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Journal of EAHIL

European Association for
Health Information and Libraries

Vol. 19 no.2

June 2023

ISSN L-1841-0715

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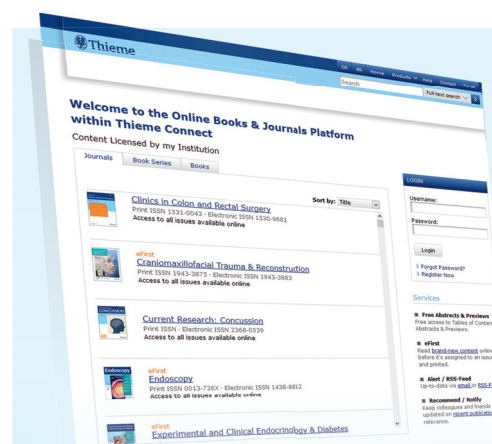
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Norwegian medical librarians' views about the future

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Abstract

The article describes Norwegian medical librarians' thoughts about trends and future developments. Results from a survey among library staff in medical and healthcare libraries in Norway in June 2022 are presented. Digital development, teaching and research support were highly emphasised, as well as the importance of physical library space, collaboration with own institution, and the library's impact. Furthermore, the librarians also registered their competency needs within teaching and education, first line support, open science, evidence syntheses, and in cooperation and management. Our project indicates that employees in medical and health libraries are aware of trends and competency needs. These competency needs are essential to be addressed to providers of continuing education in order to offer relevant library services.

Key words: librarians; libraries, medical; professional competence; Norway.

Introduction

A decade ago, the *Health Information and Libraries Journal* started an article series about international trends in Health Science Libraries. Three reviews called Global trends in health science libraries published in 2021 and 2022 summarized the results from the different publications (1-3). They identified eleven trend areas: systematic reviews and data synthesis, education and training, research support, technology, users' experience and engaging with the public, collaboration and partnership, library space, new roles and challenges for library staff.

Later, the world has experienced the COVID pandemic from 2020. This has affected the libraries, regarding delivery and type of services provided in a digital and physical library setting. A report from the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) Research Planning and Review Committee from 2022 (4), about changes in the US libraries "attempts to provide a snapshot of developments worth noting". Changes in library staffing, space utilization and collaborative collections due to tighter budgets, are seen in the sector. Furthermore, the report points to trends like the open access movement and artificial intelligence (AI) that will continue to develop.

This article aims to show how Norwegian medical librarians think about trends and future developments.

In the project "Competencies for the librarian in the future" (5) we ran a survey among library staff in medical and healthcare libraries in Norway in June 2022. We received 102 answers from librarians. Nearly 70% of the respondents were working in libraries in higher education. The rest of the respondents were working in hospital libraries, for the health authorities or in other research institutions. Two open-ended questions in the survey were about trends and areas of development for the next five years, both for the individual librarian and for the library.

Where will you be in five years' time?

The first question about trends and the future was directed towards the respondents' current position. For their own position, library employees highlight areas related to digital skills and development, teaching, and research support. All citations were in Norwegian and are translated into English by the authors.

A majority pointed out digital topics such as artificial intelligence, algorithms, and new technology. One librarian said: "artificial intelligence associated with the automation of systematic literature searches will be important in the next years". Other comments were related to digital learning resources, digital sources, and new teaching methods. "Use the best from digital opportunities and take it further" stated one respondent.

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Further, one librarian wrote "Keep up to date on new good tools that are relevant for our users in research". Several respondents stated that digital competency will be the most important in the future. One of the respondents meant "we have to be digitally literate", which sums it all up.

Most respondents emphasised that teaching information literacy will continue to be important in the future, delivered both in classroom and on digital platforms. One librarian mentioned: "Physical teaching will continue to be important, even if some believe that it is a trend for us to become more digital". Another stated: "Balance physical and digital teaching, and do not think that 'making a video for everything' is the solution". Several librarians mentioned flipped classroom and learning as upcoming trends. The development of digital services for distance education students including online courses, and distance learning are becoming more common in higher education. One mentioned the embedded librarian and wanted "more focus on library integration in the education and faculty".

Several respondents mentioned a shift from student focus to research support focus during the next five years, pointing out that "Research support is becoming more important". Research support, especially engagement in systematic literature searches and knowledge summaries, and closer involvement of librarians in the research process, were answers given.

One respondent stated: "It is important to have domain knowledge in the job to support the various professional environments" and another said: "Focus on quality in all stages of a research project". The embedded librarian as an integrated partner in research projects is also mentioned as one trend: helping and supporting with research data management, publishing, and storing in repositories. A respondent hoped for a more integrated librarian in all projects.

For summing up what librarians in medical and healthcare libraries in Norway mentioned about their future work, we can cite one librarian "That we embrace our pedagogical role more, that we venture into new areas of competence and dare to take up a little more space in the institution". They also want to improve their digital competencies about technological developments in artificial intelligence and being on top of developments in delivering services for systematic reviews and open sciences as an embedded librarian.

What should the library focus on for the next five years?

For the library, also issues like digital development and research support were highlighted. The word "digital" was heavily used in the answers in this section of the survey. Terms like digital teaching, digital meetings, digital resources and sources, digital format, digital development, digital opportunities, digital support services, digital learning resources, digital meeting places, digital platforms, digital competence and the more general digitisation, were mentioned as important issues now and in the future. As one of the respondents stated: "we have to develop ourselves digitally together with our users".

However, the importance of library visibility was strongly emphasised. This includes visibility within your own organisation, communication of the value of the library, and show the library's impact. Library visibility is important, especially in situations where budget cuts and downsizing are likely to happen. Strategic work to ensure annual budgets and keep access to relevant resources are mentioned several times. One respondent stated: "The library's position – and existence – in the organisation is threatened. Marketing of the library's services throughout the organisation is important". Another said: "The library's added value for the organisation should be highlighted".

Respondents emphasised that both the employees' skills and competencies, and library services ought to be promoted. One librarian stated: "The human resource should be important in the next five years: what can library staff with their expertise contribute to, that no one else can?"

Many respondents mentioned the importance of the library as a physical place. The library should continue to be an attractive gathering and meeting point, where learning can take place assisted by library employees; "Further develop the library as a gathering point. To work for a stronger embedding of the library services in the institution, with regard to resources of staff, physical space, subscriptions, ...".

Competencies for the librarian in the future

In the survey we asked for preferred areas for librarians to build their own competencies. There are many competency needs within teaching and education, first line

support, open science, evidence syntheses, and in co-operation and management.

Nearly 70% answered that they wanted to increase their competence about new technologies and how to use this technology in their own work. The respondents also wished for competence about new trends and development both in library and information science, and in medicine and healthcare.

About 63% wanted more competence in communication and methods to highlight the library's value. Half of the respondents wanted to learn more about evaluation methods and methods to improve library services, as well as how to market the library's offers and services.

The competency needs mentioned by the respondents are essential to be addressed to providers of continuing education for offering relevant library services.

Conclusion

Comparing with the eleven trends identified in the articles from the Health Information & Libraries Journal (1-3), we find that the trends and future development stated from the Norwegian health librarians are very similar. Digital development, teaching and research support were highly emphasized, as well as the importance of physical library space and collaboration within one's own institution. These issues seem to be trends all over the library world.

The ACRL (4) reports trends like the open access movement and artificial intelligence (AI). These are issues that the Norwegian librarians also stated as important. In a literature review about AI and the library role, Gasparini & Kautonen conclude that libraries should have a role between the technology and the library users. The libraries can take on roles as neutral investigators, responsible agents, or agents of desirable change (6).

With these thoughts about the future for the library and the librarians, we will conclude with a voice from one Norwegian librarian: "We should not only be aware of new trends, we should be a little ahead". Continuing to balance the work environment between the physical

and the virtual library with a high emphasis on technological innovations for delivering library services, is important.

Our project indicates that employees in medical and health libraries are aware of trends and competency needs, and that the librarians show great interest in professional development. National and international organisations for professional development, like EAHIL, along with library and information education, are important stakeholders for building needed competencies for the librarian in the future.

Received on 4 May 2023.

Accepted on 31 May 2023.

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Capacity building to boost information and communication skills inside an institute of research

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Abstract

To enhance its visibility, the Library of the Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS) along with the Scientific Communication Unit of the same institution delivered a set of informal online training sessions, or webinars, on their fields of expertise: information retrieval, publication, effective communication, and research evaluation, specifically addressed to internal users. The collaboration was extremely useful in terms of improved knowledge on skills available among the personnel of these two services. It increased trust in the competencies of internal staff and at the same time it contributed to develop awareness of the value of the services rendered. Skills to use available online resources for training were improved as well as ISS staff cohesion favouring the development of new collaborations.

Key words: libraries, medical; interdisciplinary communication; distance learning; training techniques.

Introduction

In recent years, the move from printed to online resources, and the ever-increasing volume of information available directly from the web, has created a situation in which a substantial proportion of library services are delivered online causing a progressive emptying of the libraries and a need for librarians to reconsider their role.

Especially in the health sciences, many librarians have started to recognize that they are losing visibility and that it is vital to re-examine their roles and to take into consideration novel approaches to remain relevant to the mission of their institutions (1). Obviously, different kinds of librarians must face different problems in increasing their visibility, but a clear common theme is the need to develop a proactive strategy to go outside the library (literally or virtually) and to create new connections with users and stakeholders. Often this means librarians need to go beyond their comfort zone and getting involved in activities outside their traditional role such as embedded librarianship (2), collaborations with other professionals, and teaching.

Starting from these considerations, the Library and the Scientific Communication Unit of the Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS, the National Institute of Health in Italy), which are two separate but complementary departments, decided, at the beginning of 2021, to work collaboratively to deliver a set of informal online training sessions, or webinars, on their fields of expertise: publication, information retrieval, effective communication, and research evaluation, specifically addressed to internal users. With the unexpected advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, teaching and learning have moved primarily online everywhere in the world, and the use of remote video conferencing has become commonplace affecting also the ISS Library and Scientific Communication Unit education programming, much of which relied on face-to-face activities.

The idea of a set of online training sessions was also based on the assessment that the COVID-19 pandemic has been a period of an extraordinary dissemination of scientific information across the Internet supported by a huge quantity of papers and pre-prints on that topic, sometimes containing incorrect and mis-

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leading data (3, 4) so it was important to share competences on retrieving and disseminating the correct information.

Building a collaborative learning environment and developing a culture of knowledge sharing in a workplace are complex processes that take time and require commitment: sharing is fundamental to improve skills and promote the development of new knowledge, increase the sense of community and belonging, and be beneficial for problem solving, critical thinking and other soft skills.

In this paper we present an experience of collaboration within the context of a research-based institution and describe the different roles, knowledge and skills acquired.

The training sessions

As the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) states in its report “The potential of online learning for adults: Early lessons from the COVID-19 crisis”, during the pandemic individuals were being encouraged to use the time freed up by short-time work schemes to train online from home and acquire new skills deemed useful (5).

Motivated by this report, in 2021, the staff of the Library and the Scientific Communication Unit of the ISS started a collaboration to organize several informal online training sessions, or webinars, addressed to researchers and other employees of the ISS.

The primary objective of the training was to share specific competencies and expertise on editorial skills and the use of information and library resources to help the ISS staff to acquire both new abilities to improve writing and publishing scientific articles, technical reports, and other documents and to retrieve reliable information sources.

The course was also intended to enhance institutional cohesion by promoting communication between different branches of the Institute, to spread awareness of the capabilities of the two departments, and to contribute to the professional development of both trainers and trainees.

The online training sessions focussed on different topics selected according to what it was thought were the training needs and skills of target users. The main topics were effective communication, research evaluation, the advantages of Open Access publishing, specific and

detailed instructions on how to publish a scientific article, a technical report or other documents, and the ISS library electronic resources online catalogue.

The planning and preparation of the training sessions can be split up in the following steps:

- set the learning objectives;
- define the process of activities;
- design and share the methodology with trainers/secretarial staff;
- define the training program, teachers, and collaborators;
- develop a communication strategy;
- design, produce and share communication material, including graphics;
- inform and engage directors of ISS internal divisions (for a top-down approach);
- inform and engage ISS colleagues (for a bottom-up approach);
- design and distribute sample e-mails to be used in the organization;
- manage privacy policy;
- design, distribute, and collect participants’ application forms;
- select participants according to specific criteria outlined below;
- design, distribute, collect, and process participants’ questionnaires;
- process data from questionnaires and collect oral/written feedback (received also from chats) for evaluation.

As it is essential to choose a user-friendly webinar platform, after an initial check of what were the alternatives, it was decided to deliver the online training modules through the Office 365 Teams platform.

The training organization benefitted from a uniform professional graphic layout, granting common design, realized thanks to the professional skills of the Scientific Communication Unit. The same graphic line was applied to the poster advertising the training program (*Figure 1*), to the application form, the slide template, and the background of the online sessions.

The selection criteria were based on the applicants’ motivation and impact on work activities, avoiding trainees coming all from the same ISS offices.

In total, 14 webinars were realized, in two editions (April-June and November 2021) for the high number of attendance requests. The organization involved:

ISS per ISS: condividere competenze per facilitare la ricerca bibliografica e bibliometrica e per pubblicare efficacemente

Obiettivo: ottimizzare l'utilizzo delle risorse informative disponibili attraverso la Biblioteca ISS e condividere competenze editoriali per la pubblicazione di articoli scientifici, rapporti tecnici e altri documenti

Periodo: aprile-giugno 2021

Modalità: piattaforma Teams

Iscrizione: inviare modulo di adesione al contatto del webinar scelto

Partecipanti: massimo 15 per webinar per garantire efficacia e interazione

Tematiche

- Ricerca delle informazioni:** come utilizzare il catalogo delle risorse elettroniche della Biblioteca ISS e quali sono gli strumenti web per recuperare le versioni gratuite di articoli non accessibili dal catalogo.
- Valutazione della ricerca:** come valutare la ricerca conoscendo i parametri bibliometrici, attivare identificativi di autore (ORCID, ResearcherID, ScopusID), riconoscere le differenze tra la Web of Science e SCOPUS.
- Scelta della rivista e sottomissione di un articolo:** come valutare i vantaggi della pubblicazione open access, scegliere la rivista sulla quale pubblicare e conoscere le regole per sottomettere un articolo scientifico.
- Come impostare un documento editorialmente corretto:** come pubblicare un Rapporto ISTISAN e un ISTISAN Congressi imparando ad applicare le regole editoriali di base.
- Comunicazione efficace:** come scegliere le parole giuste per garantire una comunicazione efficace attraverso elementi tecnici ed esercizi pratici.

Calendario

28 aprile ore 10-12
Come pubblicare un articolo scientifico: struttura, istruzioni agli autori, submission, peer-review
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 Adesioni a: P. Dionisio paco.dionisio@iss.it

19 maggio ore 10-11
Pubblicare in open access: come, dove e perché
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16 giugno ore 10-12
La valutazione della ricerca: conoscerla per farne una opportunità
 G. Ardita, D. Gentili, P. Pecci
 Adesioni a: P. Pecci paola.pecci@iss.it

24 giugno ore 10-12
Il potere delle parole
 A. Gasparini
 Adesioni a: P. Dionisio paco.dionisio@iss.it

Responsabile dell'iniziativa: Paola De Castro (Direttore COS-CON)

Fig. 1. The poster advertising the training program.

teachers from the Library and the Scientific Communication Unit (no. 11), organizational staff (no. 2), secretariat staff (no. 4), and the content coordinator for the initiative. Some people played more than one role (e.g., as teacher and organizational staff).

Each webinar lasted about 2 hours (28 hours of training in total) and included an average of 20 participants, plus a waiting list, selected according to the given criteria. As evidenced by the list below, the webinars were a representation of the different yet complementary skills of the people working in the Library and the Scientific Communication Unit.

The titles and objectives of the webinars are presented below:

- *How to write and publish a journal article: structure, instructions to authors, submission, peer review process*, which examined in detail the different steps necessary to successfully publish a research article in an international science journal;

- *Practical tips for publishing a report in the series Rapporti ISTISAN*, designed to help ISS authors to publish a report in the *Rapporti ISTISAN*, a series of grey literature edited by the ISS;
- *Practical tips for publishing an abstract book: ISTISAN Congressi*, aimed to explain how and why produce an Abstract book in the in-house edited series *ISTISAN Congressi* (related to events organized by the ISS);
- *The power of words, the most crucial elements to communicate effectively*, which objective was to present the main axioms of communication and help acquire competence on the role and power that the choice of words can have;
- *Open access publishing: how, where, and why*, which focused on the choice of the more suitable open access journal to publish avoiding, at the same time, predatory and vanity publishing;
- *360 Link: the new electronic resources online catalogue*, designed to describe the most important features of the new ISS library's electronic resources;
- *Research evaluation: understanding the game rules to gain the match*, which analysed the complex context of the bibliometric research evaluation, author identifiers (Web of Science ID, ScopusID and ORCID), and citational databases (Web of Science, Scopus).

After each webinar, participants were invited to fill in an online questionnaire, built on Office 365 Forms, to collect feedback on each training event.

The questionnaire was structured with 8 closed questions with a 5-point Likert scale to give the respondents a limited number of options to choose from. There were also 3 open-ended questions to give the respondents the opportunity to freely express their opinion about the webinar and to collect suggestions and problems as well.

Results

In total, 334 applications were received from 131 employees affiliated to 30 different organizational structures of the ISS (Scientific Departments or National Centres, Services, Administration offices). *Figure 2* shows in detail the participants' distribution by job profile.

71 trainees attended the webinars in the spring edition; 85 attended the autumn (webinar) edition (25 employees joined both editions). Overall, there were

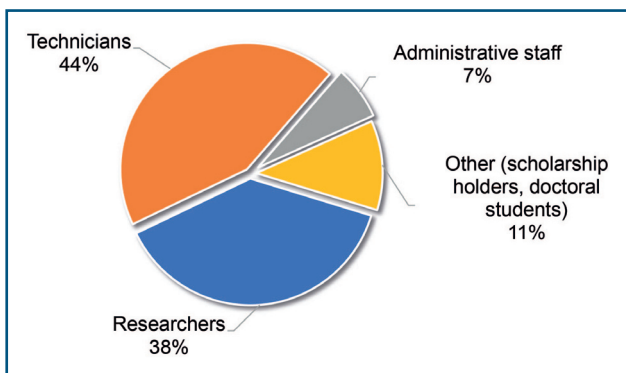


Fig. 2. Participants in the ISS webinars in 2021 by job profile.

226 participations (some attended one or two webinars, rarely three).

Most participants (91%) were women, in accordance with the higher percentage of women employed at the ISS. At the same time, the figure could also indicate a lower training need perceived by male colleagues in the webinar topics.

Researchers reached the 38% of the total number of trainees, but the largest percentage of applications came from technicians (44%). The remaining 18% is represented by administrative staff and scholarship holders, doctoral students, etc.

Most trainees (78.8%) regularly completed the questionnaire (178 questionnaires out of 226). Data show that the webinars were considered effective in terms of gaining knowledge and upskilling (*Figure 3*).

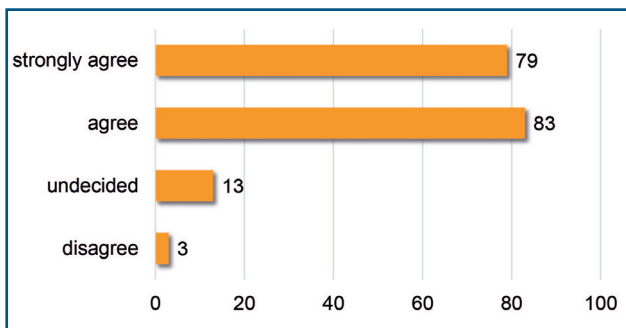


Fig. 3. Efficacy of training activity in improving skills in work performance: measure of satisfaction of the participants in the ISS webinars in 2021.

Participants demonstrated to be really interested in the topics, in their feedback questionnaire they asked for more training and face-to-face meeting to discuss critical issues.

The potential of Microsoft Teams as the chosen online learning platform was perceived by the total of participants (99.5%) as highly effective.

The same percentage (99.5%) of respondents evaluated the trainers competent, skilful, qualified, and their communication style was perceived as accurate, clear, effective, and exhaustive.

Most of the respondents considered the training activity effective to acquire and improve knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be applied in their work practice, and relevant to increase their productivity and performance (91%).

Discussion

The COVID-19 pandemic, even if it provided a powerful test of the potential of online learning, had also revealed its key limitations, including the need of adequate digital skills, computer equipment and good internet connection to undertake training online, the difficulty of delivering traditional work-based learning online, and the struggle of teachers with a limited training in online teaching methods (5).

This also affected the ISS Library and the Scientific Communication Unit staff involved in this kind of distance learning activities for the first time. It was decided to create as much interaction as possible and to give practical examples by means of additional material and lists of useful links. The slides used for the training were self-explanatory to be easily read even after the course, being attentive to the proper use of words to communicate effectively. Pictures, graphs, tables, and other diagrammatic representation were inserted in the slides to get participants much more interested in following the session (6). The contact information of the trainers was provided to the participants to offer continuity to the seminar and support over time.

Based on that experience and the feedback received, there are some issues that we think should be implemented: webinars duration did not always allowed to assimilate information beyond the basic concepts, interaction with participants should be enhanced, there was a need to assign more time for active learning, possibly with a better use of the online available resources, and remote teaching skills should also be improved (7, 8). Yet, the need of a second edition showed the interest in this activity and the necessity to keep up with the ever-changing information knowledge landscape.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the need to seek, use and produce quality health information. The webinars, in this context, were a great opportunity: their use for ISS staff training was extremely valuable during this period, offering the possibility to reach more people simultaneously, and to enhance the visibility of the Library and Scientific Communication Unit staff maintaining a close relationship with ISS personnel, even at a distance.

We should not be afraid of going beyond our comfort zone, acquiring different skills, or experimenting with new collaborations. On the Library and Scientific Communication Unit side, this training initiative was successful in terms of improved knowledge on skills available among the personnel of these two services. It increased trust in the competencies of internal staff and at the same time it contributed to develop awareness of the value of the services rendered. Skills to use ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) for training were improved as well as ISS staff cohesion favouring the development of new collaborations.

The leading concepts successfully guiding the organization of the training program were based on both “Look *outside* the box” and “Look *inside* the box”. This double approach allowed us to boost creativity, think differently and cope with the pandemic restrictions on one hand and to use existing resources and improve in-house skills of both trainers and trainees, on the other hand. The initiative carried out at the ISS during the pandemic and reported here might prove useful whenever there is a need to improve sharing of information, skills and positive attitudes among people working in the same workplace acquiring, at the same time, new skills thanks to the collaboration with people working in different areas and part of this experience could be used in discussing the libraries of the future.

Acknowledgements

This paper is a further development of an oral presentation introduced at the 2022 EAHIL conference “Broaden the horizons: diversity, partnership and innovation with a human touch” held in Rotterdam (The Netherlands) (1-3 June 2022).

*Received on 7 June 2023.
Accepted on 15 June 2023.*

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A journal club for professional networking and promotion of systematic review methodology

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Abstract

This article describes the launching of a journal club in the EAHIL Special Interest Group (SIG) for Evidence-Based Information. The key aim of the SIG is to bring together and connect all EAHIL members wanting to improve the quality of systematic reviews and other evidence-based products. One project was to set up a reference library with research papers on systematic review methodology and the role of librarians. To help translate research into practice and connect colleagues for discussion, a journal club was launched. Invited guests, such as the authors of a selected paper, not only information specialists, have been a successful feature and future development of the journal club may include inviting other authors such as students, PhD students or clinicians.

Key words: education, professional; systematic reviews as topic; librarians; information storage and retrieval.

Introduction

Journal clubs have existed for nearly 150 years, first starting in medicine (1, 2). They became a way of communicating evidence-based practice, and have subsequently also been adopted by academic libraries. Journal clubs seem to be more common within medical libraries compared to other libraries, and their purpose may differ depending on attendees, setting, or aims (1-4). Studies have shown journal clubs can result in a “research culture”, with an increased interest in research methods and application of these and facilitation of evidence-based practice within our professional field (5, 6). Unlike medical journal clubs, medical library journal clubs do not necessarily focus on critical appraisal. Instead, information professionals find journal clubs of value in discussing research within the profession, developing professional knowledge, building communities of practice and learning how to turn research into practice (7, 8).

In 2019, a new Special Interest Group (SIG) focusing on Evidence-Based Information was launched within European Association for Health Information and Li-

braries (EAHIL). The key aims were to strengthen and advocate for methodologies within evidence-based synthesis, and connect members to facilitate knowledge exchange (9). The group attracted many members from the start, and a list of specific projects (10) was set up in which members could participate to further contribute to fulfill the aims of the SIG. One of these projects aimed to set up a reference library with research papers on evidence synthesis methodology.

The project group developing the reference library has three members, and the reference library is an online Zotero library (11) one of the members had already started. To retrieve new papers in an efficient and structured way, alerts were created in a couple of key databases (such as PubMed and LISTA) and online journals (such as Systematic Reviews, Journal of Medical Library Association and Health Information & Libraries Journal). Relevant papers retrieved through these alerts and by other ways, are added manually to Zotero by members of the group. The topics covered by the papers in the library are not limited to search methodologies, but include also topics on the librari-

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ans' role in, for example, the systematic review process and the competencies needed in conducting systematic reviews, such as project management or the development of support and services as described in previous studies (12, 13).

Method

Setting up a journal club

To facilitate translation of research into practice, and to bring colleagues together who work with systematic reviews for discussion, reflection and exchange of experiences, a journal club was launched. Relevant research papers for the journal club are chosen by the project group. Criteria for inclusion of a paper in the journal club is that the paper is focused on systematic review methods, or services and management of systematic reviews. Topics and questions for discussion are chosen to create an open atmosphere, where members would feel welcome regardless of their level of experience. We decided that the focus of the journal club should be on how the members integrate the topic of the paper into their daily practices, how they would do so if they currently are not doing so, what difficulties they encounter and above all to share experiences and learn from each other.

It was decided that two journal clubs would be held each year, one in spring and one in fall. To make participation possible for all due to the SIG members' different geographical locations, the journal club is held online via Zoom, with breakout rooms for small group discussions. We decided no registration in advance should be needed, to make participation easy. The organisers prepare a set of questions to accompany each paper, to encourage discussion and keep it focused. These questions are sent in advance along with the invitation for the journal club via the SIG email group. Minutes are taken, where the groups are helping to summarise the discussions, and these are added with notes from the final discussion in a brief report for those who could not attend. Reports from the journal clubs are available through the SIGs online platform in Google Docs (14).

Result

Experiences so far

The journal club has so far been held twice with approximately 20 participants each time. The paper by McKeown *et al.* (12) in the first journal club in October

2022 was about development of a systematic review service. This topic was chosen as a starter since we thought the topic would be relevant to all members and would be great to use for reflection of our own different daily practices. The journal club participants were keen to talk and get to know each other in the small group discussions and the paper served well as a start for the journal club and its aims.

One of the SIG members suggested for the next journal club that we invited the authors of the paper to participate.

The second journal club, in March 2023, focused on grey literature and therefore the paper by Landerdahl-Stridsberg *et al.* (15) was chosen. We invited both the lead author, who is an information specialist, and a co-author, who is a researcher. They gave their perspectives on the value of grey literature, how to search for it and the challenges they encountered. This was highly appreciated and has the potential to make the journal club even more interesting and informative. The role of the information specialist was pointed out by the researcher as essential. The participants shared experiences and knowledge, led by the questions for discussion which were provided beforehand. They did so first in small breakout groups and afterwards shared their experiences with the whole group.

Discussion

Future directions and benefits for both librarians and users

The participants of the journal clubs have helped create an open atmosphere, where exchange of knowledge and experiences have been welcomed. Using a research paper has been an excellent way to encourage deep reflection on participant's daily practices in relation to research results. The journal club format has provided opportunities to get to know each other's professional contexts, as well as highlighting relevant research within our field of expertise.

Participants have also been encouraged to make suggestions for improvement to the journal club format. Some of these, e.g. inviting the authors of a paper to present their research and contribute to the discussion, have been a very successful addition to the journal club. We will keep on encouraging participants to make suggestions. In the future we may invite other guests, e.g. students, PhD students, researchers or clinicians, who are also authors of research papers. In the course of

our work, we meet many of these user groups, and it would be very interesting to hear their perspectives on evidence synthesis methodologies, barriers and facilitators to implementation, and the role of the information professional within that.

Adding user perspective and librarian-researcher collaboration perspective by inviting guests to our journal clubs is something to work further with. We plan to continue with the journal club as a professional network and discussion group, and possibly also to extend it to include our users' valuable input. This could be made possible by altering the setup for the journal club, e.g. sometimes focusing on the paper and discussion with likeminded professionals, and sometimes, when possible, invite authors as guests to broaden our perspectives.

Conclusion

The SIG journal club has encouraged reflection of daily practice in research results, and helped colleagues to connect with likeminded information professionals. Future directions for the journal club may be to include authors with different professional roles to widen our perspectives of systematic review methods and services and librarian-researcher collaboration.

*Received on 7 June 2023.
Accepted on 12 June 2023.*

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“Clubbing” with the EBMs. A brief report by the German Medical Library Association’s working group on EBM

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Abstract

The Working Group on Evidence-Based Medicine (AG-EBM) founded in 2019 within the German Medical Library Association (AGMB) aims to create a space where German-speaking AGMB members, experienced and inexperienced, can meet, share, discuss, collaborate and learn on a voluntary and altruistic basis in the areas of EBM and systematic literature searching. The group is working to establish informal training formats such as journal clubs and workshops. In recent years, the speakers have organised a wide range of virtual training events. The working group meets regularly in-person at the AGMB’s annual conferences.

Key words: *medical libraries; evidence-based medicine; Austria; Germany; Switzerland.*

Introduction

After lively discussions about the role that German medical librarians can play in the field of evidence-based-medicine (1), and following a session entitled “Systematic searching light” at the annual meeting of the German Medical Library Association (AGMB) in 2018, a general feeling remained that the communities of information specialists and medical librarians in German-speaking countries were somehow drifting apart. In order to remedy this situation by providing opportunities for exchange and networking, a working group on evidence-based-medicine (AG-EBM) was officially established within the AGMB in 2019 (2). Since then, three spokespersons have taken care of the organisation of the group, the mailing list and the content of the website https://www.agmb.de/de_DE/ag-evidenzbasierte-medizin. The working group meets regularly in person at the annual meetings of the AGMB.

The Working Group on Evidence-Based Medicine (AG-EBM)

An online survey of medical librarians in Germany, Austria and Switzerland was conducted by one of the speakers on behalf of the group in 2020. The main focus of this survey was to characterise the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that German-speaking medical librarians face when trying to provide or implement systematic review services (2). To meet the needs expressed within the group and in the survey, several online training sessions in German have been organised by the speakers. Educational materials developed by group members have also been compiled and shared through the internal website. Many of these materials are under Creative Commons license, so that other members can reuse and adapt them to their needs. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the year 2020 brought unforeseen challenges for the new AG-EBM working group and its speakers. The group’s annual

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meeting, which was intended to facilitate networking through face-to-face meetings and thus reduce barriers, such as asking for individual support when needed, had to be moved to an online-only format. Furthermore, a planned face-to-face training session on literature searching had to be cancelled. Online meetings were quite new territory for most of the group members at the time, but everyone was willing to learn quickly. As a result, the presentation of the group's activities during its first year, the brainstorming on the survey results, and the suggestions for the way forward worked quite well. One of the main positive outcomes of this new experience was the realisation that online meetings were a viable way for the group to stay in touch quite effortlessly. Another positive outcome was the consensus that regular journal clubs were the easiest way to move forward with further training activities in addition to organising formal training events.

In the same year, the speakers launched a series of virtual training events. Two meetings on "Peer Review of a Search Strategy: (PRESS) Guideline" were followed by journal clubs and practical exercises on the "PRISMA Statement" and "De-duplication and updating of search strategies using Bramer's method".

The external training course "Worlds, Tools and Effectiveness" provided informative insights into the use of the Ovid platform for systematic literature searches and the series continued with an "Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice" and "Using systematic reviews in practice - risk of bias in clinical trials". This was followed by a journal club on "Search filters".

"Clubbing" with the EBMs

As the series progressed, the speakers realised that the traditional format of a journal club, in which one person is chosen to analyse and present a paper of interest to the group, followed by a discussion led by the presenter, was not sufficient to encourage lively exchange within the group. They decided on an additional format, which they called the "Survival Club" (the name was inspired by a book called: "The snake bite survivors club", which jokingly became: "Systematic review survivors club" and was eventually shortened to the now official name: "Survival Club" (4). Without discussing a specific paper, but with a set topic, this format provides space for an informal exchange of tips and tricks between experienced colleagues, as well as insights and

help for newcomers to the field of systematic searching and EBM.

Twelve journal or survival clubs have been held so far. Recent topics have included "Citation Tracking", "Keeping up to date", "PubMed Proximity Search" and "Service Forms –the first contact and the basis for initial discussions with our customers". The topics of the sessions are agreed upon by the speakers or suggested by the group members. Presenters either invite experts in the field to attend the clubs and share their knowledge, or in the absence of an expert, the speakers take the lead in the discussion. Slides and other materials discussed, as well as the minutes of the meetings, are posted on the website shortly after the training events. The 2024 calendar is currently filling up. So far, clubs on "Deduplication with Deduklick and other tools", "Evaluation of five different deduplication tools", "GRADE", "Voyant", "Epistemonikos" and "Different types of reviews" are planned. The future club meetings will be listed in EAHIL's TrEDMIL Events Diary and we invite interested EAHIL members to participate as guests at these events.

Invitations to the online clubs are sent to the AG-EBM mailing list one week before the club meetings. In May 2023 there are 79 subscribers to this mailing list. Of course, not everyone interested in the working group can attend all the meetings. Over the year, between 23 and 38 club members have met (admittedly on Mondays, in broad daylight, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon) to share and discuss. The number of participants increased over time, starting with an average of 12 to 13 people at the first online training sessions.

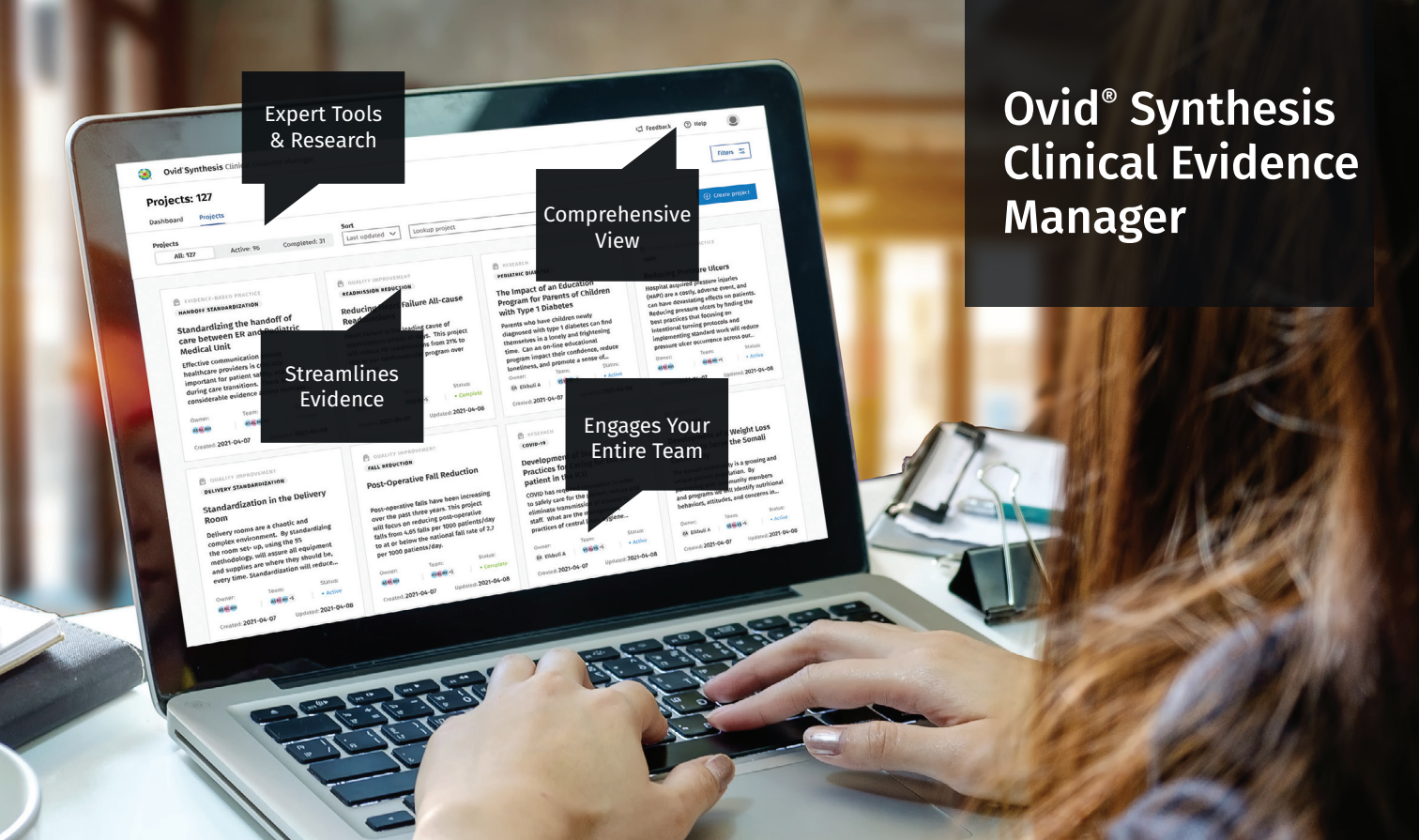
Thanks to the enthusiasm, generosity and willingness to learn of all participants, the AG-EBM "Arbeitsgruppe Evidenzbasierte Medizin" can look back on three very successful years. Membership of the working group can be obtained by simply subscribing the group's mailing list. New members and guests are always welcome.

Special thanks are due to the University Medical Library, Mainz for maintaining the mailing list and to the German Medical Library Association for providing workspace for the group.

*Received on 7 June 2023.
Accepted on 15 June 2023.*

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Letter from the President



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Dear EAHIL members,

I hope this letter finds you well. When this is published, the Trondheim Workshop has come to a close, and I want to take this opportunity to thank the Trondheim team for their efforts in planning a great event, as well as all of our members who attended and made it such a success. It was great to see old friends and make new connections.

At the Workshop, we had the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations about the latest trends and innovations in health information and libraries. We explored the conference theme of Radical Positive Change Agents in-depth and heard from colleagues who shared their insights and expertise. I hope all attendees left the workshop feeling inspired and empowered to make positive changes in their work.

For members who didn't have the opportunity to listen to Lankes' keynote speech in Trondheim, you can now view it online on the EAHIL YouTube account. The presentation is entitled "Radicals, Rebellion, and Saving Our Communities". For those interested I can recommend his book *The Atlas of New Librarianship*, where he introduces the idea of librarians as radical positive change agents. According to Lankes, librarians have always been change agents, helping shape their communities by providing access to information and resources. However, he argues that in today's rapidly changing world, librarians need to be even more proactive in their efforts to effect positive change. Lankes believes that librarians should be active participants in their communities, working to help people build the skills and knowledge they need to make positive changes in their lives and society. To be effective change agents, Lankes argues that librarians need to embrace several fundamental values and practices. These include a commitment to openness, a willingness to take risks, a focus on community building, and a belief in the power of collaboration.

Overall, David Lankes' vision of librarians as radical positive change agents is inspiring. By embracing this role, librarians can help to create a more just, equitable, and knowledgeable society.

Looking ahead, we will launch a new mentorship program later this year, providing opportunities for members to connect with more experienced colleagues and receive guidance and support as they navigate their careers. More information about this will be communicated in our channels.

In addition, we are now accepting bids to host our events from 2025 and beyond. If you want to bring our community to your city and show us what you've got, please contact me or any Board member! We're always looking for new and exciting locations to explore.

As always, I welcome your feedback and ideas for improving and growing as an association. Don't hesitate to reach out to me or any of our Board members with your thoughts and suggestions.

Thank you for your ongoing support, and I look forward to seeing you at our next event.



Time to **MEET** in Riga!

Save the date!
June 11-14, 2024

19th EAHIL / European Association for Health
Information and Libraries Conference



Publications and new products

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Dear colleagues,

Keeping on with my previous column, I suggest watching a webinar by the European Association of Science Editors (EASE) on the topic of ChatGPT, an Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool for content creation: “GPT, language models, and AI in scholarly publishing” (you can see it for free on their YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WiPWaXrHpOI&t=3s>). The speakers gave some very practical ideas on these tools to let us better understand how we can use them in our work, and what might be coming in future. Here some examples on how AI may be applied in the future to the daily working activities of librarians: writing primers for different audiences, language support (translations, writing in non-native English), doing literature review, writing review articles, summarising papers, writing social media posts. It seems very fascinating but, however, it is still too early to draw conclusions, the only thing we can do now is to deepen our knowledge of this tool without preconceived ideas.

JOURNAL ISSUES

Health Information and Libraries Journal: Contents of June 2023 (40:2)

Editorial

- **In search of health information...**

Maria J Grant

Review article

- **Drug information-seeking behaviours of physicians, nurses and pharmacists: A systematic review.**

Yu Xin Fiona Tan, Suzanne Tze Yin Lim, Jun Liang Lim, Tao Tao Magdeline Ng and Hui Ting Chng

Original Articles

- **Application of text mining to the development and validation of a geographic search filter to facilitate evidence retrieval in Ovid MEDLINE: An example from the United States.**

Antoinette Cheung, Evan Popoff & Shelagh Evan

- **Development of a validated search filter for Ovid Embase for degenerative cervical myelopathy.**

Benjamin Davies, Maaz Khan, Oliver Mowforth, Isla Kuhn and Mark Kotter

- **Updated generic search filters for finding studies of adverse drug effects in Ovid MEDLINE and Embase may retrieve up to 90% of relevant studies.**

Su Golder, Kelly Farrah, Monika Mierzwinski-Urban, Beth Barker and Anna Rama

- **Classification of all pharmacological interventions tested in trials relevant to people with schizophrenia: a study-based analysis.**
Farhad Shokraneh and Clive Adams

Regular Features

Dissertations into Practice

- **New to Health Information, Library or Knowledge Work...**
Maria J Grant

International Perspectives and Initiatives (Responding to Advances in Technology)

- **Technology and informatics in Australian health libraries.**
Daniel McDonald and Gemma Siemensma

Teaching and Learning in Action

- **Adding value to learning and development through CILIP accreditation: The NHS Knowledge for Healthcare learning academy.**
Dominic Gilroy and Gil Young

FROM THE WEB

- **ESAC Reference guide to transformative agreements**
The ESAC reference guide to transformative agreements serves as an authoritative and essential orientation for librarians and consortium staff just beginning to approach or looking to update their transformative agreement strategies based on the latest benchmarks. The Guide builds on the knowledge and insights of an “expert group” within the ESAC community with considerable experience in strategy development, negotiations, and operationalizing open access within their institutions, making it an essential and authoritative resource. Since the year of its first publication (2021), the Reference Guide has been expanded and updated to integrate new sources, making it even more robust and comprehensive. See the new additions here: <https://esac-initiative.org/everything-librarians-need-to-know-about-tas/>
- **Science journals integrate Dryad to simplify data deposition and strengthen scientific reproducibility**
The Science family journals have announced a partnership with the nonprofit data repository Dryad to simplify the process by which authors deposit the data underlying their works. The Science journals will cover costs of Dryad data publication for accepted papers. The datasets of accepted papers will undergo Dryad's curatorial process – to ensure the data is usable – and become public on the Dryad site once the article is published, with an associated DOI and with links to and from the published research article. To learn more: H. Holden Thorp et al., Strengthening the scientific record. *Science* 380,13 (2023). DOI:10.1126/science.adi0333
- **Lack of sustainability plans for preprint services risks their potential to improve science**
During the COVID-19 pandemic, preprint servers became a vital mechanism for the rapid sharing and review of research. However, discussing the findings of a recent report (The Case for Supporting Open Infrastructure for Preprints: A Preliminary Investigation), Naomi Penfold, the author of a post published on the LSE Impact Blog, finds that much of the infrastructure supporting non-commercial preprint publications is precariously governed and at risk of being acquired by commercial publishers. Read it here: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2023/03/02/lack-of-sustainability-plans-for-preprint-services-risks-their-potential-to-improve-science/>

PUBLICATIONS AND NEW PRODUCTS

- **Identifying fake journals**

The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) recently issued a statement on lists of predatory (or fake) journals asking authors and institutions to treat these lists with the same degree of scrutiny as they do with the journals themselves. Lists that are not transparent about their criteria should not be relied on. Moreover, such lists may perpetuate systemic bias and include journals with limited resources, but which are legitimate journals with the best intentions. On the COPE website is also possible to read a discussion document on predatory publishing which expands on how authors, reviewers, editors, and institutions can identify predatory journals.

It is possible to download the entire document here: <https://publicationethics.org/resources/discussion-documents/predatory-publishing>

SOME FORTHCOMING EVENTS

88th IFLA general conference and assembly. Let's work together, let's library

August 21 – 25, 2023 – Rotterdam, The Netherlands

It is possible to register either for the onsite congress in Rotterdam or the virtual conference.

More info at: <https://2023.ifla.org/>

OAI13 - The Geneva Workshop on Innovations in Scholarly Communication

September 4 – 8

The OR2023 conference will focus on the practices of the international repositories community to develop. The conference will be taking place virtually and will feature sessions on:

- Implementing the UNESCO recommendations on Open Science
- Ownership of scholarly infrastructure
- Research Evaluation
- Open Science in times of conflict
- Diamond Open Access

Here you can find regularly updated information about the program: <https://oai.events/oai13/>

4th Open Science Fair 2023. Charting the course: reimagining open science for next generations

September 25-27, Madrid Spain

OSFair2023 is organized by OpenAIRE. Conference topics are:

- Advancing and reforming research assessment (RRA) and open science; connections barriers and way ahead
- AI impact on open science and open science impact on AI
- Innovation and disruption in scholarly publishing
- Fair data, software and hardware
- Openness in research and education
- Public engagement and citizen science

More info at: <https://www.opensciencefair.eu/>

Please feel free to contact me (annarita.barbaro@iss.it) if you have any further suggestion about initiatives or events you would like to promote

Editorial Board

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Editorial layout and pagination: **De Vittoria srl**, Rome, Italy

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