

Developing Information Literacy Workshops for School of Healthcare Staff at Leeds University

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Why run training sessions for staff?

During 2005/06 I worked with the School of Healthcare on an audit of information literacy (IL) skills training for Healthcare students (Lahlafl & Clarke, 2005). This resulted in a number of meetings with Healthcare staff to discuss the development and embedding within the School programmes of IL skills training for students. At the meetings, it became apparent that some Healthcare staff would themselves welcome some IL training particularly in the areas of electronic resources, refresher database searching and awareness of new information literacy resources.

What did the sessions cover?

The School of Healthcare Information Literacy Strategy Implementation Group agreed that I would offer three workshops to Healthcare staff. To facilitate ease of attendance for staff, we decided that these would be short sessions (45 minutes), run at lunchtimes during the first week in September, and would take place within the School of Healthcare using a PC cluster that seats 17 people. We tried to come up with catchy titles to attract staff, and cover a range of topics to appeal to different levels of knowledge. Staff were contacted by email using the School staff distribution list as follows:



Alison Lahlafl from the Library is running 3 sessions in September 2006 to help Healthcare staff develop their Information Literacy.

The sessions are designed to alert you to new information resources and refresh your skills.

In addition, the sessions will raise your awareness of more detailed Info Literacy sessions offered by the Library, such as Intelligent Web Searching or How to use Endnote.

Session 1: Are you a Google Scholar?

- Session will cover web searching tips, and will look at using Google Scholar (pros and cons), SCIRUS and Metasearch engines
- NLH new interface
- Useful gateways INTUTE, Social Care Online, Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Portal, Reproductive Health Gateway.
- Searching for Images (& copyright)

Monday 4th September 12.15 - 1pm

Session 2: Database amnesty

Refresher session on using databases more effectively - learn how to explode and Boolean your searches.

- Subject headings exploding and focussing and subheadings
- Limiting to publication types and filters
- Following up citations
- RAE – journal impact factors
- Tip sheet for improving searching e.g. keyword techniques

Wednesday 6th September 12.15 - 1pm

Session 3: Keeping up to date

Useful resources for staying abreast and managing the latest information in your area.

- Alerts (databases and journals), ZETOC
- RSS feeds (esp. from NLH & ZETOC)
- Web page minding services
- New books listings and finding E-books
- Is it worth me learning to use Endnote?

Who came along?

Within a couple of days all places on the three workshops were booked, and there was a waiting list of 25 people for places (to be catered for when the sessions are re-run January 2007). Many staff booked a place on all three workshops. There was a range of participants: Lecturers; Programme Managers; Practice Learning Facilitators; Lecturer Practitioners; Part-time Researchers, and from different parts of the School: Nursing; Midwifery; Pharmacy; Return to Practice; Medical Ultrasound; Macmillan; Neonatal Care, etc.

How were the sessions run?

All three sessions had a short PowerPoint presentation and demo of resources. Staff were then invited to follow-up on anything which they were interested in using a very detailed step-by-step worksheet. For each session, I was supported by one or two members of Healthcare staff from the School Information Literacy Strategy Implementation Group, and / or other librarians from the Health Team, who made it possible to go round and answer questions from staff as they worked on the parts of the worksheet that were personally relevant. All staff were emailed a reminder one week before the session, and the sessions were very well attended. Two people were unable to attend the third session but I was able to contact people on the waiting list to take their place.


Feedback and evaluation

Rather than use a lengthy paper form, I decided to use a quick online poll at the end of each session asking participants to state if they would recommend the session to a colleague, and to provide any comments they had about the session. I thought that it would be quicker to collate feedback this way. However, a few participants left without completing the poll, and I think it would have been beneficial to have given them the option of the more familiar paper based feedback.

The poll votes were unanimous that the session would be recommended to colleagues, e.g.:

Are you a Google Scholar? - Session feedback

Would you recommend this session to a colleague?

Choice	Votes	%	Graph
Yes	10	(100.0)	
No	0	(0.0)	
Total no. of votes cast	10	(100)	

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive e.g.:

Session 1 (web searching)

"Some very useful information on engines and searching, for own use as well as to pass on for students. Good to have the worksheet to take away to practice. Thanks."

"Learnt about strategies for searching the web that I did not know about before. Good to have the time to just try things out and worksheet to take away for future reference. Support available good so that you can ask questions."

"Very practical and useful session - managed to find a lot of new resources for a programme that begins in October."

Session 2 (database searching)

"Excellent. Have not done searches for some time and it is useful to update my skills, which are very slow! Most helpful..... my colleagues would like a session when next you run them!"

"Another excellent session, much better than the one I had in another university where I did my masters. Will definitely use the info to help me prepare for lectures etc more effectively."

"There are useful reminders of aspects of databases that are easily forgotten but are very useful. Many thanks."

Session 3 (current awareness & managing information)

"Excellent, nearly everything today was new to me so well worth coming."

"Attended all 3 sessions run for healthcare staff and all were useful either as revision of systems not frequently used and for providing new information."

"Feel these are required regularly as an update and for finding out what is 'new' in the world of IT. Thank you"

This style of workshop proved a useful way of providing refresher training and flagging up new resources. The length of session made it impossible to go into great detail, but made it more likely that staff would actually attend them. The worksheets provided opportunity for staff to follow up anything new to them, and the sessions also promoted the 1.5 -2 hour Information Literacy workshops which are open to all students and staff in the University. In addition, the sessions also pointed out useful workbooks and online tutorials for anyone wanting further practice, e.g. searching a specific database. With raised awareness staff can also flag these resources up for their students.

I would change the approach very little next time round as feedback was so positive and the format worked well. However, I would offer paper based feedback forms and perhaps lengthen the databases session to one hour, as the presentation was longer for this session – a lot to cover – which reduced the hands-on time for participants.

I personally found the workshops an excellent opportunity to talk with staff, meet with staff I have not met before, and generally promote information literacy. During the presentations I made links where appropriate to IL training I do with the students, to raise awareness of what skills the library is encouraging students to learn. As a direct result of the sessions I have been asked to run a new training session for a group of Macmillan nurses and I will be running some more sessions for Healthcare staff in January, for which there is already a waiting list. The staff who attended gave very positive feedback, and most stated that they had learned new things and some linked this to developing teaching resources and better supporting students in the future.

Lahlafl, A and Clarke, D. (2005) Implementing an information literacy audit in the School of Healthcare, University of Leeds. *IFMH Inform*, 16 (3), 5-6