Problem: Physical Therapy graduate students are required to take an Evidence-Based Practice [EBP] course in their first year. Successful implementation of EBP demands the ability to locate medical research in an efficient and timely manner. Although the course taught students to construct clinical questions and how to evaluate the research, the single session of library instruction was not successful in instilling the necessary searching skills in them. Students left the course without the ability to search the medical literature as effectively as was desired.

Evidence: The information literate user employs critical thinking skills and knows where and how to locate the information they need. Because of their proficiency with locating the literature, librarians are particularly suited for teaching information literacy.

Strategy: Using their expertise and experience with EBP and database searching, the librarians and the faculty collectively devised an integrated approach to incorporate database searching and retrieval seamlessly into the course.

Practice Change: The librarians went from teaching a single session to teaching five. They used conceptual exercises to provide the students with a stronger understanding of systematic reviews and indexing. They covered several database platforms (free and fee-based), teaching search techniques from the basic to the advanced. Graded assignments and exam questions emphasized the importance of searching ability.

Evaluation: The outcome measures used included the literature searching exercises, exam questions, the students’ project presentations, and course evaluations.

Results: Students produced higher quality final presentations. Course evaluations consistently indicate a higher feeling of confidence in students’ ability to search the literature. The students have demonstrated that they retain a strong grasp of how to locate the relevant medical literature.

Recommendations: Faculty/Librarian collaboration, planning, and preparation are crucial to imparting information literacy skills to EBP students.

Bibliography:


