

Public Health Outreach Project Description

Title: Information Access for Public Health Professionals of the Public Health Departments of Clinton, Essex and Franklin Counties of New York State

Staff: William McCall, CVPH Circuit Librarian & Christina Ransom, CVPH Librarian

Organization: CVPH Medical Center Library, Plattsburgh, New York

Date: April 1999 – September 2000

Objectives:

- To increase the awareness of Public Health Department staff to health information resources
- To increase access to the Internet and other information sources to the staff of the Public Health Departments in Clinton, Essex and Franklin Counties
- Train staff at Public Health Departments in Clinton, Essex and Franklin Counties to use technology to access information resources
- Train staff at Public Health Departments in Clinton, Essex and Franklin Counties to use technology to assess the quality of information resources

Target Audience: Staff of the Public Health Departments in Clinton, Essex and Franklin Counties

Needs assessment [methodology and results]:

The staff of the Public Health Departments were surveyed informally and formally as to what they perceived their needs to be.

Intervention: The CVPH Library staff provided research and document delivery services, and monthly current awareness bibliographies. Training in using the Internet and the resources of the National Library of Medicine was offered informally and in-group sessions.

Training and other materials developed:

Website [developed as parts of project and how maintained]:
Not applicable

Evaluation [methodology and results]: All searches include an evaluation form for the requestor to complete. Participants in training sessions are provided an evaluation form to complete and return.

Poster Sessions/Exhibits/Presentations/Publications:
Not applicable

Partnerships: The subcontract provided opportunity for increasing collaboration between CVPH Medical Center and the Public Health Departments. This may be one of the subcontract's most important, long term contributions.

Marketing: The program was publicized by personal contacts made by formal and informal visits, meetings, letters, emails and phone calls.

Administrative issues:

Challenges Faced:

- The staff of the Public Health Departments are very busy and not on site much of the time
- Inadequate computers and Internet access at the Public Health Department sites
- Administrative change in two of the three Public Health Departments served
- Inadequate space at all the Public Health Department sites
- CVPH Staff time had to be shared with a multitude of other ongoing programs

Were Project Objectives Met?

All the objectives were met to some extent. Awareness of health resources available from the Internet, the National Library of Medicine and other sources was increased for the staff we were able to make contact with. Staff that attended training sessions increased their ability to access and evaluate information they found on the World Wide Web. Unfortunately we were only able to contact a fraction of the staff that would benefit.

Sustainability: The increased awareness and skills will encourage staff to consider sources they would not have before. The program increased cooperation between CVPH and Public Health. Since this is a current goal of CVPH, there may be interest in continuing to provide services to Public Health

Departments.

Anecdotes or Other Observations: