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## Organizing Centennial Resources Using Dataverse

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## **ORGANIZING CENTENNIAL RESOURCES USING DATAVERSE: LIGHTNING PRESENTATION**

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Background:** The hospital is preparing to celebrate its centennial and the librarian had been asked to help gather materials. While many items were found, there was not a way to systematically organize and locate the items. **Objectives:** Many items were collected for the hospital's centennial including hospital publications, scrapbooks, photos, and newspaper articles. The Librarian sought out how best to organize these items and make them findable for staff as well as members of the local historical societies. **Description:** After reviewing repository options, the librarian used Harvard's Dataverse to create a catalog that can be accessed by staff and local historical groups. Hospital published materials as well as newspaper articles related to the opening of the hospital were cataloged in Dataverse. Each item was tagged with metadata. Images and hospital publications were uploaded to be accessible directly from Dataverse. When copyright allowed, newspaper articles were also uploaded directly to Dataverse. **Results:** The outcome is a searchable resource of the hospital's centennial information that is currently still being added to. Standard naming conventions for newspaper articles proved to be challenging with multiple people scanning microfilm. Having a clear naming convention at the start would have saved time at later stages. **Conclusion:** This project allowed the librarian to demonstrate to leadership team members that there is more to library services than books and literature searching. The work of the historical research committee is appreciated by the hospital's leadership team.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Department of Veterans Affairs Central Western Massachusetts Healthcare System's (VACWM) main campus in Leeds, MA will be celebrating its centennial in 2024. The Leeds campus is also a designated historic site. The campus is also undergoing extensive renovations that require approval by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Due to the need for historical documentation for both of these projects, a VACWM historical committee was formed.

## **DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM**

The librarian at VACWM was tasked with cataloging various items including photos, historical documents from the campus and in the local historical society's collection, as well as newspaper articles about VACWM on microfilm at the local public library. Because stakeholders included staff and non-VA entities, it was necessary to find a system that could be publicly accessible and available within the VA firewall. Copyright laws also impacted what could be shared from the local newspaper. Additionally, patient privacy concerns are still being addressed so no photos or items identifying patients are being included in the online repository.

Dataverse (<https://dataverse.org/>) was found to be available to stakeholders within and outside of the VA's firewall. Dataverse is an online opensource research repository software. There is an extensive guide for creating a Dataverse which requires administrative rights to make changes within the network and time to install the Dataverse software. The VACWM librarian did not

have the means to install a unique Dataverse so chose to use the Harvard Dataverse (<http://dataverse.harvard.edu>). Harvard allows all researchers worldwide in all disciplines to utilize its Dataverse.

The VACWM librarian created a Dataverse within the Harvard Database program and began cataloging documents, photos, and newspaper articles making sure to follow copyright and patient privacy requirements. All items are cataloged with titles, authors, descriptions, and keywords. Where appropriate a file can be attached. All text is searchable within Dataverse so researchers can quickly locate the items they need.

### **LESSONS LEARNED**

While the librarian was solely responsible for cataloging resources in Dataverse there were several staff and volunteers who were gathering items, and saving images to thumb drives and CDs. After receiving several files, the librarian realized that a standard naming convention would be needed. Having this in place at the start would have saved time during the cataloging process.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Using the Harvard Dataverse has been an effective way to catalog historical items. The Dataverse staff have been very responsive to questions making the system easy to use. This project allowed the librarian to demonstrate to leadership team members that there is more to library services than books and literature searching. The work of the historical research committee is appreciated by the hospital's leadership team.