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# Brief Communications

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## A Clinical Program for In-Service Nurses: A Preliminary Report

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THE CONCEPT of the clinical medical librarian (CML) was developed by Dr. Gertrude Lamb, and its implementation was announced to the profession by Algermissen in 1974 [1]. Since then, clinical medical librarianship has been enthusiastically adopted in a variety of settings, but usually within a physician or medical student population [2-4].

CML has been successfully introduced into an entire nursing service of 500 to 600 R.N.s in the 619-bed Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The evolutionary process of introducing one librarian to an entire nursing service began in the early fall of 1978 when the librarian was challenged by the director of nursing service to help meet the information and continuing educational needs of her staff.

In view of the heterogeneous background of the hospital nursing staff—from recent diploma graduates to current Ph.D. candidates—and in full awareness of the magnitude of the nursing population, it was decided that the program should be initiated within one of the primary care units. By mutual consent, the CML began her work with the Maternity and Newborn Care Unit in the belief that this group would be especially receptive to the project.

A meeting with the nurse clinician on the Maternity and Newborn Unit led to the CML's daily attendance at nursing report. (Nursing report is a regular hospital procedure in which each patient's chart and status is described by the current shift of nurses for the benefit of the next group of nurses coming on duty.) Attendance at report allowed the CML to learn the interests and concerns of the nurses in the unit. As the nurses became more familiar and comfortable with the CML, they began to ask questions. The CML would respond to these questions with books,

articles, or bibliographies, usually within twenty-four hours.

Some questions were directly articulated by the nurses; others were identified by the CML as the nurses discussed their patients. In a small cabinet, the CML set up a reprint file in which the collection of articles was kept. This file was located at the nursing station. To sharpen their research skills and to increase their awareness of library resources, the CML scheduled all of the R.N.s on the floor for small group tours of the library.

During the initial months of the project, the CML initiated other activities, such as posting abstracts of selected journal articles on a bulletin board in the nursing station. Any nurses interested in reading the articles in their entirety signed a list, whereupon the CML provided copies of the selected articles.

The CML also examined new nursing books and scanned a number of journals on a regular basis. Articles or notices were sent to nurses who had shown special interest in particular subjects.

The CML participated and spoke at a hospital workshop on publishing and writing opportunities for nurses, where she collected information used by the nurses in the workshop. The CML has also been able to contribute suggestions to the library's acquisition department for purchases in the area of nursing. Requests for new acquisitions are frequently related to the CML by the nursing staff; additional suggestions for collection development have occurred as a result of the CML's involvement with the nursing staff.

As the project progressed, the nurse clinician on the floor introduced the CML to the staff development nurses, who work throughout the hospital and are responsible for orientation, staff guidance, and continuing education. The staff development nurses expressed considerable interest in the clinical librarianship concept. This group served as an introduction to nurse clinicians and floor nurses outside the maternity unit. Eventually the CML became a regular part of the orientation program for new nursing staff personnel, and these nurses extended their knowledge of the nursing service clinical librarian to different units in all areas of the hospital. The program began to reach a broad variety of nursing staff personnel.

With an increasing number of calls and inqui-

ries, the need for keeping careful statistics became apparent. Forms were completed for each transaction, and computer and copying costs were recorded. The CML designed a special library form to document the types of questions being asked, the methods used to answer the questions, and the cost of offering the service.

#### JOINT FUNDING

This project is funded jointly by the library and the nursing service. At this time, the clinical librarian's position and salary remain part of the library budget, while the cost of computer searches and photocopying is borne by the nursing service. Since only a portion of the CML's total time is devoted to nursing service activity, the library continues to utilize her for general reference work, while assigning her specific responsibility for all Lockheed (DIALOG) searching. If the clinical portion of the CML's work load increases as anticipated, then negotiations with the nursing service for contributions to salary and fringe benefits will be initiated, and another librarian will need to assume the Lockheed (DIALOG) searching role.

#### LIST OF SERVICES

A new director of nursing has recently been hired at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. A meeting has been arranged that will allow the director, the librarian, and the CML to examine the program thus far and to plan for the future. The CML has prepared a list of services that can be offered as part of a Nursing Service Clinical Librarianship Program. These services include:

1. To act as a contact person in the library for all reference services.
2. To be available to attend patient care meetings and conferences as a support person.
3. To introduce library services at new staff orientations.
4. To provide personalized library orientations to individuals and small groups.
5. To provide patient-care searches.
6. To act as a support person for workshops and inservice training.
7. To assist in library collection development.
8. To promote current awareness, by alerting individuals or units to new items of interest.
9. To establish clinical reprint files.
10. To provide LATCH (Literature Attached to Charts) service.
11. To contribute to the hospital's newsletter.

At Jefferson, an assistant director for nursing representing each of the six nursing care programs in the hospital will be selected. Then a CML can meet with these individuals and design a "package of services" to meet the special needs of each program. In this way, an effort can be made to provide information services to the nursing staff in an efficient and effective manner.

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#### Utilization of 1200 Baud for On-Line Retrieval in a Health Sciences Library

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**ON-LINE RETRIEVAL** is costly to the user and to the library not only in terms of direct costs, such as vendor charges, but also in terms of indirect costs, such as telecommunications, equipment, staff time, search time, and general overhead. The Medical Sciences Library at Texas A&M University installed 1200 baud equipment in an attempt to make computerized retrieval more cost-effective and of greater utility for the end-user. This paper discusses: (1) selection of a 1200 baud modem, (2) consideration of types of terminals for best utilization of 1200 baud retrieval, (3) use of varying search techniques appropriate to high-speed retrieval, and (4) impact of increased retrieval speed on services to end-users.