Addressing the MLA Research Agenda Questions: Where Are We Now?

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Addressing the MLA Research Agenda Questions: Where Are We Now?

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MLA Research Section, Research Agenda Committee

The MLA Research Agenda

1. There are still a number of relevant questions from the 2008 research agenda, but to me this is most critical: "What is the quantifiable evidence that the presence of a librarian, not just information resources, improves patient outcomes, increases research dollars, improves student outcomes (e.g., better board scores), or decreases length of stay, ROI for expensive electronic resources, support training programs/Magnet status, funded systems and other similar informatics platforms and tools. What is the library's role, if any, in providing information support in a clinical world that functions based on electronic medical records educational offerings?"

2. Is there a significant difference in patient outcomes (or research output or educational outcomes) between increases hospital intelligence (e.g., if the top hospitals have access to hospital librarians/libraries)?"  

3. Does what we do matter? Longer form: Do the resources we provide healthcare environment present medical librarians and medical librarians opportunities and challenges. To live up to the opportunities and challenges, what kinds of skill sets or information structures do medical librarians or medical libraries need to have in order to be strong partners or contributors of continuing effectiveness to the changing environment?"

4. How do we provide information support in a clinical world that functions based on electronic medical records systems and other similar informatics platforms and tools. What is the library's role, if any, in providing medical education with respect to information applications like electronic medical records systems?"

5. Aileen McCrillis  
6. Mary Lou Klem  
7. Alleen McCrillis  
8. Brenda Linares  
9. Margaret Henderson  
10. Anne Maddox  
11. Myrian Grondin  
12. Kaitlyn Campbell  
13. Assako N. Holyoke  
14. Linda Slater  
15. Catherine Boden  

2007 The MLA research policy, The Research Imperative, recommends that the MLA Research Section create a mechanism to identify research priorities. The Research Agenda Committee is formed:

2008 First Delphi Study

During 2008 the Committee conducts its first Delphi study to identify and rank the top research questions. The Committee polls both MLA leaders and members of the Research Section and identify 62 research questions that are distilled down to 12 top-ranked questions. The Delphi study results appear in the 2009 issue of the Journal of the Medical Library Association.

2009

2011 Second Delphi Study

The Committee conducts a second Delphi study to identify and rank research questions during 2011. The Committee asks 581 MLA leaders about their most important research question. The subsequent 140 research questions are then sent to 298 authors of published research articles in the top health sciences library journals. The 108 researchers participating in the Delphi method select their top 35 research questions. The same MLA leaders who generated questions in the first round then winnow these 35 questions down to 15 top-ranked research questions. This second Delphi study appears in the July 2012 issue of Journal of the Medical Library Association.

December 2012 Recruiting for a Systematic Review Project

An announcement by the Committee that appears in the December 21 (2) 2012 issue of the MLA Focus electronic newsletter solicits volunteers to join one of 15 teams conducting systematic reviews on each of the top-ranked research questions.

Spring 2013 Teams Formed

Leaders selected and teams formed based on experience and willingness.

Thank you to the systematic review project's Team Leaders!

1. Laure Perrier  
2. Priscilla Stephenson  
3. Margaret Foster  
4. Mary Lou Klem  
5. Alleen McCrillis  
6. PF Anderson  
7. Lindsay Acock Glynn  
8. Brenda Linares  
9. Margaret Henderson  
10. Anne Maddox  
11. Myryan Grondin  
12. Kaitlyn Campbell  
13. Assako N Holyoke  
14. Linda Slater  
15. Catherine Boden

Guiding principles and guidelines of the project:

• Teams work autonomously and set their own meeting schedules.
• Define and refine questions.
• Form subgroups as needed.
• Search strategies are to be peer-reviewed and fully documented.
• Follow PRISMA guidelines.
• Identify best studies and gaps in the knowledge base.
• “Restrain any impulse toward perfectionism.”

Expected Outcomes:

• Publishable manuscripts of use to health sciences librarian colleagues and researchers.
• A central register of high-quality articles in health sciences librarianship.
• Expected project completion: July 2014.

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11. As a profession, how do we measure our impact in our environment—be it clinical or academic—in such a way that the influence of decision makers in our institutions? I would ask the question—What is the quantifiable evidence that the presence of a librarian, not just information resources, improves patient outcomes, increases research dollars, improves student outcomes (e.g., better board scores), or decreases length of stay, ROI for expensive electronic resources, support training programs/Magnet status, funded systems and other similar informatics platforms and tools. What is the library's role, if any, in providing information support in a clinical world that functions based on electronic medical records educational offerings?"

12. Does the intervention/instruction/assistance of a professional medical librarian have a long term impact on the information seeking behaviors of health care professionals?"

13. What are the most effective instructional methods for teaching informatics/knowledge management/EBP within health sciences curricula?

14. In medical schools where librarians are included in the curriculum, do the students have a greater degree of information literacy? In schools where librarians are not part of the curriculum?"

15. What skills and knowledge must librarians possess in order to be able to design tools to help researchers evaluate evidence, and otherwise manage large and complex data generated during both quantitative and qualitative research?