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Conducting a user-centered information needs assessment: the Via Christi Libraries' experience.

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PURPOSE: The research sought to provide evidence to support the development of a long-term strategy for the Via Christi Regional Medical Center Libraries. **METHODS:** An information needs assessment was conducted in a large medical center serving approximately 5,900 physicians, clinicians, and nonclinical staff in 4 sites in 1 Midwestern city. Quantitative and qualitative data from 1,295 self-reporting surveys, 75 telephone interviews, and 2 focus groups were collected and analyzed to address 2 questions: how could the libraries best serve their patrons, given realistic limitations on time, resources, and personnel, and how could the libraries best help their institution improve patient care and outcomes? **RESULTS:** Clinicians emphasized the need for "just in time" information accessible at the point of care. Library nonusers emphasized the need to market library services and resources. Both clinical and nonclinical respondents emphasized the need for information services customized to their professional information needs, preferences, and patterns of use. Specific information needs in the organization were identified. **DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS:** The results of this three-part, user-centered information needs assessment were used to develop an evidence-based strategic plan. The findings confirmed the importance of promoting library services in the organization and suggested expanded, collaborative roles for hospital librarians.

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APPENDIX A

Self-reporting survey questions (print format)

Are we meeting your information needs? Your responses to this survey will help the professional staff of the Via Christi Libraries to deliver services and resources that further the mission of the Via Christi Health System by meeting your information needs and expectations. Thank you—we appreciate and value your input.

1. Please check the category that best describes your profession or position.

- Physician
- Resident/intern
- Physician assistant
- Therapist (OT, PT, RT)
- Pharmacist
- Technician (radiology, lab, pharmacy)
- Nonclinical administrator/manager
- Nursing administrator
- Advanced registered nurse practitioner
- Staff nurse/floor nurse
- Nurse-educator
- Nursing student
- Dietician
- Other clinical position (please specify)
- Other nonclinical position (please specify)

2. Do you have convenient access to a computer with an Internet connection?

- Yes, at work
- Yes, at home
- Yes, at work and at home
- No convenient access

3. Do you search online databases (e.g., MEDLINE, CINAHL, UpToDate) for answers to your information needs?

- Yes, I search myself
- Not personally, but I do ask a librarian to search on my behalf
- Not personally, but I do ask someone else (e.g., an assistant, technician, or student) to search on my behalf
- No, I do not search online databases

4. Have you visited one of the Via Christi Libraries within the past six months?

- Yes
- No
- Do not recall

If you answered yes to question 4, please continue with the next question. If you answered no or do not recall to question 4, please skip ahead to question 6.

5. How often do you use the following Via Christi library services? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly, Never)

- Literature search by a librarian
- Assistance in locating information, either online or in the library
- Assistance in obtaining copies of journal articles
- Orientation to the use of electronic or print resources available through the libraries
- Recommended links to search engines, other libraries, and PDA resources
- Computer/Internet access
- Access to print journals
- Access to books (e.g., handbooks, clinical texts, encyclopedias, dictionaries)
- Audiovisual equipment or services
- Study space
- Other services (please identify in spaces below):

6. Have you visited the Via Christi Libraries Website within the past six months?

- Yes
- No
- Do not recall

If you answered yes to question 6, please continue with the next question. If you answered no or do not recall, please skip to question #10 and continue with the survey.

7. Please respond to the following statements about the usability of the Via Christi Libraries Website

(Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree):

- Information available on the Website made it clear what services and resources are available from the Via Christi Libraries.
- The content of the Website is up-to-date.
- Information and resources available from the Website generally answer my information needs.
- The design of the Website is well organized and clear, making it easy to navigate the site.
- The size and style of letters used on the Website make it difficult to read.
- Links within the Website are current and working.
- Graphics used are appropriate for the purpose.
- The overall look of the Website is attractive and attention getting.

8. How often do you use the following online resources? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly, Never)

- UpToDate
- MEDLINE (via Ebscohost, PubMed, or another source)
- CINAHL
- Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews
- Health Business Fulltext Elite database
- Proquest Nursing Database
- PsycINFO database
- International Pharmaceutical Abstracts
- American Dietetic Association Nutrition Manual
- Via Christi online catalog of holdings
- Via Christi A-to-Z Journal Title List (electronic full text and print journal holdings)

9. How did you first learn about the resources and services provided by the Via Christi Libraries?

- During an orientation session or a staff meeting
- During a presentation by one of the library staff
- From a brochure or a newsletter (such as Via Christi This Week)
- From the Via Christi Libraries Web page
- From visiting one or more of the libraries
- From a colleague or supervisor
- From another source (please specify)
- Do not recall

If you have visited one of the Via Christi Libraries or have used the Via Christi Libraries Website within the past six months, please skip ahead to question #11.

10. If you have *not* visited one of the Via Christi Libraries or used the libraries' Website within the past six months, what are your reasons for not doing so? Please check all that apply.

- No time to do so
- No convenient access to a computer with Internet access
- Did not know full range of library services available
- Library hours not convenient
- Library location not convenient
- Library resources not relevant to work-related information needs
- Not needed, use information resources available from another organization (e.g., clinic, office, university library)
- Not needed, use information resources available on the Internet
- Not needed, use information available from colleagues and/or supervisors
- Did not know library services or resources were available
- Other (please specify)

11. What else should the Via Christi librarians know to better align library services to your information needs and expectations?

APPENDIX B

Telephone survey questions

1. Would you describe the work you do at Via Christi as clinical or nonclinical? _____

[Branching]

Response: Clinical

2. What type of clinical work do you do? _____

Response: Nonclinical

3. In what area or department do you work? _____

4. What type of work do you do? _____

All respondents:

5. Please think back over the past few weeks. During that period, did you need information that you could not find in time for it to be useful?

___ Yes

___ No

[Branching]

Response: Yes

3. Please describe the question or kind of information you needed.

4. What was the impact of your not having the information? Was there:

___ A direct impact on the quality of patient care?

___ An indirect impact on the quality of patient care?

___ A loss of time spent on your information search?

___ A loss of possible revenue (yours or the institutions)?

___ Any other negative impact? (if yes, identify negative impact) _____

All respondents:

5. Speaking more generally, what type or types of information do you frequently find yourself looking for over the course of a work day?

6. When you need information of the type that you have

just described, do you use Via Christi library services to find what you need?

___ Yes

___ No

[Branching]

Response: Yes

7. What type of library services do you find most useful for the type of information needs you have mentioned?

___ Print resources available in the library

___ Information available from the libraries' Website

___ Working with one of the librarians to locate information

___ Another type of service (please specify)

Response: No

8. Why is it that you do not use the Via Christi Libraries to meet your information needs?

9. What could we do to make library services more useful to you?

APPENDIX C

Focus group questions

1. Think about the work ahead of you this week. What kinds of information are you going to need? Where and by what means are you going to access that information?

2. What are your frustrations in using library services?

3. What are the best communications channels for making your group aware of library services?

4. Looking ahead to the next three to five years: if there were no limitations on the hospital library services you could have access to, what would those services look like? Dream big.

5. What else should the hospital librarians know so that they can be most useful to you?