

National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Pacific Northwest Region
2003 Access To Electronic Health Information Award
Final Report of Online Access to Reviewed Health Education Materials Project

Public Health Seattle & King County

Seattle, Washington

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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

1. Summary/Introduction:

The title of our project was Online Access to Reviewed Health Education Materials. Our goal was to make available reviews of consumer oriented print health education materials, partnering with Washington State Department of Health (DOH) Office of Health Promotion's Health Education Resource Exchange (H.E.R.E.). This project built on a program developed in 1986 at Public Health – Seattle & King County (PHSKC) which used a Review Committee of various PHSKC health professionals to review health education materials on a regular basis and created a catalog of the approved titles which was used within PHSKC. Due to department wide budget cuts, the program was eliminated in December 2002. With the award of this NN/LM funding, the program was reestablished in March 2003 to fulfill the project goals and PHSKC and H.E.R.E. committed to the continuation of the program following the end of the funding period. Due to unexpected delays because of server changes at DOH, we requested and received a three month no cost extension of the funding period to the end of November, 2004.

During the 21 month funding period, we restarted the review process, added new members to the Review Committee, made changes to our database and designed the web page to be a part of the H.E.R.E. web site. At the end of November, 2004 we successfully launched the web page, Reviewed Education Materials, as part of the H.E.R.E. web site's Education Materials section. We demonstrated the site to six of the members of the Review Committee and in mid-December to two members of the NN/LM PNW staff. Based on evaluations from the Review Committee we made changes to the design of the web page in January and we have begun the process of planning for additional revisions in 2005. The web site was announced in the January, 2005 H.E.R.E. newsletter and February, 2005 PHSKC newsletter shortly. These online newsletters reach hundreds of public health professionals around the state of Washington.

2. Geographic region/number of counties

The H.E.R.E. web site has an internet audience and receives visits nationally and internationally. The intended audience of the web site is public health professionals in Washington State. The PHSKC web site, which has several links to the Reviewed Education Materials website, also receives many national and international browsers, in addition to local and state health professionals and members of the public.

3. Collaborations/Partnerships

Most important has been the collaboration with Don Martin and his colleagues at DOH. The Reviewed Education Materials web site is a product of our close partnership with PHSKC conducting the review process and editing the

database, and DOH developing and maintaining the web site. We are working together to promote the web site and gather evaluations.

We are also developing new partnerships with agencies in expanding the Review Committee. There are presently 15 members of the committee from PHSKC, representing various programs and professions. Over the course of the funding period we have recruited new members from Cross Cultural Health Care, Odessa Brown Children's Clinic, and Carolyn Downs Family Medical Center.

In May 2004, our project held a "Stakeholders Meeting" to gather together representatives from various programs and agencies in the Seattle area who would have an interest in electronic access to health education materials. In addition to Theresa Fuller from H.E.R.E. and a variety of PHSKC staff, we were joined by a program coordinator from Food Lifeline. Discussions included the value of reviewed materials and the challenges presented by PDF brochures. We discovered it was difficult to attract busy professionals to a meeting based on the theory and the promise of a useful product, but in 2005 we intend to hold another meeting to present the website, gather evaluations, and discuss potential revisions and new features.

4. Training

Theresa Fuller presented information on the upcoming website to a meeting of Nursing Directors of county health departments in May, 2004. In early December 2004, technically after the end of the funding period, the web site was presented to members of Review Committee, and based on their evaluations, we have already made significant changes in the design of the web site, changing the page of reviews from columns to a horizontal format, the order of appearance of information about a title, and dropping some of the information. Additional presentations are planned for 2005.

5. Training Sites

The trainings discussed above were held at DOH in Olympia, and PHSKC in Seattle, respectively.

6. Exhibits

At the Washington State Joint Conference on Health in Yakima in October of 2004, DOH hosted an exhibit presenting upcoming new features of the H.E.R.E. website, including Reviewed Education Materials.

7. Resource materials

The January H.E.R.E. newsletter featured an article about Reviewed Education Materials at <http://www3.doh.wa.gov/here/HERENews/HERENEWS05Jan.htm>. This newsletter is sent electronically to health professionals across the state of

Washington. PHSKC intends to publish a similar article in their newsletter HealthBeat Online in March.

8. Web sites

The Reviewed Education Materials web site has been public since the end of November, [Reviewed Education Materials](#). It will be maintained by DOH and the data will be edited and maintained by PHSKC. Plans are underway to convert our data from Access to Sequel which will be stored on DOH's server, at which point PHSKC will do the data entry via the internet. We also intend to add additional search capabilities when this transfer takes place.

9. Document delivery and reference services

None

10. Approaches and interventions used

To continue the process of reviewing materials we were able to go back to the Review Committee comprised of PHSKC staff that had been meeting until the end of November, 2002. We recruited additional members from various community agencies who had been former customers of the Health Education Materials resource center and who were familiar with our program. Although we successfully recruited four new members from other agencies, only one member has been a regular participant. The time pressures most health care staff face make it very challenging to add another obligation to their schedule. However, we hope to begin a process of online reviews at some point in the future.

11. Evaluation

Because of the unexpected delays in launching the web site, we have only had one opportunity as yet to gather evaluations. However, we were pleased to be able to meet most of our objectives: supporting the continuation of the Review process, creating the web site of reviews and resources, and developing a successful collaboration between DOH and PHSKC. Our objectives of promoting the effective use of health education materials and promoting the unique functions of the resources of NNLM, DOH and PHSKC has been nominally met by including links in the Reviewed Educational Materials web site, but we hope to be able to do more with these objectives as we promote the site and train health providers to use online materials.

12. Problems or barriers encountered:

(Provide details on problems encountered in the areas of promotion/marketing; training; equipment/telecommunications; personnel/staffing; and web site development.)

The most significant problem was a delay in the web site development because of unavailable staff from the Division of Information Resource Management division of DOH. The other problem encountered was the slow process of revising, checking, and updating data.

13. Continuation plans:

PHSKC has made a commitment to continued funding of this joint venture, and is funding the .5 FTE project coordinator and .25 FTE database manager, and the review process activities. DOH is also continuing to fund their participation in providing the staff of the H.E.R.E. program and Application Resource staff, as well as hosting the web site.

We are planning further presentations of the website for 2005 to PHSKC and other county health departments in Washington State. We are also discussing a possible presentation for the Washington State Joint Conference on Health in October, 2005.

14. Impact:

We've been unable to evaluate the impact of the project as yet because of the recent launch of the web site.

15. Recommendations for improvement:

From our experiences with presenting the website to date we've learned that a surprising number of staff at PHSKC are still unfamiliar with using the resources available on the H.E.R.E. website, and have numerous concerns regarding the issues of downloading and printing PDF formatted materials. We're taking into consideration the needs for additional training on these issues as we make our plans for future presentations.

16. Responses to follow-up questions (attached):

If answers to the follow-up questions are contained elsewhere in your report, indicate where they are located.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

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

We were very pleased that our overall goals of producing the web site, continuing the process of reviews, and securing the future of the web site were met.

We had hoped to have converted our data from Access to Sequel, which is being used by H.E.R.E. Because of the delays, we've had to postpone this conversion until later in 2005. Converting the data will allow for greater search capabilities and will assist in a more seamless connection with other data available on the H.E.R.E. website.

We did not have the time we anticipated to conduct our evaluation activities such as developing an online feedback survey to include as part of the web site or to conduct a survey of customers of the former Health Education Materials resource center to determine their evaluations of the new web site.

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?

Of course, our most significant lesson was that unexpected delays can seriously disrupt timelines. We also didn't realistically account for the length of time required to revise and check data. We hadn't expected to have to rely on the deadlines of the project to meet our goals, but it was ultimately very effective to have both the support of the National Libraries of Medicine and our regional NN/LM coordinators but the obligation to them. In communicating the urgency of deadlines to other programs it was very helpful to stress the importance of this obligation.

Our most effective strategy for implementing the project was the collaboration between the PHSKC project coordinator and Don Martin of the H.E.R.E. staff. We worked closely to plan responsibilities, keep each other informed and share ideas. It was an enthusiastic collaboration and it's impossible to imagine the project happening without both parties. We now have a solid foundation for the continuation of this joint project.

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

There were two occasions when we were unable to continue revising data for what evolved into prolonged periods of time. These disruptions were after submitting the database to the Division of Information Resource Management at DOH so they could test the data. What were expected to be one week long disruptions became two months long. We learned from this experience to have more frequent face to face meetings with this third party, followed up with written agreements and timelines, and backup plans for unexpected delays.

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

For any project concentrating on the development of a web site, our recommendations would be to make sure they have the organizational commitment to continue the web site activities following the end of the funding period.