HTW Chur
Schweizerisches Institut für Informationswissenschaft

Do Medical Librarians Need a Specialist Degree Programme?

Prof. Dr. Rudolf Mumenthaler, HTW Chur

Medical Librarians Matter for Evidence Based Medicine

Berne, September 9 2016

Questions to be answered in this talk

- Do medical librarians need a specialist degree programme?
- Or: Do medical librarians need a specialist training programme?
  - And if yes: what kind of a training programme?
- Which new skills are important to medical librarians?
- What kind of training and educational programmes exist already?
- What should we do in the field of training programmes for medical librarians?

Slides are online:

http://www.slideshare.net/ruedi.mumenthaler/do-medical-librarians-need-a-specialist-degree-programme

http://bit.ly/2ceKKwb

Horizon Report Library Edition 2015: Challenges

Challenges Impeding Technology Adoption in Academic and Research Libraries

Solvable Challenges: Those that we understand and know how to solve

- **> Embedding Academic and Research Libraries in the Curriculum**
- **> Improving Digital Literacy**

Difficult Challenges: Those that we understand but for which solutions are elusive

- **> Competition from Alternative Avenues of Discovery**
- **> Rethinking the Roles and Skills of Librarians**

Wicked Challenges: Those that are complex to even define, much less address

- **> Embracing the Need for Radical Change**
- **> Managing Knowledge Obsolescence**

New skills and roles of (medical) librarians

http://blogs.sfu.ca/projects/tlcomm/2011/03/sfu-librarians-bridge-the-gap-to-encourage-clear-instructor-student-communication/

New skills: understanding and supporting research

- „[…] contemporary librarians should be able to understand the needs of the research community as well as to select and make easily accessible the resources that support their work. Anyone fulfilling this role must seamlessly traverse the physical, conceptual, and digital realms.“

Jean Ferguson, head of research and reference services at Duke University LIbrary http://www.dukechronicle.com/articles/2013/06/13/role-librarians-changes-digital-age#.VafGCcZViko

- This is a general trend in academic libraries – what about medical libraries?

Horizon Report Library Edition 2015: Challenges

Challenges Impeding Technology Adoption in Academic and Research Libraries

Solvable Challenges: Those that we understand and know how to solve

- **> Embedding Academic and Research Libraries in the Curriculum**
- **> Improving Digital Literacy**

Difficult Challenges: Those that we understand but for which solutions are elusive

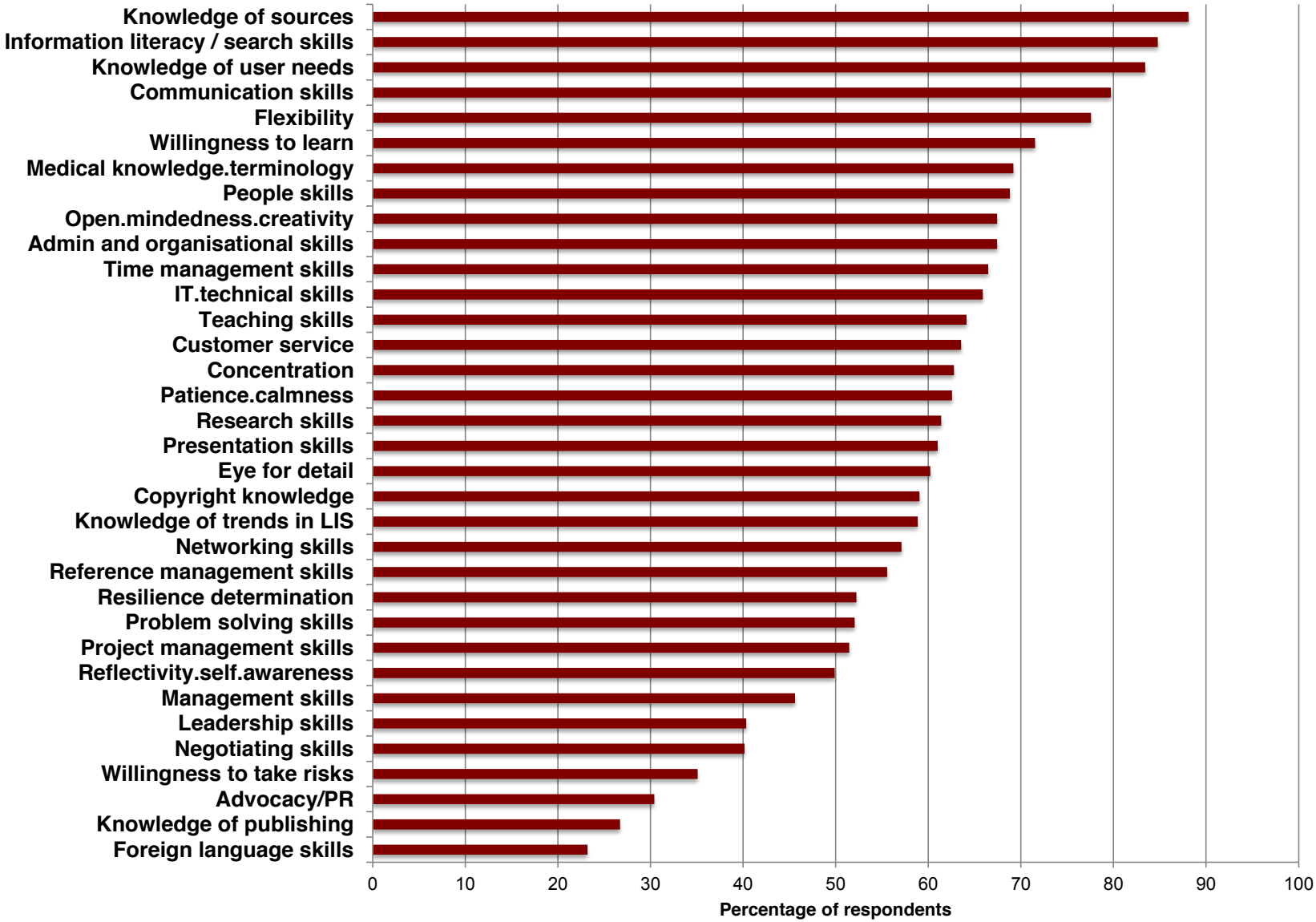
- **> Competition from Alternative Avenues of Discovery**
- **> Rethinking the Roles and Skills of Librarians**

Wicked Challenges: Those that are complex to even define, much less address

- **> Embracing the Need for Radical Change**
- **> Managing Knowledge Obsolescence**

- all Challenges have a direct impact on the roles and skills of librarians

Survey: Skills Identified



Educational landscape

- Switzerland as an example (in reality it‘s much more complicate...)
- Library and Information Science is taught at the Universities of Applied Sciences in Chur (german) and Geneva (french)
  - On the levels of a Bachelor degree (180 ECTS) and with a consecutive Master of Science programme (in Chur Master in Business Administration with focus on Data Science)
- in german speaking countries only at Humboldt University in Berlin there is also a doctorate programme, usually LIS is also tought at University of Applied sciences
- There are several programmes for a Master of Advanced Studies in Library and Information Science
  - (HTW Chur, University of Zurich, Universities of Bern/Lausanne, HEG Genève)
  - Usually 60 ECTS, degree as a Master of Arts

Master programmes in Germany

- similar situation in Germany:
- Programmes for MAS LIS
  - at Humboldt University
    - Blended learning
  - Hochschule Hannover
    - Distant learning course
  - Hochschule für Technik Köln
    - Blended learning
- several consecutive Master programmes (MSc)

- The combination of a Bachelor/Master in any field/topic with an additional MAS in LIS ist the usual way for an academic librarian or reference librarian in an academic library

Further education

- there are many different possibilities and formats:
- summer schools (HTW Chur/HEG Genève), 1 week
  - (for example on Digitisation or Research Data Management)
- seminaries (1 or 2 days) offered by universities or library associations (BIS)

- courses and seminaries on generic topics
  - Human resource management, project management, didactics, copyright, general management, IT topics...

- Conclusion: there are many possibilities for further education in generic skills, general topics and in Library and Information Science, but none (or few) for specific skills in medical libraries.
- There is a demand for smaller modules on specific topics, also in general LIS
  - i.e. one week with a certificate (3 ECTS), that can be combined to a CAS or MAS

Course formats

- Distance learning, online-only
  - Independent from place/country and time
  - Self motivation important, no classes, few social contacts and exchange
  - Tools: webinars, online seminars, hang-outs
- Blended learning (combination of online courses and real classroom
  - Flipped classroom (online modules with videos in advance, discussion in the classroom)
- Face to face-courses
  - Teaching in classes
  - i.e. for hands-on workshops (national, local)
- Exchange program
- MOOC
  - Online courses for free; certificate from a university

Needs and Requirements

- What do medical librarians need?
- What kind of further education, special training do they need?
- On which topics?
- In what kind of formats?

- In order to get answers we want to make a survey
- And we collected some ideas on a virtual discussion board

Input from our Discussion Board

http://linoit.com/users/Gerhard_from_Bern/canvases/Education%20of%20Medical%20Librarians

Skills & topics

Specific skills for a special training program

Existing programmes at LIS schools

External courses, training on the job

EBM-related Library Services/specific skills
Literature search supporting evidence based practice
Critical Appraisal
Systematic Literature Searching
Teaching EBM literature search
Health Research Reporting
Basic epidemiology (study designs, epidemiological measures)
Information for patients
Trends in MLIS, keeping up-to-date
Core resources in health science (databases, e-resources)
LIS skills
Information literacy (teaching of)
User research/customer service
Collection Development, licensing
Databases and e-resources
Library Management
Information services development
Research data management, repositories
Classification and cataloging
Reference Management (tools and methods)
generic skills
Knowledge and information management
Ethics, Confidentiality, Online Security
Scientific/scholarly publishing practices and processes & trends
Pedagogics and educational technologies/pedagogical skills
Sustainability
Marketing and Communication
statistics and visualisation

Which topics are missing?

- you may contribute to our spreadsheet

(during the next days)

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1i3N7HKolPYL7koU7daVSKJ5Y8kpNwLhy8ROnZrTiCwI/edit#gid=0

Requirements and needs (some theses)

- There are enough possibilities for an education (or further education) as an academic librarian in general (MAS LIS, MSc)
  - but there is no specific training/education for medical librarians
- for universities the market for these specific topics in one country is too small (maybe not in Germany...)
- medical librarians want and need special training for important new skills
- (medical) librarians need possibilities for specific modules depending on the requirements of their job
- Librarians prefer a modular system with smaller modules (1 week, 2-3 ECTS) that can be combined to a CAS or a MAS
- Librarians want a blended learning programme combining distant learning with face-to-face teaching and discussing

Planned Survey

- These theses (and other questions) will be studied with a survey among medical librarians
- We aim to better understand the needs of the community
- On this basis we will try to set up a programme
  - Maybe international or european
  - Maybe a blended learning or a distant learning MAS in Medical Librarianship
  - Maybe coordinated with existing MAS LIS programmes (for general topics in LIS)
  - Maybe in English only, maybe with parts in different languages (for example meetings in real world and discussions in national languages)
- The survey will take place in September/October 2016
- The results will be published in EAHIL Journal 4/2016

Literature

Lawton A, Burns J. (2014): A review of competencies needed for health librarians—a comparison of Irish and international practice. Health Info Libr J. 2015 Jun;32(2):84-94. doi: 10.1111/hir.12093. Epub 2014 Dec 30. PubMed PMID: 25557954.

Sen, B. A., Chapman, E. L., & Villa, R. (2014). Working in the Health Information Profession: Perspectives, Experiences and Trends. Project WHIPPET. In *iConference 2014 Proceedings* (p. 933–940). doi:10.9776/14321

Barbara Sen, Robert Villa, Elizabeth Chapman: Working in the Health Information Profession: Perspectives, Experiences, and Trends. Report to the European Association for Health Information and Libraries (EAHIL). University of Sheffield, 2014.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262179768_Working_in_the_Health_Information_Profession_Perspectives_Experiences_and_Trends_Report_to_the_European_Association_for_Health_Information_and_Libraries_EAHIL

- http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25557954

HTW Chur
Schweizerisches Institut für Informationswissenschaft

Thank you for your attention...

and for contributing to the survey!

www.ruedimumenthaler.ch