

Canadian Health Libraries Association (CHLA) - Chapter Initiative Fund (CIF)
Final Report from SOHLIN

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Chapter: Southwestern Ontario Health Libraries Information Network (SOHLIN)

Project: Provision of Pandemic Information by Health Sciences Librarians: A Multi-Site Comparative Case Series

Investigators:

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Summary of Project

OBJECTIVE: Four cases of librarians who provided extended information services to health professionals during the 2009 H1N1 outbreak were investigated to inform understanding of pandemic information needs and to support professional development in disaster medicine.

METHODS: Utilizing a multi-site, comparative case series design, researchers conducted semi-structured interviews and examined supplementary materials in the form of organizational documents, correspondence and websites to create a complete picture of each case. The rigour of the case series was ensured through data and investigator triangulation, and interview transcripts were coded using NVivo to identify common themes and points of comparison.

RESULTS: Comparison of the four cases revealed a distinct difference between "client-initiated" and "self-initiated" provision of pandemic information. Self-initiated projects utilized social software to "push" information; whereas client-initiated projects operated within patron-determined parameters to deliver information. Health care administrators were identified as a key audience for pandemic information and news agencies were utilized as essential information sources. Librarian evaluation skills proved crucial for selecting best quality evidence to support administrative decision-making.

CONCLUSIONS:

Qualitative analysis informed understanding of pandemic information needs and identified best practices for disseminating information during periods of high organizational stress caused by an influx of new cases of unknown infectious disease.

Progress of Project:

The project is now complete.

Evaluation of Project:

The investigators feel the project was valuable and timely since a literature review showed that there is a gap in the evidence on the topic of librarian-provided information services during a pandemic. The study's results revealed interesting conclusions that will prove beneficial in aiding librarians as they plan for and respond to future pandemics with appropriate information services.

The acceptance of the project for presentation at two conferences and for publication in a peer-reviewed journal further demonstrates the success of the research project.

Presentation/Publications:

Disaster Information Symposium in Bethesda, Maryland, March 2011:
<http://videocast.nih.gov/summary.asp?Live=9836>

Canadian Health Libraries Association (CHLA/ABSC) Annual Conference in Calgary, Alberta, May, 2011:
<http://www.chla-absc.ca/2011/program/abstracts>

Manuscript accepted for publication in the Journal of the Medical Library Association. September 2011. Expected publication date is April 2012.

Final Budget:

Transcription Services	\$251.14
One member - One day NVivo training in Toronto	\$449.00
Total Expenses	\$700.14
Original Grant	\$953.00
Remaining budget	\$252.86

Respectfully submitted,

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