Value of Hospital Libraries Study

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Value of Hospital Libraries Study, New England Region
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**INTRODUCTION**

Study conducted in 2008 to determine value of hospital libraries in New England region. Twenty-one (21) hospital librarians participated; equal representation found both in location (by state) and institution size (by licensed beds).

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- What are predominant views of hospital administrators on library services provided in their institutions?
- How do administrators view role of the hospital librarian?
- How do administrators make decisions about what services to provide and how to fund them?
- What are predominant views of hospital librarians on value placed on their libraries?

**METHODS**

- Survey Questions (8)
- Administrator Interviews (22)
- Focus Groups (2)
- Focus Group Questions (9)
- Transcriptions (2)
- Analysis & Report (1)

**RESULTS**

Both sets of focus group participants saw value in study, but tone of each group was very different:

**Focus Group 1** – positive; upbeat; quick paced; most knew interviewees (possible bias)

**Focus Group 2** – disappointed; not very positive; most did not know interviewees.

**COMBINED THEMES**

- What people say about the library influences administrator’s funding decisions & perceptions.
- Statistics matter.
- Administrators have difficulty measuring library value beyond the numbers.
- Administrators see value of librarians serving on committees, as well as in education, but not in helping with decision making.
- Administrators cite lack of specific examples (except MAGNET status) of librarian’s direct role in education and patient care.

**CONCLUSIONS**

- Severe economic climate since 2008 (i.e., hospital library closings) may have affected study results.
- More studies need to be conducted.
- Hospital librarians need to find ways to “know” the business they’re in, by expanding services beyond traditional offering (e.g., CME, patient education & health literacy, research grants, EHR & Health IT, EPP & Risk Analysis, Quality Assurance, etc.)

Funded in whole or in part with Federal funds from the National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services, under Contract #N01-LM-6-3508 with the University of Massachusetts Medical School.