

## Quarterly Report 2

St. Louis Children's Hospital in partnership with Becker Medical Library  
One Children's Place  
St. Louis, MO 63110

### **Continuity of health Information: Integrating the Medical Library into Hospital Emergency Planning**

Betsy Kelly and Lauren Yaeger

[kellyb@wusm.wustl.edu](mailto:kellyb@wusm.wustl.edu) 314-362-2783

[yaegerl@wusm.wustl.edu](mailto:yaegerl@wusm.wustl.edu) 314-454-2768

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#### **Publicity:**

Lauren got to meet and explain her involvement at a severe weather drill on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Doctors, nurses and other float staff wandered in and out of the command center and saw her face. Her job was to call the disaster as it happened, watch and observe command central in action, and keep the drill moving along in a timely manner. There will be another drill toward the end of the year that hopefully the library will be used as a place of gathering or at least signs will be up to direct staff to a place (the library) where power/internet/peace can be found.

#### **Outreach:**

Lauren went to an all day CEEP (Critical Employee Emergency Plan) seminar given by GSRCPU (Gulf State Regional Center for Public Safety Innovations) and supported by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and FEMA.

The program was geared toward Public Safety professionals and Lauren was a little out of place in a room mostly of police officers, fire men/ women and their assistants. When introducing herself and why she was there a lot of people smiled and nodded their interest and approval.

#### **Target Audience:**

CEEP, which was the result of a lack of communication during Katrina where a wife of a small town police officer had evacuated to Dallas and not a single person could help her find any information about her husband. She had no money, needed medicine for the kids and was about to be kicked out of the one small hotel room they were in, but most importantly didn't know if her husband was dead or alive. Later it was found this was by far not the only situation of similar circumstance. CEEP is pronounced KEEP as in 'keep' your families safe first. Where does the medical library and librarian fit into this concept? As a safe place of first responders and hospital personnel to go and email, call or social network their status, get in touch with families or just take a break from being around patients.

Who are the first responders at Saint Louis Children's Hospital? In most cases, whoever is at the hospital at the time the emergency strikes. St. Louis isn't prone to many disasters that can be forewarned in a timely manner. The occasional snow or ice storm, but even as played out in our drill a pre-warned thunderstorm can do much more damage than expected, or strike at inconvenient times such as shift change or the early hours of the morning or in the middle of rush hour. Although Lauren will advertise and educate as many hospital employees as possible, it is near impossible to reach every hospital employee, volunteer and part time assistant regarding the library's new role in the emergency plan. Therefore it's important to focus on a small group of individuals who will be directing and informing responders during an emergency. The emergency preparedness team knows the library is working to become involved and provide space and information in the event of an emergency, would the volunteer office (on the same floor) and guest services (front desk workers?) benefit from the same knowledge?

This is a question to be discussed at the next emergency preparedness meeting as well at proposed to guest services. Their input on who else might be key people to hold this knowledge will also be solicited.

**Goals, Outcomes, Objectives:**

While the toolkit is still being worked on I (Lauren) became more immersed in the world of emergency planning. Meeting with St. Louis Children's Hospital's preparedness group, participating first hand in a drill and attending CEEP training all made me rethink the value and resource our hospital library lends to those responding and involved with a disaster.

Next up is creating a toolkit specifically for SLCH and the SLCH medical Library and outlining a poster.

**Evaluation:**

Thirty three people involved in emergency preparedness or emergency planning in the general area of St. Louis, MO responded to our survey through Survey Monkey. Summary results:

Where do you go in an emergency for medical information:

Internet	19
Websites	3
Health Dept.	2
Medical Lib.	9
Staff	8
Com. Centr.	3
Em. Manual	1

Is your library included in the emergency plan?

No/don't know/not sure	28
Yes	5

Comments: no library available (3), yes, library integral part of the process, librarian is HIM director and oversees physician library services, library provides the literature that supports the emergency plan, to a minor extent

How is the librarian included?

- Assists in the configuration of HCC standup
- documentation and lit search
- Our system is a little different than others....since I have done Emergency Mgmt for over 20 years in the community I help with ICS and overall planning, direct the HIM department and am involved in community emergency planning...
- literature search
- physician buy-in
- variety of resources on-line to identify agents, course of treatment, diseases etc...
- Reference material
- Information resource on line access
- information gathering

What benefits might come from integrating the medical library into the emergency plan?

- I would think it highly advantageous to have a collection of books and materials readily available and in one location for expedient research. Additionally, a complete Subject, Title, and Author card catalog would aid in detailed and extensive research
- Having someone with research skills who is able to use appropriate literature and information, particularly in radiation events
- More in depth resources
- It could help to have reference guidelines especially if computers were down
- I do not see the benefit
- info available immediately as needed during a crisis
- It is always nice to have additional resources during an emergency. I am open to any changes in resources
- generally has abundance of equipment that is always ready--computers, fax, copier, telephones, etc.
- assistance with pulling relevant information in real time. Would be most appropriate during exposures or outbreaks
- would give the general public a resource that would not tie up emergency resources for information
- this is already done in our facility....have not formally placed in the plan but we will
- possibly to look up specifics on antidotes, other meds, hazmat treatment, but we utilize our Medical Officer in the Incident Command Center to do that
- They would know key resources to go to in order to find the information in a quick efficient manner

- This would be helpful in having a central place where information could be obtained and someone who was aware of what is available and where to locate would be very helpful
- Unknown at this point. It would depend on the expert advice available as well as the convenience of the library
- Have easy access to all types of information
- Library needs to provide research capability during the planning phase and recovery phase. Will not be used in the response phase
- Capitalize on the existing library of useful medical information
- None
- I see downside
- It would be beneficial because it would be a quick, easy, and efficient way to obtain information in a hurry
- Unsure. Could be time saver for those who must seek resources
- would assist Medical specialist with specific information
- Additional resource to assist with information Access for employees
- Ease and assist to quickly access needed information
- would help to identify anything outside of the manual. Also having a person to do the research would really help when we are into the disaster.

There are mixed feeling about whether or not the library and librarian has a helpful place in the emergency plan of its hospital. The majority of people responding to this survey hadn't previously considered the library as a resource in an emergency event, but few seemed against the idea and even implementation. They could see the value of having a place with computers and internet and textbooks if need be. While information, non-clinical space and an information specialist working as part of the emergency response team might be new to the hospital employees and first responders, it doesn't from Lauren's experience and survey, seem to be one that is going to be immediately dismissed.

### **Impacts and Observations:**

Lauren is finding that in the event of an emergency not every plan will go as planned. The original thought about using the library as part of the emergency plan would be to get information to the point of care and to the care giver. It seems the care giver has a better idea how to get what they need but might need access to that information, be it a computer with internet, a social network on an unblocked computer or even hardcopy reference materials. Also, the physical space of the library may prove to be its greatest asset if the emergency is long, drawn out, or over crowds the patient and family areas. The first responders are some of the most important people to the hospital in the event of an emergency and if they are over stressed, overly concerned with their own family and not properly cared for, they will become useless if they even choose to stay and work. A place where the hospital staff first responders or even community people delivering patients to the hospital can take a moment, get their thoughts in order, contact their loved ones and regroup before continuing on with their duties can prove to be invaluable- from training and drills Lauren is observing this is a capacity the library might fill perfectly.

**Planned activities:**

We now have the laptops and are in the process of getting stands and security measures to keep them safe in the medical library. Lauren will be crafting a SLCH specific toolkit and a rough draft of a poster. She will also present some of the CEEP concepts to both the emergency preparedness workgroup and guest services with the idea that in the event of an emergency key people will direct first responders and other staff to the library for assistance.