User training project - a collaboration strategy for the libraries of Faculty of Pharmacy (FF) and Faculty of Medicine (FM) at University of Lisbon

Sílvia Costa Lopes[1], Susana Oliveira Henrique[2]
[1]Faculdade de Farmácia, Universidade de Lisboa, Lisboa, Portugal
[2]Faculdade de Medicina, Universidade de Lisboa, Lisboa, Portugal

Corresponding author: Susana Oliveira Henriques, susanahenriques@medicina.ulisboa.pt

Abstract
To overcome difficult times and reinforce their position in the academic community, the Libraries of Faculty of Pharmacy and Faculty of Medicine at University of Lisbon, developed a collaboration strategy and established a protocol for the development of a shared user training project, based on the international recommendations for Information Literacy in Higher Education.

Our main goal is to develop a common user training project, especially designed for both academic communities in order to strengthen training programs already implemented in both libraries, maximizing resources and promoting the development of information literacy skills in both academic communities.

Convergent points were identified: related scientific areas; identical user needs; geographic proximity; similar training objectives and programs; reduced training teams, two libraries, the same problems, and a common solution. The user training project protocol was developed, submitted and approved by both Faculty Deans in June 2015. The implementation of the User Training Project occurred in the beginning of the school year. In October 2015 the first training schedule was presented and released in both communities through the mailing list, Facebook and libraries web sites. The first sessions happened in all Fridays of November. Registries management was made online through google forms. Training sessions were about: Search Strategies and Available Resources; PubMed Advanced Search; Mendeley and EndNote Basic. At the end of each session, a satisfaction survey was distributed.

By the number of registrations (50) on the first training sessions and concerning the results of the satisfaction survey, in which the parameters considered (program content, interest, trainer, organization and logistics) were rated as very good (36%) and excellent (60%), there are strong evidences of the success of this collaborative strategy. On the other hand the input received, shows that there is interest in the development of new schedules of the available sessions, thematic sessions with different levels (Initial and advanced) and new themes, more practical and focused on supporting the scientific production and scientific writing.
In conclusion the training program should continue to develop, grow and be adapted to future needs, taking into account the suggestions registered by the trainees in the evaluation questionnaires collected at the end of each module.
It is also expected to extend this collaboration to other schools in the health strategic area, at the University of Lisbon.

Keywords: Information Literacy, Education, Medical Libraries, Health Science Libraries, Cooperative Behavior, Community Networks

Introduction

The impact of Portuguese economic crisis, felt in the last years were critical for academic libraries too. With reduced budgets and teams, it's not easy to full-fill user needs and maintain quality services (1), when is supposed to do more with less. Both FF and FM libraries were having difficult to maintain and develop their user training projects, having their training teams reduced to one librarian each.

To overcome these difficult times and reinforce their position in the academic community, both libraries developed a collaboration strategy. In this context, FF and FM libraries had established a protocol for the development of a shared user training project (2) based on the international recommendations for Information Literacy in Higher Education (3). The institutional recognition and validation was a critical factor for the successful implementation (4), and are indicators of the relevance of the project.

Objectives

Our main goal is to develop a common user training project, especially designed for both academic communities in order to strengthen training programs already implemented in both libraries, maximizing resources and promoting the development of information literacy skills in both academic communities.

Methodology

Convergent points were identified: related scientific areas; identical user needs; geographic proximity; similar training objectives and programs; reduced training teams, two libraries, the some problems, a common solution. The user training project protocol was developed, submitted and approved by both Faculty Deans in June 2015.

In October 2015 we proceeded to the presentation and disclosure of available training schedule, through mailing lists, Facebook pages and websites of the respective libraries and schools. The management of the registration was made through an online application developed in Google Forms platform. At the end of each session, a satisfaction questionnaire was distributed.

Results

The implementation of the User Training Project occurred in the beginning of the school year. The first training schedule was presented to both communities in October 2015, and training sessions appended in all Fridays of November. Sessions were about: Search Strategies and Available Resources; PubMed Advanced Search; Mendeley and EndNote Basic.

The adopted teaching models was the traditional in class model, but the adoption of e-learning is part of the program objectives, as a complementary option.

Conclusions

By the number of registrations on the first training sessions and concerning the results of the satisfaction survey, there are strong evidences of the success of this collaborative strategy. The training project is supposed to keep on growing and to be adapted to future needs, taking into account the suggestions registered by the trainees in the evaluation questionnaires collected at the end of each module.

It is also expected to extend this collaboration to other schools of the University of Lisbon. For the next school year (2016/2017), it is already planned the integration of the Faculty of Dental Medicine, reinforcing the strategic area of Health Sciences, at the University of Lisbon.

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