



Knowledge and skills to be fulfilled in a documentation unit

Malene Fabricius Jensen
Knowledge Manager
National Board of Health, Denmark

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Outline

- What does documentation unit do?
- What knowledge and skills are needed?
- Benefits and challenges

The role of documentation unit

- HTA summarizes relevant available knowledge, and is research-based and usage-orientated
- A documentation unit supports and develops the activities, processes etc needed for HTA
- Overall aim is to provide health care professionals, decision makers, the public etc with knowledge to support health care related decisions

Documentation unit tasks - examples

- project planning re. information management
- literature searches
- reference handling
- locating literature
- critical appraisal
- courses and education
- dissemination of HTA reports, ongoing projects etc
- web site development and maintenance

Skills and knowledge needed

- literature searching
- source selection and quality assessment
- reference management
- document supply – interlibrary loan
- critical appraisal
- data extraction
- report writing
- dissemination
- education and training
- web publishing, scientific communication
- knowledge about scientific, research and clinical disciplines and methods
- project management

Various HTA types → various approaches

- depending on
 - target group(s) and which type of information they need
 - scope and problem of the HTA
 - specific question(s)
 - timeframe
- examples
 - new cancer drug with limited clinical evidence
 - prevention of falls of elderly people
 - treatment of low back pain

... therefore additional skills are needed

- analytic skills
- personal impact
- collaboration and negotiation skills
- flexibility

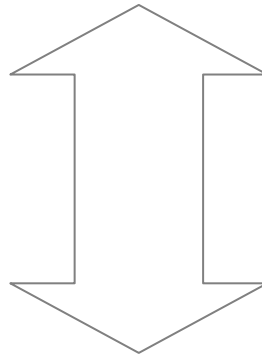
Benefits and challenges

- Benefits
 - support a structured process
 - information handling → integrated part of HTA process
 - focus on methodology

- Challenges
 - 'how difficult can it be? 'We have Google'!
 - general lack of resources
 - limited awareness of 'untraditional librarian skills' among health information professionals and among health professionals and managers
 - finding trained staff

What do we know?

- Information specialists are a significant part of the HTA team



- but appr. 35% of HTA agencies (no=38) have no information professionals / documentation team

Handbook on capacity building, EUnetHTA WP8 2008

What can be done?

- Learn from other institutions, projects – within and outside the HTA
- Tell the good stories
- Share some of work
- Get out of the library
- Take the chance

Conclusion

Integration of information professionals into the HTA team can

- contribute to optimisation of the work flow
- help ensure that the project team members are spending time on what they do best

but

- each HTA project requires its own proces with its own composition of project team

Same procedure?

Same procedure as last year, Miss Sophy?



Same procedure as every year, James!

References

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