Measuring the impact of library tutorials in an allied health evidence-based practice course

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1 Background

In 2014, the OU-Tulsa Schusterman Library developed a series of online tutorials for occupational and physical therapy students in a graduate level Evidence-Based Practice Course. Tutorials were embedded in the online course platform and guided students through constructing searches for different types of evidence. Students wrote a final paper based on the steps of EBP in which they presented a clinical question, conducted a thorough search of the literature, and then cited (3) studies representing the best available evidence for their question.

Three student cohorts have completed the Allied Health EBP course since implementing the library’s online tutorials. By evaluating the final EBP papers written by students in cohorts before and after implementation of the tutorials, we aimed to measure the impact of these instructional devices on student learning of EBP skills.

2 Methods

- Develop a grading rubric to assess components of student EBP papers, including search strategies and study levels of evidence
- Gather all student EBP papers from 2012-2013 pre-tutorial cohorts (n=177) and 2014-2016 post-tutorial cohorts (n=272)
- De-identify all personal information from student EBP papers
- Randomly select (90) pre-tutorial papers and (90) post-tutorial papers for assessment
- Assign each randomly selected paper (2) reviewers for assessment
- Reviewers score their assigned papers using the grading rubric
- Compile paper scores from all reviewers and reconcile any variances amongst scores
- Compare paper scores from pre- and post-tutorial cohorts

3 Results

Using the grading rubric, papers were given scores ranging from 1 to 4 in the following components: A) number of databases used in the search; B) number of search terms & use of MeSH/subject headings; C) use of limits in the search; and D) level of evidence for the (3) studies cited in the student papers.

A. # of Databases in the Search Scores (p-value = 0.0312)

B. # of Search Terms & Use of MeSH Terms Scores (p-value = 0.00005)

C. Use of Limits Scores (p-value = 0.0286)

D. Level of Evidence for Cited Studies Combined Scores (p-value = 0.0285)

4 Discussion

Based upon our initial assessment of student written assignments, the OU-Tulsa Schusterman Library’s online tutorials positively impacted the searching skills of graduate students in the OUHSC College of Allied Health Evidence-Based Practice course.

5 Conclusion

IRB Approval:
University of Oklahoma, Institutional Review Board, Expedited Category 5, Reference Number: 057482

Works Cited: