

Eva Lesenková
Prague – Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education
Helena Bouzková
Lenka Maixnerová
Prague – National Medical Library
Alena Drdulová
Brno – National Centre of Nursing and Other Health Professions

INFORMATION LITERACY: KNOW-HOW IN THE AREA OF EFFECTIVE INFORMATION SERVICES FOR MEDICAL LIBRARIANS AND THEIR CUSTOMERS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Aim

This speech aims to define what is information literacy in the field of medical scientific communication and how it can be effectively used in various types of health facilities in the Czech Republic. Information literacy, its teaching and learning, facilitates medical librarians' professional training, their lifelong education and raises the quality of provided services.

Introduction

The term information literacy was first coined by Paul Zirkowski in 1974.(1)

The 2003 Prague Declaration added weight to the importance of the concept regarding information literacy *not only as an important set of skills to enable information to be gathered and used but also essential for effective participation in the "information, knowledge society", a basic human right and integral part of education for all.*(2)

There are many current models of teaching and learning in the field of information literacy.

The system of libraries in the Czech Republic consists of libraries established by the Ministry of Culture, regional libraries established by the respective regional authorities, basic libraries and specialized libraries established by the respective municipal authorities or by other founders.

Public information services in health

National net-structure of public information services in health is formed on principles of: regional centres, centres for integral work of faculties of medicine and teaching hospitals, special learning, research and sanitary preventive workplaces with

the incontestable role of the National Medical Library. These workplaces create mature centres of net structure, which are able to give delegate services to others, in the scope of similar defined services in cooperation with workplaces of the netstructure.

From the act it follows that the National Medical Library (NML) is accredited as special library in the field of health. NML is a public library, the state organizational component established by the Ministry of Health. It assures the informational support of science and education in the field of medicine and related disciplines:

- builds and administers collections of domestic and foreign information sources subsidized by state with the responsibility of a national depository function,
- provides coordination, special, information, learning, analytical, research, methodical and reference services for the field of health information,
- fulfils the roles of the national medical bibliography and branch union catalogues, administration of museum collections of the Medical Museum, WHO Documentation Centre.

The net-structure of medical libraries coordinated by NML shows (to 31. 12. 2006) following parameters: 149 medical libraries, 95 000 users and library holdings in number of 2 850 000 items together with 3 426 foreign periodicals and 14 639 items of Czech periodicals (multiple) and 1 090 000 loans. There are employed 321 full time librarians in these libraries.

Important educational medical institutions authorised for special postgraduate and continual education (Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education and National Centre of Nursing and Other Health Professions) provide systematic activities performing together continual education of librarians and information literacy training of customers.

Methods

The preparation and implementation of training actions are primarily performed by information workplaces of educational medical organizations (medical schools, institutes and centres for further education) using teaching methods of:

- Classical model of present teaching
- Combined interactive teaching
- Problem Based Learning (PBL)
- Best Evidence for Medical Education (BEME)
- Distance Electronic Learning

A medical faculties and in postgraduate courses, the classical model of present teaching prevails and the use of ICT tools is limited to application of modern didactic facilities in presentations of instructors (Power Point, educational video program and animation).

Emphasis is placed on the interactivity, participation of students, then on combined interactive teaching in the form of workshops and “hands on” teaching. Distance and

combined way of learning is also used insufficiently. There is even such an opinion that medicine is not suitable subject field for this unconventional form of study.

In 2006, the National Library of the Czech Republic organized the first e-learning course of cataloguing in the Czech Republic – as one of the modern forms of education using ICT tool – Distance Electronic Learning. Full distance study (one day with certificate), browsing courses, can be used as auxiliary material for training in regional etc. libraries. National Medical Library prepares its utilization for this autumn.(4)

The project "Information literacy in the field of postgraduate medical studies" will be realized by the Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education in 2008 - 2010. The aim of the project is to create a unique module of teaching of Information literacy based on methods and technology of web based learning for target group of participants of postgraduate education in health.

Benefits of e-learning form:

- more topicality of information
- not too expensive and wide available distribution of education
- reusability
- lower costs for education
- free option of platform, communicableness
- web browsers and connection to the Internet

Results

According to the Concept of Development of Health Libraries Net for 2005 - 2010 for professional preparation of medical librarians and their lifelong education and for raising of quality of provided services and its availability for health (5), "the Program of Raising Quality of Library Information Services in 2007" was created.

The conceived program consists of teaching and training actions realized in the form of one-day or two-day workshops especially in accredited health educational institutions: Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education in Prague and in National Centre of Nursing and Other Health Professions in Brno and in Information Centre of Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, Palacky University in Olomouc, and finally National Medical Library in Prague. (See Tab. 1, 2).

Discussion

- Information literacy is not just a library issue, but it is also an educational and pedagogical issue;
- Full integration into curricula of various types of medical education (bachelor ,master, PhD, postgraduate specialisation, lifelong learning- continuing);
- Standardization;
- Providing of educational needs on the base of analysis of demographic and qualification structure of physicians ;
- Modernization of educational methods – e-learning (web based learning)

Conclusion

Process of Information Literacy is a part of lifelong education process of all professions. Owing to restructuring of health system there is a change of diversification of traditionally centralised educational activities in the Czech medical librarianship. According to

pedagogical direction, universities or specialised educational subjects remain as centres of users' education (as it is indicated in Tab. 1, 2).

Information Literacy Education is organized for various target groups divided according to the type of completed education or according to professional direction. So, with the exception of health staff, it is also organized for librarians, who create systems and services.

From the survey of realised activities it is possible to derive the hierarchy of taught topics: in sequence (the number of included topics in 6 presented modules).

1. place: sources, retrieval, locating and accessing (6x)
2. place: constructing search strategy, PC literacy (4x)
3. place: synthesising and adding new knowledge (3x)
4. place: comparing and evaluation, organizing, applying and communicating (2x)
5. place: recognising as information need – critical thinking (0)

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