

Medical Librarians and Physicians as Partners in Teaching Healthcare Professionals to Use Point-of-Care-Resources

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Introduction

Healthcare professionals have been adopting the evidence-based practice (EBP) paradigm to improve quality of patient care, but its application requires access to pre-appraised evidence. For EBP to become a reality in patient care, it needs to be consistently taught by competent teachers. Some of them can be librarians working together with health sciences educators.

Purpose

The aim of the paper is to demonstrate inter-institutional opportunities modelling and endorsing collaboration between medical librarians and clinician-teachers to offer a new tool for teaching evidence-based practice skills at different levels of medical education.

Materials and Methods

A team consisting of medical librarians affiliated with the National Medical Library (Prague, Czech R.) and the Palacky University Medical Library (Olomouc, Czech R.) were working together with Palacky University (Olomouc, Czech R.) medical teachers who had previously developed an online interactive collection of 187 paediatric cases. It serves as a virtual educational tool to help master PICO questions in the absence of doctor-patient encounter. This is followed by searching for best evidence in Dynamed, a reputable point-of-care resource, containing around 3,200 topic summaries with links to the original clinical studies.

Results

A „blended learning“ model has been elaborated of a case-based approach to teach implementation of pre-appraised evidence in virtual clinical settings. Participants of the training courses can be any healthcare professionals, including students, who get registered with the National Medical Library (Prague) to benefit from remote access to a selection of electronic information resources. A pre-requisite to the contact hours of the course is preparatory online communication with course facilitators.

Limitations

It should be admitted that point-of-care resources will never be robust enough to answer all clinical questions. Librarian-guided demonstration of database searches using building blocks can be a suitable supplementary part of the training course.

Conclusions

Medical librarians seem to be valuable multiprofessional team members to help improve practical skills in evidence-based healthcare and decrease clinicians' barriers to effective information seeking.