

Evidence Based Library and Information Practice

Editorial

Evidence of Impact

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Welcome to the June 2014 issue of the EBLIP Journal. While we were pulling together the content for this issue, I found myself thinking about impact and how this relates to evidence based practice. The reason for this was because I was preparing for a talk on "measuring impact in practice" for the Scottish Health Information Network (SHINE) annual study day. Evidence based practice in library and information work is all about using evidence in our decision making, and is usually associated with effectiveness or whether something works. On the other hand, impact is something that as library practitioners we are increasingly asked to demonstrate to our stakeholders; and is about whether our services make a difference. However just as we can use or locate evidence to help us in our own decision making to find out whether an aspect of our service works, we can also use evidence to help us understand whether our service makes a difference. Not only can we use this evidence of impact for ourselves in our

own decision making, we can use evidence to demonstrate the impact of our practice or service to our stakeholders and help them make decisions regarding our services. Thus measuring impact has an important place within evidence based practice.

The SHINE Study Day (http://www.shinelib.org.uk/news/596) provided plenty of useful information to those who want to measure or provide evidence to demonstrate impact about any aspect of their library service. Wilson (2014) presented a theoretical background and detailed framework that has been implemented across the National Health Service Scotland Knowledge Services. This framework can be used to measure a wide range of different impacts, and complements other guidance about impact, such as those expressed by Hall (2011), Tenopir (2013), or Bawden et al. (2009). Lemay (2014) provided an example where evidence from library services has been incorporated into a clinical decision

making system and then monitored to document impact on patient care, while Brettle (2014) addressed the practicalities that need to be considered when measuring impact. All speakers provided slightly different definitions of impact, but a common theme was the need to specify the outcomes you are measuring, so that you know what evidence you need to collect and the need to be aware of your stakeholders so that you can ensure you collect evidence that is important and relevant to each particular stakeholder.

As well as evidence to inform your practice, this issue has a number of news items for grants and conferences that might help give you a boost, so go ahead and make an impact!

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