Roles of Librarians in Advancing Evidence-Based Veterinary Medicine

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Overview

Veterinary medical librarians and the EBVMA Librarians Committee are involved in supporting and advancing evidence-based veterinary medicine in clinical care, education, and research. In addition to the important traditional roles of selecting resources and providing access to information, librarians: educate, find the evidence, critically appraise the evidence, and participate in the research process.

Veterinary librarians are partners in improving practice outcomes by increasing the effectiveness of research teams and facilitating the uptake of research evidence into clinical practice.

Educate

In the classroom or in the clinic, librarians teach students, practitioners, and faculty:

- The principles of EBVM
- How to formulate clinical questions using the PICO framework: Patient / Population / Problem Comparison Intervention / Control Outcome
- How to select the best information resources and create effective search strategies
- How to evaluate the quality of information resources and of retrieved information
- How to manage references with software programs such as EndNote and RefWorks

On curriculum committees, librarians partner with faculty to integrate EBVM into courses and programs.

Find the Evidence

As expert searchers, librarians:

- Translate clinical and research questions into effective search strategies
- Attend rounds as members of the clinical team, performing rapid, focused searches to support clinical decision making
- Conduct comprehensive literature searches to support research and the creation of systematic reviews
- Use and develop search filters to retrieve the best evidence from databases such as PubMed and CAB Abstracts.

PubMed Clinical Queries: Further research is needed to adapt these filters for veterinary medicine.

MEDLINE/PubMed Veterinary Search: Developed by librarians at the National Library of Medicine.

CAB Abstracts: Comprehensive international coverage of veterinary medicine literature. Includes journals not indexed in MEDLINE/PubMed.

Critically Appraise the Evidence

To facilitate assessment of the validity and importance of the evidence, librarians:

- Filter search results to retrieve studies from top levels of the evidence pyramid
- Critically appraise articles using standard checklists
- Participate in journal clubs
- Participate in the creation of critically appraised topics (CATs)

Participate in the Research Process

In this emerging role, librarians, as part of the research team:

- Conduct scoping searches that define and refine the research question
- Code abstracts and extract data from journal articles in the production of systematic reviews
- Help coordinate the work of the research team
- Write search methods sections and co-author grant proposals, case reports, and systematic reviews

Selected Bibliography


