



**When Librarians Search**

Ann McKibbon  
McMaster University



Diagnostic Error Toronto  
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**Clinicians can search.**

However....

- In some situations it is more efficient for librarians to be involved

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**When to call in the librarians**

- Your time runs out or you have no time
- Your usual sources do not have an answer and you know one must exist
- Outside of your domain
- You do not have a clue where or how to look for your answer
- If cost is a big factor

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### Answers are not always right

- ◎23 clinicians each answered 23 questions (yes, no, or evidence not sufficient)
  - ◎Each clinician chose 2 of the 23 questions to look for answers using usual sources
  - ◎Correct before searching: 39%
  - ◎Correct after searching: 42% diff 1 Q
    - ...but 6 questions went from wrong to right
    - ...and 5 questions went from right to wrong
- Your choice of resource is important

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### McGowan RCT of librarian vs clinician searching (3:1 randomization)

Time	<b>L</b> 14 min	<b>C</b> 20 min
Cost	<b>L</b> \$7.15	<b>C</b> \$21 to \$28
Impact		
High	<b>L</b> 20%	<b>C</b> 5%
No	<b>L</b> 8%	<b>C</b> 25%
Negative	<b>L</b> 8%	<b>C</b> 45%
Little or no information	<b>L</b> 6%	<b>C</b> 43%

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### RCT of librarian rounding with ICU

If a Medline search was done by a librarian early in a hospital admission:

- ◎Different or new treatment (OR 8.2, CI 1.0 to 64)
- ◎Mulvaney Vanderbilt 2008

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### Medline and hospital LOS

If a Medline search was done by a librarian early in a hospital admission:

- Lower costs
- Lower charges
- Shorter length of stay

- ⊙ Klein 1992 Detroit
- ⊙ Case control study

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### Rochester Study 1992

Clinicians were asked to submit a question to the library staff, searching done, feedback given

- ⊙ Changes in
  - Choice of diagnostic tests 51%
  - Choice of drugs 45%
  - Advice given to patient 72%
  - Avoidance of additional tests, etc 49%

- ⊙ Marshall and Rochester area HS librarians
- ⊙ Critical incident study 15 hospitals 208 replies

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### Rochester Study replicated

Urquhart	UK	1995
Ali	Australia	2000
Burton	New Zealand	1995

Bottom line: Lots of changes resulting from librarian involved in searching

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Clinical medical librarians  
Informationist  
Informationalist  
Embedded librarian

Librarians become part of the rounding team.

35 studies (1974-2002) mostly descriptive Q and Q

- 89% of users found services helpful and of high quality
- 65% felt services contributed to improved patient care

Bottom line: Lots of changes resulting from librarian involved searching

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Conclusions



Clinicians can search.

Librarians also have a role in clinical searching.

Just remember:

- All information sources are not equal and some can be dangerous
- If time and cost are important, a librarian wins
- If you find nothing, a librarian can help out
- If you don't have a clue how to start or how to use unfamiliar information resources, again ask a librarian
- Clinician librarian partnership can be strong.

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