-the-trainer collaboration model and efforts aimed at - developing successful partnerships between librarians and academics; in the EBM educational process - offering instruction on reading EBM - the follow-up reviewed the EBM-related activities after the EBM course

Table 1: Training models

Hartman, 2000	The University of Pittsburgh Health Sciences Library System (HSLS), Pittsburgh, PA	The University of Pittsburgh Health Sciences Library System (HSLS) Model for program planning staff development	This model identifies staff development opportunities and outlines various approaches their organizations could use to maintain effectiveness of their staff's professional development activities
Hobson, 2008	The National Institutes of Health (NIH), Bethesda, MD	The NIH Library Informational program	A library-based program that - provides librarians with biomedical training with a goal to become embedded within the teams - offers continuing education program supporting the professional librarians - staff training is ongoing and is accomplished through coursework, self and other resources
Hicks, 1998	School of Health and Related Research (SHARR), South Thames Library and Information Service, Guildford, UK	The Applying Diagnostic, Therapeutic, and Therapeutic Health (AD3T) Programme	This programme aims to - explore different approaches and strategies to professional development of librarians through series of workshops and distance learning modules in the area of evidence-based medicine.

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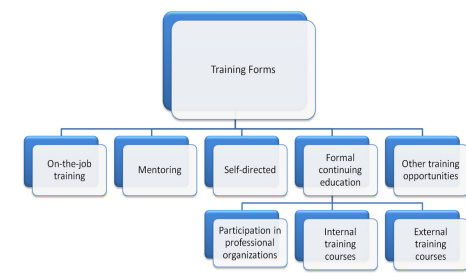


Figure 1: Training diagram

Discussion and conclusions

Training of the new health librarian is a crucial to ensure that the skills are learned and developed. A curriculum needs to employ a variety of methods and resources, so that the new librarian can deal effectively with the challenges of the work within the particular health care environment in the least amount of time.

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