Librarian Embedded in Primary Care
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Objective: To explore the role of a consumer health librarian as part of a multidisciplinary care team in a primary care clinic.

Background: Stanford Coordinated Care (SCC) is a primary care clinic established in May 2012 for high-risk, high-cost patients. It features multidisciplinary care at a single clinic. The care team includes care coordinators/medical assistants, primary care physicians, physical therapist, clinical social worker, pharmacist, dietitian, and a clinical nurse specialist.

A year later SCC and Stanford Health Library (SHL), Stanford’s consumer library, were both relocated to a new clinical building, offering an opportunity for closer collaboration. A consumer health librarian was invited to attend the weekly case consultations of the care team. As the team became familiar with the librarian and learned what the library had to offer they started making information requests.

Methods: The librarian recorded information requests by requestor, type of request, resources used, a time estimate for completion, and feedback.

Results: 166 information requests reflected five broad categories and one specific topic.

1. Living with chronic disease: e.g. support groups/classes for Parkinson’s
2. Provider interest: e.g. medical marijuana, aspirin-induced asthma
3. Disease overview: e.g. IBS, scleroderma
4. Specific treatment: e.g. peritoneal dialysis, ozone therapy
5. Nutrition and diet: e.g. intermittent diet for diabetes control, resistant starch
6. Ehlers-Danlos: i.e. requests for overview and treatment information for patients and providers

All team members made information inquiries. Librarians answered 57 percent of requests with consumer-level information, 37 percent with clinical level information, and 6 percent with a combination of consumer and clinical information.

Conclusion: We found it somewhat surprising that nearly a quarter of requests were for providers but not related to a specific patient. This appeared to be an unmet need of primary care physicians and an opportunity to extend the role of SHL librarians. Recently we have expanded our support of primary care physicians by attending their monthly journal club and working with an internist who consults on difficult diagnoses.

Acknowledgement: Stanford Coordinated Care https://stanfordhealthcare.org/medical-clinics/coordinated-care.html