

Clinical Librarian Service:

Providing research evidence at the point of clinical need

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UHL Clinical Librarian Service Project Plan

NB: Written in 2000 therefore some of the detail is no longer current. The plan is offered here as an example.

[Background](#) | [Definition](#) | [Partnerships](#) | [Scope](#) | [Benefits](#) | [Budget](#) | [Constraints](#) | [Project organisation](#) | [Communication](#) | [Quality assurance](#) | [Timescales](#) | [Evaluation](#) | [Appendices](#)

Purpose of Document

The purpose of this document is to define the Clinical Librarian Service, to form the basis for its management and to assist with its evaluation.

1. Background

Clinical Governance requires NHS trusts to ensure that evidence based practice is supported and applied routinely in everyday practice. Barriers to accessing the information required to practice evidence-based health care have been identified as:

- Time. Clinicians have recognised that the searching process can take two hours out of their busy day.
- Lack of knowledge of the most relevant database/s to search and the most effective way in which to search it.
- Access to IT facilities, with a lack of investment in hardware and software in the clinical setting.

Davidoff suggests that putting "information retrieval tools directly into physicians' hands... physicians still don't regularly search the medical literature themselves, nor do they ask for professional help in searching nearly as often as they need to. Many questions arising in clinical encounters that can, and should, be answered on the basis of evidence from the published literature are therefore never addressed."

A scoping study carried out in 1998 at Leicester General Hospital (LGH) identified clinicians interest in the clinical librarian concept. This led to a six-month Modernisation Funded pilot project at LGH that identified the benefits of an outreach clinical librarian present in the clinical setting to stimulate and respond to clinical questions (see Appendix 1). Leicestershire Health in

partnership with UHL has identified three years funding to extend the service to the three UHL hospital sites.

[Back to top of page](#)



2. Project definition

2.1 Project aim

Develop a clinical librarian service for UHL to support clinical governance and provide evidence-based information in the practice of patient care.

2.2 Project objectives

2.2.1 Prompt clinicians to seek the evidence to support patient care by becoming an integral part of selected multidisciplinary clinical teams present at ward rounds, clinical meetings and audit meetings.

2.2.2 Ensure that questions arising in clinical encounters are answered on the basis of evidence from the published literature. Provide evidence based literature searches for patient care queries highlighting the level of evidence found.

2.2.3 Reduce information overload by providing the most clinically relevant material due to knowledge of local issues/terminology.

2.2.4 Support the future care of patients by providing evidence for new guidelines.

2.2.5 Provide an evaluated model of best practice that can inform similar developments.

2.3 The clinical librarian service will offer the following:

2.3.1 contact in the clinical setting to provide the evidence for patient care

2.3.2 contact with clinicians in advance of ward rounds, clinical meetings and audit so topics being discussed can be accompanied by supporting evidence.

2.3.3 provide the evidence base for the development of new guidelines to support future patient care within the assigned clinical teams.

2.3.4 provide evidence based literature searches with:

- a digest/summary of the results listing the databases searched and highlighting the level of evidence found,

- full text articles when appropriate

2.3.5 current awareness for hot topics. The clinical librarian can anticipate information needs in clinical subject areas and proactively keep abreast of new developments

2.3.6 an intranet hosted database of questions asked, beneficial for identifying what kinds of clinical questions are asked most often and which questions lack satisfactory answers.

2.3.7 an Intranet site with clinical librarian contact details, times of clinical visits, questions database.

[Back to top of page](#)



3. Partnerships

The clinical librarian service will work in partnership with:

3.1 the Clinical Effectiveness Information Librarian and literature search services offered by the Clinical Sciences Library, Leicester General Hospital library and Glenfield Hospital Library to avoid duplication of service provision and ensure access to the evidence-base for all departments of the UHL.

3.2 the inter-library loan services offered by the three libraries on the UHL sites to ensure rapid access to full text material not available locally.

3.3 the UHL libraries to market and support the provision of a UHL library training programme ensuring all UHL staff achieve a high level of evidence based information retrieval skills.

3.4 the information technology departments to support the access to and provision of information.

3.5 Clinical governance managers to ensure that the clinical librarian service is used to support the clinical governance agenda.

3.6 other clinical librarians in this country and abroad to share best practice.

[Back to top of page](#)



4. Project scope

4.1 The project will last for three years and will support specified departments across University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust. It will initially consist of two librarians based at the Leicester General Hospital and the Glenfield Hospital.

4.2 Departments supported by the service will change over time. Evaluation of the service within each department will be made every three months. Areas where the service is not working effectively will be highlighted to the Steering Group for advice on new approaches to take or approval to suspend support. The list of clinical teams supported by the service will be identified as:

- Currently supported. See Appendix 2 for a full list of areas supported.
- Targeted areas of support. This is open to modification after consultation with the Steering Group
- Suspended. Departments suspended from service provision due to insufficient uptake.

4.3 Site specific and cross-site support will be provided.

[Back to top of page](#)



5. Project Benefits

5.1 The clinical librarian service bridges the literature-practice gap, overcoming barriers (e.g. time, knowledge and access) to getting information into practice. Clinical librarians combine the expert literature searching skills, knowledge of resources and a developing knowledge of local issues and terminology in clinical subject areas.

5.2 The clinical librarian service supports clinical governance by ensuring that evidence based practice is supported and applied routinely in everyday practice.

5.3 Identifies the kinds of clinical questions asked most often and which questions lack satisfactory answers that could contribute to the clinical research agenda.

[Back to top of page](#)



6. Budget

Staffing costs for three clinical librarians. 50% of the funding is being provided by Local Implementation Strategy Funds. The additional funds have been provided by the Trust & Blending Services funds.

The budget consists of funding for the clinical librarian posts only.

This project must determine future budget responsibilities, data collection required to identify costs, resource costs e.g. provision of full text articles, administration, clinical librarian training and office space.

[Back to top of page](#)



7. Constraints

7.1 Time constraints

This is a three-year project.

7.2 Size constraints

Number of clinical librarians to cover UHL Trust

[Back to top of page](#)



8. Project Organisation Structure

8.1 Project Team

Providing regular reports to the Steering Group and Local Implementation Strategy Group. Undertaking the operational duties.

Representative
Name
Trust
Project Manager
Claire Honeybourne, Library Services Manager
LGH, UHL Trust
Project Team
Linda Ward, Clinical Librarian
LGH, UHL Trust

Jacqueline Verschuere, Clinical Librarian
GH, UHL Trust

Mary Edmunds-Otter, Clinical Effectiveness Librarian
LRI, UHL Trust/ University of Leicester

8.2 Steering Group

Providing overall direction and guidance to:

- identify opportunities
- define priorities
- make decisions regarding leadership and staff involvement
- monitor, coordinate and support the service
- ensure service meets UHL organisational aims and objectives
- ensure successful implementation

Name

Title

Trust

Liz Rowbotham

General Manager Clinical Support Services

UHL Trust

Lynn Woods

Assistant Nurse Director (Clinical Governance)

UHL Trust

Sharron Hotson

Clinical Governance Manager

GGH, UHL Trust

Andy Ogilvy

Consultant Anaesthetist/ Clinical Tutor

LGH, UHL Trust

Tony Narula

Assistant Medical Director (Clinical Governance)

UHL Trust

Louise Jones

Clinical Sciences Librarian

University of Leicester

Humphrey Dunn

Librarian

GGH UHL Trust

Claire Honeybourne

Library Services Manager

LGH, UHL Trust

[Back to top of page](#)



9. Communications plan

Monthly meetings of the Project Team will be held.

Updated 07/11/05

Quarterly meetings of the Steering Group will be held.

Communication with users of the service will be via personal contact, email, intranet and print. Presentations within the Trust, Regionally and Nationally will be used to communicate the project details.

Email will be used to provide a link between the two clinical librarians and the Clinical Effectiveness Information Librarian.

Marketing the Clinical Librarian Service:

- Promotion via the Steering Group

10 Promotion via personal contact with lead clinicians

11 Promotion via conference presentations

12 Promotion via publication (articles in health literature)

13 Promotion via internal publicity (mailshot/poster/flyers/intranet)

- Promotion via the Internet/e-mail lists

[Back to top of page](#)



10. Quality assurance

10.1 Clinical Librarian skills/knowledge. The clinical librarians will have obtained:

- PRECEPT (Programme for encouraging clinically effective practice in Trent) training.
- Critical Appraisals Skills training
- Associateship of the Library Association

10.2 Clinical Librarian continuing professional development:

Proactive in seeking relevant training

10.3 Performance. An evaluation questionnaire (modified as a result of the pilot) is sent with each completed search to measure timeliness, usefulness, number of full-text articles obtained as a result of receiving the search and impact on patient care. The questionnaires will be evaluated on a monthly

basis at the Project Team meetings to ensure an effective service is being provided, to monitor trends and to serve as an impetus to enhance services.

[Back to top of page](#)



11. Project timescales

Activity

Responsibility

Deadline

First clinical librarian (Linda Ward) in post

August 2000

Project team established

Claire Honeybourne

February 2001

Set up steering group

Claire Honeybourne

February 2001

Six month report

Linda Ward

February 2001

Second clinical librarian (Jacqueline Verschuere) in post

February 2001

Extend service to Cardiology and Anaesthetics

Jacqueline Verschuere

February 2001

Database available on Intranet site

Linda Ward

March 2001

Review of current departments

Project Team

May 2001

Extend service to other selected teams

Jacqueline Verschuere

May 2001

Six month report

Jacqueline Verschuere/Linda Ward

August 2001

Report to steering group and LIS

Claire Honeybourne

August 2001

Approach UHL for third clinical librarian to join the project on a two year contract

Claire Honeybourne/ Louise Jones

August 2001

Third librarian in post

February 2002

Final project report and evaluation report

June 2003

Decision to continue

June 2003

End of project at LGH

End July 2003

End of project at GGH/LRI

End January 2004

[Back to top of page](#)



12. Evaluation:

12.1 Maintain and develop existing internal evaluation process

12.2 The School of Health and Related Research (SchARR) will externally evaluate the project.

12.3 Ensure all aspects of the service are reported to the Steering Group and other official bodies.

[Back to top of page](#)



Appendix 1: Details of clinical librarian pilot project at LGH. *British Journal of Clinical Governance*. 2001 6,4 248 - 252

A Clinical Librarian can support clinical governance

Abstract:

Tests the feasibility of an outreach clinical librarian service in an acute hospital setting, providing quality filtered research evidence at the point of clinical need. The design was based on a six-month pilot with professional librarians attending clinical meetings responding to information needs raised there by providing appraised summaries of the published evidence, with full text and bibliographic material as appropriate. The main outcomes were usage statistics and clinicians' evaluation via a 23-question questionnaire completed each month seeking overall views of the service. Practical issues regarding the provision of the service were tested. Concludes that an outreach information service in the clinical setting can meet the clinical governance agenda of the Trust by supporting evidence-based practice, teaching and learning and continuing professional development. Earlier models of service are adapted to make the service cost-effective.

Appendix 2: Identification of areas currently served by the clinical librarians

Linda Ward

Jacqueline Verschuere

Proposed areas for 3rd Clinical Librarian

Anaesthesia and Critical Care/ ITU

Anaesthesiology & Pain Management

A & E

Integrated Medicine (LGH) Emergency Medical Unit (LGH) Stroke (LGH)

Cardio-respiratory Directorate

Cancer Services

Musculoskeletal Directorate, Orthopaedics, Rheumatology

Integrated Medicine (GH)

Children's Services

Renal (LGH)

Surgery (GH)

Diabetes Services

Shared Governance Clinical Practice Council (LGH)

Women's & Perinatal Directorate: Neonatal Intensive Care & Obstetrics & Gynaecology