Clinical Support During COVID-19

Victoria Rossetti
University of Massachusetts Medical School

Et al.

Follow this and additional works at: https://escholarship.umassmed.edu/lib_articles

Part of the Health Sciences and Medical Librarianship Commons

Repository Citation

Creative Commons License
This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License.
This material is brought to you by eScholarship@UMMS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Library Publications by an authorized administrator of eScholarship@UMMS. For more information, please contact Lisa.Palmer@umassmed.edu.
Clinical Support During COVID-19

**Introduction**

The Lamar Soutter Library serves UMass Memorial Healthcare and UMass Medical School, which consists of the Schools of Nursing, Medicine, and Biomedical Sciences. In pursuit of our mission to help our community during the COVID-19 pandemic, we were called upon to provide clinical support in new ways as we also adapted to the “new normal” of working from home, social distancing, and remote interactions.

**What We Experienced**

- Level of urgency was much higher for searches done during pandemic, especially around COVID topics
- Difficulty in finding any literature at first, then difficulty wading through so many newly published articles
- Dealing with adjusting to working from home (learning new technology, dealing with family issues)
- The searches we received seemed to reflect a desperate and scary situation across all disciplines
- An increase in requests for literature searches and systematic reviews
- Incoming emails and interactions expressed concern and compassion towards library staff
- A desire for library support to be introduced to new residents and clinical departments

**Clinical Search Requests**

- Chronic conditions and geriatric mortality
- Panic attacks in disaster situations among healthcare workers
- Aerosolized exposure and alternative PPE
- Evidence supporting early discharge after birth
- Psychiatric medication practices in the ER
- Feeding strategies for intubated patients
- Safety practices in clinical settings
- Wellness activities for hospitalized, quarantined patients
- Telehealth for OB/GYN check-ups
- Effects of COVID-19 on supply and use of blood products

**Adapting to a Pandemic Environment**

The Education and Clinical Services department (ECS) typically supports the clinical system by attending clinical rounds, staffing multiple library locations, providing education around information resources, and supporting literature searches.

During COVID-19, many of our usual methods of support were not possible because we could not be there in person, and because educational pursuits were repurposed to answer the call for staffing and training during the pandemic. The need for immediate information and the desire to help meant demands for evidence-based information increased.

To answer the call, ECS librarians had to learn new skills, develop creative approaches, and stay up to date with an ever-changing information landscape.

**Conclusion**

The COVID-19 pandemic was a force for change in the relationship between ECS and the clinical environment we support. In the wake of this upheaval, we have become more creative, more adaptive, and more flexible. We better understand the needs of our clinical community and are more proactive and confident in our approach to working with them.

It was evident that our impact was felt by the response to our offers for new resident orientations. There was almost a 200% increase in the number of sessions between March - September 2020 as compared to the same period in 2019.

The skills we learned, and the relationships formed have changed the way we will approach clinical support going forward.