Demonstrating library value: the use made of information provided by an NHS library service, and how that use relates to organisational goals

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Outcomes; impact and value: health
How does this session fit the theme?

• Reports robust statistics about impact
• Evidence about library impact in the context of organisational values
• Practicalities of a local impact study
• Findings that may be useful for future studies
“I’m not interested in how many books or how many articles or how many this or how many that – I’m not interested in that at all. What I’m interested in is – what difference did it make”

Chief executive 2009
Information (Buckland 1991)

• Information as thing, the same despite context (book, journal, e-journal) useful for usage studies and service development (realist, objectivist stance)

• Information as knowledge (the book or image carries a message) Information varies on circumstance and individual

• Information as process (the act of informing)
Value

• Value framework – economic or social
• Measurables that can be assigned a money value (e.g. length of stay reduced)
• Cause and effect – this information caused a reduced length of stay and saved £x – difficult to “prove” causation
• Self-perceived values “I think that the information provided (put together with my experience and various other factors) led to a reduced length of stay/better decision”
organisations

• Organisational and group theories still identify shared objectives and values as a defining factor (Cole, 1996)

• What is valued by organisational leaders is articulated in organisational objectives, goals and mission statements.

• Do individuals share corporate goals?
Theory to practice

• Information as knowledge
• Value-in-use
• Perceived value
• Critical incident technique
Hypothesis, theme, title

• Information obtained through the library service was used in ways that directly related to organisational goals

• Theme – value of the library service to the organisation

• Demonstrating library value..
Research questions

• What use is made of information provided by the library service?
• How may organisational goals be translated to the mission of the library? (so we are all talking the same language)
• Does information use relate to organisational goals?
• Additional validation of the tools
Methodology

• General approach - constructivist, realist
• Research method (what and how not just if) qualitative
• Study design - Survey
  – Interviews
  – Questionnaire
  – Content analysis

Using validated tools if possible to reduce bias (NHS Impact toolkit)
Sampling

- Population = 2604 members of the library
- Online sample size calculator
- Confidence level of 95%
- Confidence interval of 12.51
- Calculated the sample at 60
- 3 library users - opportunistic
- 3 managers – purposive
Randomising

• Random sample so generalising results with statistical confidence would be possible
• Exported names and addresses from library management system into an excel spreadsheet
• Generated 60 random numbers on line, picked the names that matched the numbers in the first column of the spreadsheet
Results

• Questionnaires – 38 out of 60 (63%)
• Information use interviews - the impacts and uses identified were already options on the questionnaire (added validity to interview schedule and questionnaire)
• Organisational interviews – managers values matched the organisation’s values
• 95% confidence that total population (2604) would respond in the same way about impact

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<tr>
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<th>lowest</th>
<th>highest</th>
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<tr>
<td>Contributed to a higher quality of patient care 23</td>
<td>25.79%</td>
<td>50.81%</td>
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<td>60.5% responders(n=38)</td>
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<td>38.3% of sample (n=60)</td>
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<td>Better informed decisions 19, 50% 31.7%</td>
<td>19.19%</td>
<td>44.21%</td>
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<td>Saved time 14. 36.8%,23.3%</td>
<td>10.79%</td>
<td>35.81%</td>
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Translating organisational goals

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<th>Organisational mission concept</th>
<th>Organisational goals With quotes from interviewed managers and annual strategy</th>
<th>Survey results from Library users showing the Need/Immediate Impact/future use of information. The % is of the total sample (n= 60)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical care</td>
<td>Provide excellent clinical care “reduced waiting times” “improved clinical care” putting patients first</td>
<td>For direct patient care 23.3% Contributed to higher quality of care 38.3% Better informed decisions 31.7% Choice of diagnostic tests 8.3% Choice of non-drug therapies 6.7% Minimisation of risks of treatment 10% Confirmation of proposed drug therapies 10%</td>
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Key messages

• Information provided by NHS libraries does impact on organisational goals
• Other libraries with similar populations can use the generalisable results to demonstrate their value
• Suggests managers accept self perceived impacts
• Mapping evidence on impact to organisational goals may be effective in demonstrating value
Next steps

• Health Libraries in Kent Surrey and Sussex will start systematically collecting self-perceived impacts from literature searches (Ben Skinner)
• Look at balanced score card
• Explore organisational power and purse strings – to target the impact evidence.
• Influence of the interview process to gain a shared understanding