

K-State Veterinary Medical Library Outreach Grant

Outreach Grant

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April 1, 2002-June 30, 2003

January 8, 2004

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

1. Summary/Introduction:

Gayle Willard and I attended three veterinary medical meetings as exhibitors where we distributed materials about the National Library of Medicine and its services to veterinarians, veterinary technicians, faculty members of veterinary colleges, veterinary students, veterinary public health workers and other healthcare professionals attending the meetings. Our display had posters which showed databases that were available for use by veterinary healthcare professionals, described the services our library provided to healthcare professionals, and showed the methods of information delivery that we could provide to veterinary healthcare professionals. We also demonstrated how to use and search the NLM databases—PubMed and MEDLINEplus. We also answered the individual questions that veterinary healthcare professionals had about the services that NLM could provide them through the databases PubMed and MEDLINEplus and the use of these databases.

2. Geographic region:

We impacted the states of Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska.

3. Collaborations/Partnerships:

We collaborated with the Kansas Veterinary Medical Association, The Nebraska Veterinary Medical Association, and the Central States Veterinary Conference. We have maintained our partnership with the Kansas Veterinary Medical Association and plan to exhibit and demonstrate again at the Annual Trade Show held in conjunction with the KVMA/Kansas State University's Annual Conference in June 2004. We were not able to contact as many veterinary healthcare professionals at the Nebraska meeting due to the smaller numbers of attendees at that conference. We did not feel that it was a good use of our time to display at their meeting in the near future. The Central States Veterinary Meeting provided us with many contacts but the amount of days that we would be required to exhibit were too prohibitive for the current staffing that we have at our library. Also, while the exhibit space was donated to us we found that the costs of having an exhibit were out of line with the other two conferences. We had to pay for tables, internet access, and travel expenses since the meeting was held in Kansas City, Missouri. The KVMA/Kansas State University's Annual Conference is held in Manhattan, Kansas, where our library is located and thus does not require us to spend money on travel. Also we were given a free booth as well as free Internet access.

4. Training

Not applicable to this grant.

5. Training sites

Not applicable to this grant.

6. Exhibits

Central States Veterinary Conference, Kansas City, Missouri, August 17-19, 2002. We had a total of 172 visits to our booth. We conducted 18 NLM database demonstrations and 5 Internet demonstrations. We felt this was a very successful exhibition because it was a regional meeting and we were able to make contacts with veterinarians and other veterinary-related healthcare professions from several states.

Nebraska Veterinary Medical Association 107th Annual Convention, Omaha, Nebraska, January 13, 2003. We had a total of 35 visits to our booth. We did not conduct any database or Internet demonstrations because our laptop computer modem was broken and could not be repaired. We felt this was the least successful of our conference exhibits. There was a small crowd and they were not interested in library or information resources.

65th Annual Conference for Veterinarian (College of Veterinary Medicine)/Kansas Veterinary Medical Association 99th Annual Trade Show, Manhattan, Kansas, June 1-3, 2003. We had a total of 75 visits to our booth. We conducted 10 NLM database demonstrations. We felt this was also a successful exhibition and plan to repeat this in June, 2004. We received a complimentary booth and did not have to pay for Internet access.

7. Resource materials

We printed copies of the PubMed brochure that was available on the NLM web site. We did it on blue granite paper and adapted the citations to veterinary medical literature. We provided copies of the PubMed glossy bookmarks that are available from the RML. We also handed out MEDLINEplus bookmarks, MEDLINEplus pens, and PubMed pens. Also we handed out brochures from our library that described our document delivery and reference services available here at the Veterinary Medical Library here at Kansas State University. We were able to buy a display for our booth that enabled us to display large posters.

8. Web sites

We currently have a web site that explains our Library Research Services here at the Veterinary Medical Library. The URL is as follows:

<http://www.vet.k-state.edu/depts/library/research.services.htm>

We update this at least once a year and more when there are significant changes in information.

9. Document delivery and reference services

During 2003 Library Research Services has provided 1,647 documents and has performed approximately 40 reference searches for Library Research Services clients. These were done throughout the year 2003 at the library.

10. Approaches and interventions used:

We answer email requests from clients requesting services and tell them the procedures and charges that we have for our services. Carol Elmore writes a column describing services and features that the library provides to clients and features services that are available through the National Library of Medicines various databases. The column is published in Sunflower Roads and is sent to alumni and friends of The College of Veterinary Medicine, Kansas State University. Carol Elmore is the primary staff member who performs searches, provides reference help, and provides document delivery to clients who are not affiliated with the university. She is backed-up by the other staff members of the library.

11. Evaluation

Our original Statement of Work for the grant stated our evaluation requirement as follows:

“To determine the success of the outreach activities in providing information to the target populations, the following information will be collected:

- Number of people visiting the booth
- Number of demonstrations of NLM products completed
- Approximate percentages for target populations reached (i.e., 50% veterinary, 25% public health, 10% extension officials, and 15% other).”

We had meaningful contacts with 282 persons through our exhibit sessions, and we did a total of 15 demonstrations. Our target groups were a little different than we had originally thought. 75% of the people that we made contact with were veterinarians, 10% were public health professional, and the remaining 15% were spouses, veterinary technicians, and corporate veterinary affiliated personnel.

We felt that people were open to hearing about the services of NLM and we were surprised at the number of professionals who were unfamiliar with PubMed and MEDLINEplus. Spouses of veterinarians were especially interested in hearing about MEDLINEplus. The Nebraska Veterinary Medical Association meeting that we attended was the most disappointing of all the exhibits. The number of people who visited our booth was much lower than the number that visited us at the other two locations.

12. Problems or barriers encountered

At the Central States Conference we were surprised that we had to pay to rent tables and chairs. We were given a free booth but were not told that we would have to pay for the furniture. We were finally given without charge several chairs. Also we had to pay a lot in our opinion for Internet access. At the Nebraska meeting our computer modem did not function so we were not charged for Internet service there even though we had requested it. We also received free Internet service at the Kansas Veterinary Medical/Annual Conference meeting that we attended and were given a free booth at this meeting. We felt that this was our most successful exhibit venue because we were able to interact with Kansas veterinarians. Staffing a booth we discovered can be a very time-consuming and sometimes unproductive venture. There were many periods when very few people came through the exhibit halls.

13. Continuation plans

We plan to exhibit at the yearly Kansas Veterinary Medical Association/Annual Conference that is held in June at Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS. We will continue to demonstrate NLM databases and services and hand out NLM promotional materials.

14. Impact

We feel that the exposure that we received at the exhibits helped promote the Library Research Services that we provide at the Veterinary Medical Library at Kansas State University. We feel that this has helped increase the number of clients that we now serve and the number of documents that we supply to these clients has increased.

15. Recommendations for improvement

We were happy with the materials that we received from our RML and would hope that they would continue to provide us with promotional materials such as bookmarks and pens.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

1. Were your original project goals and objectives met? If not, why not?

Our goals and objectives were met and were answered in questions 1-6 above.

2. What significant lessons were learned which would be of interest or use to others conducting outreach projects. Which strategies were the most effective in implementing the project?

I learned that people are very open and want to learn about information options that can help them in the improvement of their providing quality veterinary care to their clients. They were very interested in learning that they could perform searches themselves but also appreciated knowing that there was a library that they could call upon to help them

out when they either didn't have time or the expertise to help themselves. I also felt that personal contact and talking with people was the most effective way to communicate our services. Although they liked seeing searches demonstrated, they really just like chatting about the problems that they have encountered and the need to find information to help them solve these problems. Many older veterinarians and their spouses were especially interested in knowing that they could use resources on the Internet that were reliable and free.

3. If you were to start all over again, what, if anything, would you change about your goals, project plans, etc.?

I think that I would not change anything other than to plan ahead more so that I would be sure that the laptop that I took for the exhibits had a working modem. It was very disappointing to learn that ours did not work. I did think that the reports that were required to be sent were way too detailed for the type of exhibits that we did. In my opinion a mid-point report and a final report would have been sufficient. It took more time to do the reports than it did to plan the exhibits.

4. What advice or recommendations would you give to anyone considering a similar outreach effort?

Try doing it. It was really a good experience.