

THE MEDICAL LIBRARY'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE

Hilde Stromme, Inger Schou, Karen Bjoro.
Ullevaal University Hospital, Oslo, Norway.

hilde.stromme@medisin.uio.no

Ullevaal University Hospital

Ullevaal University Hospital is Norway's largest hospital with over 8,000 employees. The Medical Library has a staff of 10 full time librarians.

The Ullevaal Model for Evidence Based Practice in Nursing

A pilot project was initiated in 2002 in the intensive care unit to develop evidence based protocols. In 2005 the hospital management extended the pilot to a hospital wide initiative. A resource group was established, and the group decided to name the project The Ullevaal Model for Evidence Based Practice in Nursing. The aim of the project is to assure the quality of EBP protocols. The Ullevaal Model is a problem based approach to EBP. Fundamental components of the model are: 1) small groups of clinical nurses, 2) a masters or doctorally prepared group facilitator, 3) a systematic work process based on Sackett et al. (1). All literature searches are facilitated by a librarian. The librarian's participation ensures retrieval of research literature that is relevant to the clinical question, and that the searches are documented correctly.

Resource group

The resource group consists of five nurses with masters or PhD degrees and one medical librarian. The resource group has developed the guidelines for the Ullevaal Model and provided various materials to help the groups in their work (e.g. PICO-form for clinical questions, check lists for critical appraisal of different types of articles, forms for registration of evidence levels etc.). At one of the first meetings of the resource group the medical librarian made a bold suggestion: "All literature searches should be facilitated by a librarian." Nurses in the resource group: "Can we really ask for that much?" Medical librarian: "Of course!"

The 5-step process of the Ullevaal Model

The process is inspired by Sackett et al. (1).

1. Asking questions with PICO-form
2. Systematic literature search facilitated by a librarian
3. Critical appraisal of the literature
4. Protocols/guidelines based on the evidence found and the nurses' clinical experience are written. A plan for implementation is developed.
5. The protocols/guidelines will be evaluated and updated every two years.

Searching

Prior to conducting a literature search, the groups identify the problem they wish to work with and formulate a clinical question. To help them in this process, a PICO-form is provided. PICO is an acronym that stands for P = Patient, I = Intervention, C = Comparison, O = Outcome. The form is also used to define study type and suitable terms for searching bibliographic databases.

All literature searches are facilitated by a librarian. Nurses and librarian sit together at one PC. The nurses take turns in searching; the librarian explains how to find the best available evidence in each database. This way, in addition to being a “real search”, the searching becomes a training session. The librarian collects the search histories from all databases and writes a documentation of all searches performed for each protocol. Proper documentation ensures that the searches may be replicated, so that the quality of the search as well as the protocol itself can be assessed. This documentation is also very useful when it is time to update the protocol.

Courses

2-3 times a year the resource group offers a full day course. The topics of this course are: introduction to evidence based practice, literature searching, critical appraisal, and the process from literature search to finished protocol. In addition to this the Medical Library offers a tailored course for the groups working on specific protocols. Topics for this course are: what the library can offer, what librarians can do for you, introduction to EBP, asking questions with PICO, types of questions and choosing the right databases, picking search terms, different types of literature, and basic principles of literature searching. This course culminates in a search relevant to the protocol the group is working on.

Consequences for the library

This project is time consuming, and the library has had to reorganize its resources. A very positive result is that the library's good reputation and its position within the organization has been strengthened. Many users have also become more aware that the librarians' competence and involvement in the project is needed to assure good quality searches so that all relevant literature is retrieved.

Librarian's personal experiences

It is great fun to work with nurses and I have become more in touch with the clinical work. I find that there is a mutual respect between nurses and librarians, and through this project both parties have become “infected” by each other's enthusiasm.

What's next?

At the moment work is in progress to implement finished protocols. New groups will start working on new protocols. Protocols will have to be evaluated and updated every two years.

References

- (1) Sackett DL. Evidence-Based medicine : how to practice and teach EBM. 2nd ed. Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone; 2000.
- (2) Stromme H, Schou I, Bjoro K. The Ullevaal model for evidence-based practice in nursing. *Journal of the European Association for Health Information and Libraries*. 2(3):39-41, 2006. Free full text available at www.eahil.net