

Boston Mental Health Information Outreach Project

Project Description

The Alumni Medical Library, Boston University Medical Center, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health, Doctor Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Center, will facilitate access to biomedical, general health, and mental health information and provide information skills training for the staff, inpatients, and outpatients of the Doctor Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Center. The Alumni Medical Library serves the faculty, staff and students of the Boston University Medical Center, including the School of Medicine, the School of Public Health, the School of Graduate Dentistry, and the hospitals of the Boston Medical Center. The Doctor Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Center (DSCFMHC), located in the South End of Boston, is one of five Metro Boston Department of Mental Health Community Mental Health Centers. The Center serves the mental health needs of adults, families, adolescents and children, providing a system of care and a broad spectrum of mental health inpatient and outpatient services for the severely mentally ill population. The Center's staff and consumers represent the ethnic, racial, and linguistic diversity existing in the communities they serve. The Boston Mental Health Information Project will provide the Center's staff and consumers with training in accessing Internet-related and other health/mental health information resources, and in searching the National Library of Medicine's databases (including MEDLINE*plus*) via PubMed or Internet Grateful MED. The information skills training sessions will be designed and tailored to both staff and consumers. Staff training will be done in the Library's state-of-the-art computer classrooms and consumer (inpatient and outpatient) training will be done by the Library's Information Management Education staff in the DSCFMHC room where the computers will be located. The Boston Mental Health Information Project will provide the Center with equipment needed to effectively access information resources and will facilitate document delivery via the National Library of Medicine's Loansome Doc system. General and mental health-focused Web pages will be developed on the Alumni Medical Library's Website, providing training materials, Web links, and other information useful to the staff and consumers of the Massachusetts Mental Health Department, Doctor Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Center.

Staff

Primary Project Staff Members are as follows:

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| David S. Ginn, Ph.D., Director | Principal Investigator |
| Mary McKeon, MLS, Information Services Librarian | Project Director |
| Joseph Harzbecker, Jr., MSLS, Head of Reference and ILL | Instructor |
| Kathy Schilling, MLS, Head of Information Mgmt. Education Alumni Medical Library, Boston University Medical Center | Instructor |
| Jean Wilkinson, Ph.D. Director, Doctor Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Center | Co-PI |

Organization(s):

Alumni Medical Library, Boston University Medical Center, Boston, MA
Massachusetts Department of Mental Health, Doctor Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Center, Boston, MA

Date:

The Boston Mental Health Information Outreach Project runs from Oct. 2000 – July 2001

Objectives:

1) To provide mental health staff and consumers with the equipment needed to access Internet and NLM information resources during the project period and afterwards 2) To provide information skills training for mental health staff and consumers, designed to improve skills in searching Internet-based health/mental health information resources such as the NLM's MEDLINE*plus* and PubMed MEDLINE database. 3) To provide access to training materials, information, and links to quality-filtered health/mental health information resources by developing and maintaining Web pages on the Boston University Alumni Medical Library's Web site. 4) To facilitate access to health/mental health information by making the resources of the Alumni Medical Library and other resources available via Loansome Doc.

Target Audience:

The target audience consists of staff and consumers of the Doctor Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Center (DSCFMHC), which is one of five Metro Boston Department of Mental Health Community Mental Health Centers. The Center serves the mental health needs of adults, families, adolescents and children and provides a system of inpatient and outpatient services for the severely mentally ill population.

Needs assessment (methodology and results):

A series of discussions were conducted between DSCFMHC management staff and the Alumni Medical Library director and librarian project manager to assess information needs and required computer equipment to enable access to information resources. Results included agreement that the DSCFMHC has a library housing only archival and outdated materials, and that there was no expectation of funding for the purchase of new materials or staff to work in the library. Approximately 60% of staff have desktop computer access and none of the inpatients/outpatients have access to electronic information resources via DSCFMHC facility equipment. The Center lacks a librarian whose responsibilities include training staff in information retrieval, evaluation or management. Staff, including psychiatrists, nurses and other professionals require access to professional psychiatry and mental health literature as well as consumer information which may be used for patient education purposes. Consumers will benefit primarily from accessing consumer information on both mental health and general health topics.

Intervention:

As part of project, four computers and a printer have been ordered for a classroom at DSCFMHC to be used for small-group consumer workshop training sessions in internet and/or NLM database access. The librarian project director has created the outline for the Boston Mental Health Information Outreach Project (BMHIOP) website and has located the most appropriate sites for the purposes of this project. Two slideshows to support the two half-day workshops are under development: Searching the Internet for Mental Health/General Health Information and Searching the NLM's Databases For Mental Health/General Health Information. Staff workshops for 12 – 15 participants will commence in December and will be held in the Alumni Medical Library Learning Resources Center computer classroom. The investigators expect to train 160 of the 240 DSCFMHC staff and 100 of the 200 consumers (inpatients or outpatients) in internet and/or NLM database access during the duration of the grant which runs through July 31, 2001.

Training and other materials developed:

Powerpoint slideshows:

Searching the Internet for Mental Health/General Health Information
(under development)

Searching the NLM's Databases for Mental Health/General Health Information
(under development)

In-class exercises:

In-class exercises for both the Internet and NLM databases workshops are being developed

Website:

The BMHIOP website (<http://med-libwww/library/bmhiop.html>) has been developed by the librarian project manager with the assistance of a second reference librarian. The sites selected for inclusion are being carefully evaluated for reliability and authority due to the potential vulnerability of mental health consumers in evaluating reputable sources of information. The BMHIOP website will be updated as needed during the duration of the grant period. Additional subjects of interest may be added to accommodate staff and consumer interests. The BMHIOP website will be maintained on the Alumni Medical Library's web site after the grant period has ended as a source of mental health information for both DSCFMHC staff and consumers, and for students, staff and faculty at Boston University Medical Center.

Evaluation:

Each workshop will be evaluated at the conclusion of the session. An evaluation form has been designed for this purpose. Participants will be asked to provide feedback regarding the quality and effectiveness of the workshop, followed by questions inquiring as to the participants' response to the workshop.

Feedback regarding quality and effectiveness rated on a 1 – 7 scale:

1. Were the slide show and course materials useful learning aids?
2. Did the instructor cover the material in a clear concise way?
3. Did the workshop cover the areas/issues that you wanted to learn about today?
4. How effective was this workshop in helping you improve your skills & knowledge?
5. Overall, how would you rate the instructor?
6. Overall, how would you rate this workshop?

Questions inquiring about the participants' response to the workshop:

1. Was there anything that you found to be particularly helpful or specifically liked about the session?
2. Was there anything that you specifically disliked about the session?
3. Was there anything specific that was not addressed or not addressed in enough detail that you think should be given more emphasis?
4. How can the library help you continue to develop your information skills and build upon what was learned today?
5. Additional Comments/Feedback

Poster Sessions/Exhibits/Presentations/Publications:

Project was funded starting October 2000 and we are therefore still in the development stage of the project. We anticipate presenting the project results at the annual meeting of the Medical Library Association in 2002, in addition to other forums.

Partnerships:

The Alumni Medical Library, Boston University Medical Center and the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health, Doctor Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Center collaborated on the development of the grant proposal. The Alumni Medical Library Systems staff ordered and will set-up the 4 computers and printer at DSCFMHC and will maintain the computers during the duration of the grant. At the end of the grant period, the computers and printer will become the property of DSCFMHC and will be maintained by their IT department. The development of the BMHIOP web site, workshop slideshows, in-class exercises, evaluation forms and all teaching responsibilities will be undertaken by Alumni Medical Library librarians. Staff workshops will be conducted in the library's state-of-the-art computer classroom. DSCFMHC will be responsible for registering and requiring attendance of the appropriate numbers of staff and consumers to meet grant requirements. DSCFMHC will also ensure availability of their computer classroom for scheduled consumer workshops.

Marketing:

The Alumni Medical Library's homepage has been used to publicize the project. The Massachusetts Department of Mental Health's MetroBoston bi-monthly newsletter will feature an article on the grant in January 2001. We anticipate publicizing the grant in the Boston University Medical Center's newsletter as well.

**Administrative issues/ Challenges Faced/ Were Project Objectives Met?
/Sustainability/Anecdotes or Other Observations:**

Since the grant period has just started in October 2000 and we are in the development phase, it is too early to comment in detail on the above issues. However, some of the challenges we are facing include issues relating to inpatient/outpatient consumer training including DSCFMHC administration concerns relating to security of patient information behind the Department of Mental Health 'firewall', supervision of consumers to ensure appropriate uses of computers, and safety issues of consumers and library staff during workshops. Other teaching challenges involve developing effective workshops for a group of consumers who possess a wide-range of disabilities relating to their mental illnesses, as well as educational levels and computer skills. DSCFMHC administration needs to develop policies relating to staff supervision during consumer workshops and policies regarding access to the classroom and computers during those periods when workshops are not being held. DSCFMHC administration will need to develop policies to enable future usage of computers and the BMHIOP website after July 31.