

## **SCAMeL Professional Development /Exchange Program**

### **Report of Visit to University of New Mexico (UNM) Health Sciences Library March 30<sup>th</sup> – April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2010**

#### **Participant:**

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#### **Institution Visited**

University of New Mexico, Health Sciences Center, Library and Informatics Center

Albuquerque New Mexico

#### **Account of Visit**

The purpose of my visit to the UNM Health Sciences Library was to learn how Evidence Based Medicine (EBM) is taught to specifically medical students, focusing on the role of librarians in the School of Medicine curriculum. I also wanted to investigate the working relationships between librarians and clinical faculty. At Jon Eldredge's invitation, I planned my visit to coincide with the beginning of the Transitions Block.

I am familiar with PBL from my five years experience as a librarian tutor at the annual McMaster. Workshops: 'How To Teach Evidence Based Clinical Practice '. I wanted to compare that week long, EBM focused experience, at McMaster, with the librarians' role in EBM instruction in a medical school PBL curriculum.

UNM has adopted a Problem Based Learning (PBL) curriculum in the School of Medicine and my visit coincided with the Transitions Block. This block is designed to prepare the second year students for the clinical biennium third and fourth years where they will be dealing with patients on a regular basis.

As first year medical students they are taught the principles of EBM in the Genetics and Neoplasia block by library faculty member Jon Eldredge. This includes an assignment both coordinated and graded by a librarian.

During my visit I attended the Transitions Block Section 1 lecture given by Toby Palley MD Family Medicine: "Introduction to EBM Search and Resources". This included some review of

the EBM material previously covered in the Genetics and Neoplasia block eighteen months previously. I observed several other examples of interaction between clinicians and librarians

I also participated in a year 2 EBM Transitions Block tutorial. In this tutorial group 14 students reviewed the PowerPoint presentation given by Dr Palley. The group also reviewed search strategies in the context of EBM and critically appraised a journal article. This was in preparation for assignments to be completed by the next tutorial Session. The group was facilitated by David Stoltze, Family and Community Medicine and by Jon Eldredge. In addition to providing feedback and advice on searching techniques during the session, Jon Eldredge also offered separate PubMed review sessions. These are both good examples of a librarian taking an active role in instruction in the curriculum.

Another tutorial session I attended was mediated by Dr. Bardack, and Dr.Smoker, Family and Community Medicine, and Brian Bunnnett, Director, Library and Education Services. This was also in the Transitions Block: the six students in the group were charged with working through a case, starting with history and physical findings, and progressing through the differential diagnosis to the correct diagnosis. It was the second of six tutorials, covering a total of 12 cases. Each student had a role to play in the scenario. The three tutors are collectively responsible for the students' evaluations and grades. It was very interesting to observe the role playing. This is a learning technique much favored by McMaster and one I would like to introduce in San Antonio.

Afterwards, I attended the wrap up meeting of all the tutors, chaired by the Transitions Block Chair, Theresa Anderson M.D. It was interesting to note that all the cases are produced in house and that tutors come from many different disciplines. The Library was well represented by 3 library faculty tutors: Brian Bunnnett, Ingrid Hendrix and Sarah Morley.

In addition to attending tutorial sessions I also met with several library faculty who either teach extensively in the curriculum or who provide other necessary library services at UNM. The integration of instruction into the curriculum was my primary interest, but other library services are equally as important when considering the profile of the library within the institution.

I came away with a snap shot of how the library is successfully integrated into the curriculum and I look forward to building on the connections I have now established. For example, I am planning a conference call with Ingrid Hendrix and Sarah Morley so that we can further discuss instruction in the curriculum. During my time there, Jon Eldredge generously provided me with extensive reading materials and met with me as often as his busy schedule permitted.

This experience is directly relevant to my responsibilities as Curriculum Liaison Librarian in San Antonio. Starting in July, 2010 librarians will be teaching EBM and literature searching to the second year class in the School of Medicine. The format will be a combination of lectures and small group activities. The Transitions Block at UNM is therefore a good example of how this is achieved. I will use this model as we move forward in the planning.

## **Comments**

I am most grateful that the SCAMeL Professional Development Award made this possible. My visit to UNM gave me the opportunity to see how librarians and clinicians instruct and facilitate small group learning together as a team in a curricular context

I was able to extend my visit by carefully selecting a reasonably priced hotel located near UNM. Also, I used the free hotel shuttle for transport and did not claim for all my evening meals. A longer stay definitely added to the value of my experience.

When planning future visits, I recommend an agenda be discussed early on in the planning, the better to manage all parties' expectations.