

Limbs and Spills: the use of a Clinical Librarian in supporting Orthopaedics Surgeons in the research process

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Introduction

The requirement for the medical profession to publish their findings and practice is well established and an accepted *modus operandi*. Promotion of individuals is often dependent upon the satisfactory publication of research in media with most impact. However, equally important for the profession is the publication and dissemination of research by teams or groups of the medical profession. The dissemination of medical research and practice is essential for several reasons, to maintain existing funding from institutions/funders and to attract additional funding to continue and develop work. Moreover, the process of publishing also enhances the profile of the individual or a group of personnel. In 2008 this was recognized by the Head of Orthopaedic Surgery at Pontifical Catholic University of Campinas (Celso Pierro Hospital and Maternity Unit) who identified the need to increase the profile, research activity and publication rate amongst his team. Independently of this, a project to develop a Clinical Library Service in São Paulo State using UK based experience and practice was established in 2005, entitled Building the Brazilian Bridge (BBB). This paper details how these two elements have been brought together to enhance research activities amongst the Orthopaedic Surgeons, the use of Evidence Based Medicine and Clinical Librarianship.

Methods

The Head of Orthopaedic Surgery took the initiative to employ a Librarian. This was a pragmatic and strategic action designed to raise the research profile of the Department. The role of the Librarian was to assist Surgeons primarily in writing research papers, developing methodological approaches and systematic reviews and secondly to search for the best evidence in the literature to assist their work in both practice and research. Researchers from the BBB team provided support for the Librarian *in situ*, eg: Pod casts of UK Clinical Librarians talking about their work and roles were used as on the job training. The evidence of successful Clinical Librarian services and practice from the UK was also used to explain the role of the Clinical Librarian and demonstrate the significance of this role to the Orthopaedic Surgeons.

Findings

The Head of Orthopaedic Surgery can now be recognized as a champion of Clinical Library services and EBM. The Librarian has made a considerable impact on the research culture of the Department. Members of staff are now engaged in the process of writing, using and evaluating literature to inform their everyday clinical practice. Although there are no records prior to the presence of the Librarian, data collected in 2008 and 2009 indicates that the research profile of the team has improved. Librarian is now a fully integrated member of the team and respected as a professional in his own right. The employment of the Librarian is a definite boost to the BBB project and the Orthopaedic Surgery Team.