Students, Librarians and a Practice-Based Research Network: A Transformative Collaboration

A research team including faculty, a librarian and medical students completed two research projects on information-seeking behaviors and the readability of patient education materials.

Value of the PBRN
• A partnership of community physician practices, community agencies, and scientists
• Fosters and facilitates collaborative, interdisciplinary primary care research
• Practices used as research sites

Research 2011
• Assessing the information needs of community-based primary care physicians
• Assessing the readability of patient education materials handed out during the observations

Research 2012
• Assessing the readability of patient education materials generated from electronic medical records

Project Team
Susan Labuda Schrop, Assistant Dean of Curriculum, College of Medicine; Assistant Professor of Family and Community Medicine
Beth Layton, Library Director
LuAnne Stockton, Clerkship Coordinator
Brian Pendleton, Professor of Sociology, the University of Akron; Research Professor of Family and Community Medicine, NEOMED

The students were all rising second-year students at the time of the research.
L. Austin Fredrickson
Craig Kornbau
Robert Parisi
Nithya Priya Ramalingam
Ryan Shields

Tasks
• Proposal preparation: Beth and Susan
• IRB proposal and administration: Beth and Susan
• Proposal administration: Beth and Susan
• Site recruitment: PBRN through Susan
• Researcher education and orientation: LuAnne, Susan and Beth
• Protocol development: Students with support from Susan and Beth
• Taxonomy identification and development: Beth
• Research observers: Students
• Patient education material assessments: Students
• Data analysis: Susan and Brian
• Data interpretation: All

Outcomes:
• Data
• Student posters
• Oral Presentations
  Fredrickson LA, Kornbau C, Ramalingam N, Layton B, Labuda Schrop S, Pendleton BF. Information Seeking Behavior of Primary Care Physicians at the Point of Care. Ohio Family Medicine Symposium on Research and Education; 2012 March 31; Dublin, OH. (Received the Best Oral Research Presentation Award)
  Ramalingam N, Kornbau C, Fredrickson LA, Labuda Schrop S, Layton B, Pendleton BF. A Readability Assessment of Patient Education Materials Distributed by Primary Care Physicians. Ohio Family Medicine Symposium on Research and Education; 2012 March 31; Dublin, OH.
• Poster
  Fredrickson LA, Kornbau C, Ramalingam N, Layton B, Labuda-Schrop S. Primary Care Physicians: Answering Clinical Questions in a Digital Age. American College of Physicians Excellence in Medical Education Meeting; 2013 April 13; San Francisco, CA

Conclusions:
The librarian is an essential team member who understands information-seeking behaviors, and the development and application of taxonomies.
The PBRN is critical for this research.
There is value in the diversity of knowledge and experience of the participants.
All learned new things.

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