

# Improvement of the Practicing Veterinarian's Information Literacy by Netbased Education

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113

## What makes a quality information literacy programme?

- Collaboration with institution/faculty
  - institutional mandate, commitment and structure
- Articulation with the curriculum
  - librarian deeply familiar with the curriculum
  - librarian understands scholarly information patterns
  - library's goals synchronised with educational goals of institute
- Pedagogy and information technology
  - librarian full partner in delivery of educational content

(1) Oberman, 2002

## Veterinary Education in Finland

- College of Veterinary Medicine 1945-1995
- Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Helsinki, 1995-
  
- 50 students/year
- 5 doctorates/year
- ca 8 specialists /year
- Continuing education (1500 veterinarians in Finland)
  
- New premises in Viikki Campus 2004
- More co-operation with the Faculties of Agriculture, Pharmacy and Biosciences of the University of Helsinki

(2) Oker-Blom & al. 2000

## **Strategy of the Faculty of Veterinary medicine**

Responsible for

- basic and postgraduate education
- specialization programmes

Partly responsible for

- continuing education in cooperation with Länsi-Uusimaa Institute for Continuing Education, a unit of the Centre of Continuing Education at the University of Helsinki

Its library is responsible for instruction in information literacy preferably integrated in the education

## **The Veterinary Medicine Library in Finland**

- founded 1892 by the Finnish Veterinary Association (FVA)
- donated 1945 to the College of Veterinary Medicine
- librarian and library premises 1962
  
- to be merged to Viikki Science Library in 2004
  
- direct services to veterinarians all over Finland (distance between Helsinki and e.g. Utsjoki in Lapland is 1000 km, practitioners work mostly alone)
- collections focused on veterinary medicine and food hygiene
- inter-library-lending (ILL) is very well developed in Finland
- instruction in information literacy

## **Information literacy instruction at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine**

### Basic education

- introduction to library services (1 year)
- use of library services (PBL literature reviews, 1 year)
- information retrieval (short thesis 4-6 year)
- information retrieval-drop in courses( students and teachers)

### Postgraduate education and faculty

- information retrieval, selected resources (special groups)
- information retrieval - drop in courses (postgraduate students preparing thesis and teachers)

## **Teaching methods**

- traditional class room and hands on teaching
- team-teaching: two librarians, librarian - faculty
- netbased courses; in cooperation with Viikki science library

(3) Oker-Blom, 1998

## **Information literacy for practicing veterinarians**

- integration with courses organized by the Länsi-Uusimaa Institute for Continuing Education, a unit of the Centre of Continuing Education at the University of Helsinki
- user education courses organized together with Finnish Veterinary Association (day after Annual Finnish Veterinary Conference)
- courses organized specially for municipal veterinarians
- hands on instruction of veterinarian visiting the library

(2) Oker-Blom & al. 2000



## **Teaching methods**

- Traditional classroom teaching
  - at the Faculty, at the premises of the course organiser
- Netbased courses

## **Why netbased information literacy instruction ?**

New era:

- nearly every veterinarian has access to internet
- numerous electronic resources available (for free or licensed)
- supported by faculty and other partners of continuing education (economic support during the project phase)

## **Solution: The project “Improvement of the practising veterinarian’s information literacy by netbased education”**

### One portal

- that supports different groups of practising veterinarians
- gives a clear picture of available quality resources and teaching material
- gives efficient information searching possibilities

### Netbased courses

- to support retrieval of information e.g. via the portal
- as part of the continuing education programme of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

## **Continuing education programme for practicing veterinarians**

- Organizers: the Länsi-Uusimaa Institute for Continuing Education, a unit of the Centre of Continuing Education at the University of Helsinki, the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, the Veterinary Medicine Library
- Sponsors: the Food and Health Department at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Finland
- Topic: Herd health management
- Length and duration: 20 credits, combination of modules, 2 years

## **Project phases 1**

Gathering of relevant information resources

- Cooperation with relevant producers of websites/information for veterinarians:
  - the Food and Health Department at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Finland
  - the National Veterinary and Food Institute
  - the National Food Agency
  - the Finnish Veterinary Association
- Analysis of the information needs of practising veterinarians:
  - administration, -production, -food industry (deep interviews)
- Collaboration with teachers of subject modules of the continuing education course

Design of a “one-stop-shop” portal

## **Project phases 2**

### Design of netbased courses

- obligatory introductory course in information literacy for “Herd health management” (February 2003)
- obligatory course in information literacy for the module “Good veterinary practice (GVP) and legislation” of Herd health management (September 2003)

## **Steps in netbased course design**

- choice of the e-learning platform
- starting seminar in classroom and hands on –teaching
- net-based distant learning independently, supported by the library (email)
- closing seminar, feed-back and suggestions for further studies

## **Results and experiences**

- Results of the analysis of information needs
- Comments on portal design
- Comments on netbased course design



## **Skills required by library personnel**

- Familiarity with production of netbased courses and pedagogical methods
- Knowledge of web design and updating
- Knowledge of internet resources in the field
- Familiarity with the curriculum
- Full member of the planning and teaching team

## Literature References:

(1) Oberman, Cerise. What the ACRL Institute for Information Literacy Best Practices Initiative tells us about the librarian as teacher. 68th IFLA Council and General Conference, August 18-24, 2002, Glasgow.

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(2) Oker-Blom, Teodora, Iivonen, Raisa & Suckcharoen, Sinikka. Electronic Animal Health Information: outreach services and continuing education for the practicing veterinarians' changing information needs. 8th International Congress on Medical Librarianship July 2nd - 5th, 2000, Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London.

<http://www.vetmed.helsinki.fi/lib/eltdkpub/London2000.html>

(3) Oker-Blom, Teodora. Integration of Information Skills In Problem Based Curricula. 64th IFLA General Conference, August 16 – August 21, 1998, Amsterdam.

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