Exploring the impact of Information Professionals on Evidence Based Practice

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Overview

- Health information professionals play a key role in EBP
- Wide range of roles
- Do we make a difference?
- How do we evaluate?
- Illustrations from a range of projects to demonstrate effectiveness and impact
Methods

- Presentation of model of roles based on literature review
- Demonstration of the model in practice
  - Portfolio of cases
- Summary of evidence
Appraising → Finding → Appraising
Appraising ← Finding ← Appraising
Finding → Appraising → Implementing → Evaluating
Model in practice

- 4 studies relating to information skills training within EBP (supportive role)
  - One study unlikely to establish overall effectiveness or impact
  - Use range of research methodologies
- Evidence of effectiveness and impact (active role)
EMPIRIC study

- Compared the effectiveness, cost effectiveness and impact of providing training and mediated searches in hospital libraries
- Librarians – capacity builders and evidence facilitators (supportive role)
- Descriptive survey, cost analysis
- Outcome measures = satisfaction, use of skills, use of information
EMPIRIC - conclusions

- Both methods of providing information are effective
- Cost effectiveness depends on whose perspective is being measured
- Providing training does not reduce demand for mediated searches
- Information is being used for CPD, direct patient care, research and EBP
- Majority satisfied with results of own searches and search frequently
Developing and evaluating an online tutorial

- Interactive tutorial - medline post grad EBP students
- Librarians capacity builders (supportive)
- Quasi experimental – pre and post skills test
Online tutorial - conclusions

- Well received by students
- 85% improved overall searching skills
- Successfully integrated into curriculum
- Small study, no comparison group
Information skills training: a systematic review of the literature

- Does information skills training in a health setting improve search skills?
- What methods of training are effective?
- Does training affect patient care?
- Librarians in capacity building (supportive role)
Systematic review: conclusions

- 24 studies included
- Heterogenous, generally poor quality, poor reporting of methodology, subjective measures to determine changes in skills
- Limited evidence training improves search skills (3 good quality studies)
- Insufficient evidence on most effective method of training (lack of comparative studies or insufficient descriptions)
- Limited evidence that training improves patient care (2 studies)
Evaluating information skills training: systematic review

- To identify valid and reliable measures of evaluating training
- To enable librarians become researchers or evaluators (active role) and evaluate their own training (supportive role)
Evaluating - conclusions

- There is a lack of valid and reliable “off the shelf” instruments for evaluating training
- Provides details of what has been evaluated, on whom and in which setting
- Using valid and reliable instruments in evaluations/research studies improves credibility of results
- There is scope for development and testing of instruments to evaluate in a range of situations and settings
What do the studies tell us?

- Information professionals play a number of roles in different settings
- There are different ways of evaluating training
- There are different contexts when evaluating training
- There are many issues to take into account when evaluating training
Make a difference?

- All show some evidence of effectiveness
- To demonstrate impact need to have evidence relating to outcomes
- However
  - The contribution or impact that information professionals make may not have immediate or tangible outcomes
Conclusions

- Information professionals do make a difference to evidence based practice
- Short, medium, long term impacts
- Weight of the evidence is limited
- Could further populate using additional studies to provide an overall view of the impact made, undertake larger, higher quality studies to increase the weight of evidence
- Can use to demonstrate impact on other aspects of the information professional role
Any Questions

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References