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<tr>
<td>Authors(s)</td>
<td>Boyle, Susan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publication date</td>
<td>2009-08-03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication information</td>
<td>Journal of the European Association for Health Information and Libraries, 5 (3): 18-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher</td>
<td>European Association for Health Information and Libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link to online version</td>
<td><a href="http://www.eahil.net/journal/journal_2009_vol5_n3.pdf">http://www.eahil.net/journal/journal_2009_vol5_n3.pdf</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item record/more information</td>
<td><a href="http://hdl.handle.net/10197/2787">http://hdl.handle.net/10197/2787</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher's statement</td>
<td>Creative Commons License</td>
</tr>
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Exploring and Extending Information Literacy Support with Nursing and Midwifery students

Susan Boyle, Liaison Librarian, UCD Library

A prime objective for Liaison Librarians is the development of Information Literacy (IL) skills programmes within School curricula. This poster illustrates the need for and development of an embedded IL programme for undergraduate students in the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems (SNMH&S) in UCD. It explores and identifies the best route and structure for an Information Literacy skills programme through collaboration with staff in the School. The poster demonstrates how the programme was designed and implemented to provide appropriate, incremental support and how it engaged with students at each stage. Feedback and reflection on the highlights and challenges of engaging with the students are included. The poster also presents creative training ideas to further engage students and suggests amendments and possibilities for increasing and extending the support offering into the future.

No Programme: Do Not Proceed
- No existing structured programme
- Last-minute training requests not ideal
- Student absorption of IL skills hindered by stress
- Inefficient use of librarian’s time
- Current structure patchy
- Current offering not equitable for all students & no incremental learning in place

New Programme Barriers: Check
- Securing hours in the timetable
- Sustainability
- Organisational challenges
- Selling the programme idea
- Large class numbers
- Challenges of integrating a programme alongside elective modules

New Programme: Proceed
- Propelled by meetings, training & requests
- Follow through on work of predecessor
- Membership of the School Committees
- Alignment with UCD Draft Strategy for Education
- Evidence Based Health practice rationale
- Value of Information Literacy to health students

The route below works towards the finish line: To have all Nursing & Midwifery students graduate as information literate students

4th Year Lesson Plans
- Part 1: Defining your topic, web resources, advanced searching, high-level features of databases & cross disciplinary resources
- Part 2: Additional databases, retrieving specific types of information, evidence-based health resources
- Problem Clinic: Addressing individual issues with exercises

Evaluation Pit Stop

Creative Gear Changes
- Incorporate games to add variety
- Increase active learning tasks and relate content to curriculum
- Tailor sessions for audio, visual and kinesthetic learners
- Package salient points into mini take-away bites for easy recall

With special thanks to Carmel Nolan, Polity Johnson, the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems, colleagues at UCD Library, Advocates/Host permissions for poster design and Erica Leesmore for the librarian image.
Award for the Best Poster Overall (and First-Timer)

Exploring and extending information literacy support with nursing and midwifery students

Susan Boyle
Health Sciences Library, University College Dublin (UCD)
Dublin, Ireland
Contact: Susan.Boyle@ucd.ie

Abstract
A prime objective for liaison librarians is the development of information literacy (IL) skills programmes within school curricula. This poster illustrates the need for and the development of an embedded IL programme for undergraduate students in the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems (SNM&HS) in UCD. It explores and identifies the best route and structure for an information literacy skills programme through collaboration with staff in the school. The poster demonstrates how the programme was designed and implemented to provide appropriate, incremental support and how it engaged with students at each stage. Feedback and reflection on the highlights and challenges of engaging with the students are included. The poster also presents creative training ideas to further engage students and suggests amendments and possibilities for increasing and extending the support offering into the future.

Key words: information literacy skills; programme development; nursing; midwife; liaison librarian; teaching librarian; academic library.

Introduction
This article is based on a poster presented at the 2009 EAHIL workshop in Dublin. The poster explores the development of a new information literacy (IL) skills programme for undergraduate nursing and midwifery students. It also depicts how the programme engaged with students and how it could be extended and developed further.

Racing poster theme
A racing theme is used throughout the poster to illustrate the process of developing the information literacy (IL) skills programme for nursing and midwifery students from the point of view of the librarian. The liaison or teaching librarian drives along the race route of tasks. The finish line or aim of the race is for the librarian to have all nursing and midwifery students graduate as information literate students. Traffic lights at the beginning of the poster tie in with the racing theme and are used to demonstrate the reasoning, barriers and propellants for the new IL programme.

The red traffic light – no programme: do not proceed
(indicates the need for a new programme)
- no existing structured programme;
- last-minute training requests not ideal;
- student absorption of IL skills hindered by stress;
- inefficient use of librarian’s time;
current structure patchy;
current offering not equitable for all students & no incremental learning in place.

The amber traffic light – new programme barriers: check
(lists the barriers to creating a new programme)
- securing hours in the timetable;
- sustainability;
- organisational challenges;
- selling the programme idea;
- large class numbers;
- challenges of integrating a programme alongside elective modules.

The green traffic light – new programme: proceed
(details the propellants for the programme)
- propelled by meetings, training and requests;
- follow through on work of predecessor;
- membership of the School committees;
- alignment with UCD Draft Strategy for Education;
- evidence-based health practice rationale;
- value of information literacy to health students.

The green traffic light heralds the start of the race to the reader.

The race route has three stages that the librarian needs to complete to reach the information literate graduate finish line. Stage one is the explore stage, stage two is the engage stage and stage three is the extend stage. These three stages match the themes of the EAHIL 2009 workshop.

Stage one of the race - explore
The race begins with the explore stage. This stage starts by highlighting the race strategy or best way to develop the IL programme and to reach the “information literate graduate” finish line.

Race strategy
- develop incremental information literacy steps for annual IL skills sessions;
- allow adequate time for planning, preparation, programme analysis and reflection.

The explore stage then shows the collaboration between the librarian and the School of Nursing Midwifery and Health Systems, Undergraduate Teaching and Learning committee, that led to the development of the IL Nursing and Midwifery undergraduate programme. The ‘explore’ stage also maps the (ANZIL) Australian and New Zealand Information Literacy framework standards to the programme and illustrates how the programme runs in parallel to a writing skills course provided by an academic in the School. The structural design of the programme in terms of contact hours and incremental blocks of learning is also explored in this first stage.

Stage two of the race - engage
The second stage of the race is the engage stage. In this part of the race, the librarian recalls the details and stages of engagement with the Nursing and Midwifery students during the delivery of the programme.

Since this was the first year the programme was rolled out, certain students had not received information literacy instruction before. These student groups, therefore, received a package of basic skills in addition to the intended content appropriate to their year. The poster outlines what the basics package contains and lists the topics to be covered in the first, second, third and fourth year lesson plans. The outline below shows an example of the basics package and one of the lesson plans from the poster;

Basics package
- catalogue, journals & library rules;
- navigating the library website.

4th year lesson plans
- part 1: defining your topic, web resources, advanced searching, high-level features of databases & cross disciplinary resources;
- part 2: additional databases, retrieving specific types of information, evidence-based health resources;
- problem clinic: addressing individual issues with exercises.

Stage two also includes two pit stops where the librarian stops to carry out important checks.

Evaluation pit stop
After the programme has been delivered, the librarian is required to stop at the evaluation pit stop on the race route. The librarian pauses here to analyse the student evaluation forms and determine how relevant or useful the programme was to students.

Reflection pit stop
The librarian is reflecting at each stage of the race but reflects more intensively on how successful the
programme was, from their point of view, at the reflection pit stop.

Stage three of the race - extend
In the final stage of the race, the extend stage, the librarian focuses on how to improve the programme. The librarian uses the student evaluation and elements uncovered in the personal reflection process to recall the positives and negatives of the process and examines how these can be addressed and how the programme can be improved and extended with creative ideas.

Highlights
● problem clinics worked well for 4th year students;
● student programme feedback was very positive;
● continuation of programme approved;
● active learning worked well – worksheets;
● valuable learning experience for me.

Warning lights
● no integrated assessment;
● pitching content to varying IL levels;
● back to back sessions for large classes were a heavy teaching load for one librarian;
● too many learning objectives to cover in too few contact hours.

Creative gear changes
● incorporate games to add variety;
● increase active learning tasks and relate content to curriculum;
● tailor sessions for audio, visual and kinaesthetic learners;
● package salient points into mini take-away bites for easy recall.

Programme parts upgrade
● make location clearer and avoid back to back sessions where possible or request assistance;
● remove basics element from programme in next run;
● amend programme to reflect library innovations, service/resource changes and new strategies;
● consider using stop, start, continue or H form evaluation.

Extending toolkit
● make 1st year sessions more challenging and dynamic;
● increase exercise time for 3rd and 4th yrs and continue problem clinics;
● design in-depth handouts and more VLE aids;
● investigate ways to incorporate assessment;
● use feedback, reflection and evidence from IL literature to improve practice and incorporate knowledge from CPD courses;
● investigate equivalent roll out at postgraduate level.

The race and poster end with the librarian feeding the programme evaluation back to the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems, Undergraduate Teaching and Learning committee. At this point, the reader is left with the understanding that the librarian will repeat the race again in the next academic year, delivering a more fine-tuned and improved programme.

Conclusions and reflections
It is always a challenge to embed information literacy skills in the School curricula but liaison librarians should persevere to achieve this, as it enhances collaboration with academics and improves the student experience and their life long learning skills in preparation for working life. It is also beneficial to the working practice and continued professional development of the liaison librarian. Creating and presenting the poster at the EAHIL workshop in Dublin has been a very interesting, creative, worthwhile and rewarding process. My thanks go to the EAHIL workshop 2009, the School of Nursing Midwifery and Health Systems, Undergraduate Teaching and Learning committee at UCD who supported the IL programme and also to my colleagues within UCD Library for their helpful feedback and assistance with the delivery of sessions in the programme. Since the EAHIL workshop, I have found it very useful to refer to the poster in my working practice but it has had an even more positive impact in prompting the development of an equivalent programme for postgraduate level students.