



Implementing a Formal Systematic Review Service in an Academic Health Science Library Setting

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Background

An overview of the process of implementing a formal systematic review service for academic health science librarians who currently provide an informal systematic review service. This slight difference in approach can lead to a greater impact.

Introduction

Systematic reviews have existed since the early 80's-90's [1], however the boom in librarian involvement in systematic reviews in the academic health science library setting was not seen until of recent. After 2011, the IOM recommended librarians or information experts to be involved in the literature search process and many libraries have decided to offer a formal systematic review service [2]. The Ginsburg Health Sciences Library at Temple University implemented a formal systematic review service in the Fall of 2015. It has been used widely by both faculty and students.

Purpose & Research Question

What is the impact of having a formal systematic review service versus an informal systematic review service? What are the critical steps to implementing a formal systematic review service in an academic health science library setting? While systematic review requests are common in the academic health sciences setting, there is not yet a lot of research on implementing such a service and the specialized training that is required, including competencies for librarians.

Methods

In the Summer of 2014, the Ginsburg Health Sciences Library began an informal systematic review service after having received requests since 2009 for systematic reviews. Library staff received formal training from 2009-2014 and requests were on the rise. It seemed apparent that the library would have to start planning a formal systematic review service and in 2015 the library decided to hire a librarian to provide formal support and coordination for the launch of a formal systematic review service. The formal service began as a soft launch in the Fall of 2015. Two librarians were involved in the soft launch.

This allows for the comparison of the informal and the formal systematic review service and the steps that can be carried out by other librarians in the health sciences academic setting to create a formal systematic review service. The action steps were not dramatic in the informal versus the formal systematic review service but these slight changes and improvements allowed for a much greater future impact.

Results

Informal Systematic Review Service: (Summer 2014-Summer 2015)

Action Steps:

- Created a Libguide for Systematic Reviews.
- The library purchased a subscription to the database Embase and a subscription to Endnote.
- Taught a few drop in library workshops-What is a SR Overview offered in Fall and Spring.
- The library hired a Biomedical & Research Services Librarian (summer 2015).

Impact:

- Taught a workshop for Pediatric faculty SR Overview.
- Offered SR search tips to Pediatric 4th year research elective students and a few medical school faculty members.
- Assisted with 2 SR searches in papers that were published, librarian(s) received acknowledgement.

Formal Systematic Review Service: (Fall 2015-Present)

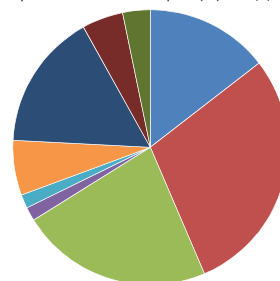
Action Steps:

- Created a mission statement for the SR program and drafted the policies and procedures for the formal SR service.
- Updated the Libguide for Systematic Reviews, added to the resources and a tab on critical appraisal tools.
- Updated the drop in library Systematic Review Overview workshop offered in Fall, Spring and Summer.
- Created a soft launch of the Systematic Review service by adding it to the Libguide and reaching out to key faculty members.
- Partnered with the Temple TCRI to provide consultations with a biostatistician for those interested in performing a meta-analysis.

Impact:

- 62 Systematic Review Service Requests (data collected from 9/1/15-9/1/16)

Systematic Review Service Requests (62) from 9/1/15-9/1/16



■ SRW Literature Searches (9) ■ SRW consultations (18) ■ SRW Guest Lectures (14)
■ SRW feedback (1) ■ Formulate PICO (1) ■ SRW scoping searches (4)
■ SRW search critique (10) ■ SRW methods write up (3) ■ Help with Critical Appraisal (2)

Conclusions

A formal systematic review service was implemented a year ago at the Ginsburg Health Sciences Library. Even without formal advertisement of the service, there has been a steady demand and an increase in systematic review requests in the health sciences library.

Many of the researchers (students and/or faculty) are repeat users of the service. They have inquired for help beyond the literature search and researchers expect consultation services about how to conduct a systematic review. There are other researchers who have already requested literature searches for more than one systematic review.

Having a formal systematic review service has allowed the health sciences library to meet the growing needs of the researchers, faculty and students interested in conducting or learning more about systematic reviews.

Directions for the Future

As more systematic reviews are being published than ever, the library has an incredible opportunity to play a pivotal role [3]. It doesn't require a big staff to begin offering a formal systematic review service. A service can start off small and grow as the demands for the service increase.

If starting a formal systematic review service you will want to have a librarian with expertise in the area whether that expertise is gained hands-on, by attending trainings or a second degree in research or health sciences.

It is also important to have a mission statement and a general description of the service with a comprehensive Libguide on systematic reviews to connect people to the service.

Offering an ongoing Introduction to Systematic Reviews workshop may be helpful in gaining additional interest in the service and making it more visible.

Expand your service to include consultation services, critical appraisal guidance and literature searching critique to provide a relevant and useful service.

Bibliography

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3. Bastian H, Glasziou P, Chalmers I. Seventy-five trials and eleven systematic reviews a day: how will we ever keep up. PLoS Med. 2010 Sep; 7(9):e1000326. [cited 1 Sep 2016]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000326>.