

Transition to a new model of academic library cooperation.

1. Witold Kozakiewicz: *Information and Library Centre of the Medical University of Lodz, Poland*, witold.kozakiewicz@umed.lodz.pl
2. Bogumila Bruc: *Information and Library Centre of the Medical University of Lodz, Poland*, bogumila.bruc@umed.lodz.pl

Introduction

Traditional model of academic library cooperation pertains to reciprocally beneficial sharing of resources among libraries and it remains to be a very important element of the library paradigm. However, the library is the evolving organization seeking new ways for adapting to modern environment and contemporary challenges. Demands of our times, such advances in technology, reduction of funds, increase of competition in academic sector, focus on outcomes in education and research, induce recognition of the need for collaboration between library staff and other University departments.

Objectives

The Library of Medical University in Lodz faces challenges related to a new environment. As the old building is undergoing extensive restoration to expand workspace, the library staff will share the upgraded premises with other University departments such as the Center for Innovation and Transfer of Technology and the Bureau of the Science, Strategy and Development. These groups have created the new entity named the Knowledge and Innovation Hub (KIH). The KIH has been established out of economic and operational necessity to consolidate the potential of knowledge and project management, to support the commercialization process, and to develop cooperation with business. The main purpose of this undertaking is to establish favorable conditions for the creation of national and international initiatives and it is based on the concept of the knowledge triangle Science-Education-Business. One of the tasks of the KIH will be supporting the EIT Health InnoStar Poland Project¹.

The inception of the KIH is planned for February 2016. This paper focuses on planned development of the KIH ideas, advantages and challenges of such a novel model for library cooperation.

Discussion

The EIT Health emphasises on resolving upcoming challenges related to healthcare, such as aging population, diminishing birth rate, the rising life expectancy. These challenges inevitably change proportion within community causing increase number of inactive people, reduce the labour force population, enlarge older people population in long-term care, e.g. due to cardiovascular disorders, diabetes or functional loss, and a dramatic raise in expenditures for health and social care. Its goal is to consolidate the European healthcare system as well as to support people in maintaining and managing their health.

Moreover, the EIT Health's aim is to create a platform integrating existing services with business novelties within healthcare area, research and investigation. Its strategy is to execute healthy living not only by setting up personalized services for people, but also to educate healthcare professionals and executives about patients' needs in personalized care. Its action plan improves innovation skills

¹ One of the largest healthcare initiatives worldwide <https://eithealth.eu/>

and provide new competencies to the public and private sector on how to adapt the workplace to an ageing population, teaching novel processes and best practices for patient-centred care and self-management. EIT Health's vision is to design future healthcare for the advantage of society by integrating technology, consumers and professionals and quickening the development of future health solutions and their implementation[2].

The other substantial element of the KIH is BRaIn. This joint venture created interdisciplinary center of basic research, applied bioscience, and clinical laboratory which focuses on comprehensive coverage of issues related to the state of public health, especially in terms of population ageing in Poland. BRaIn was established by four research and two business partners with leading role in the field of biomedical sciences in Lodz: Faculty of Pharmacy of the Medical University of Łódź; Faculty of Biomedical Sciences and Postgraduate Training of the Medical University of Łódź; Institute for Medical Biology of the Polish Academy of Sciences; Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine; Bio-Tech Consulting; and The Foundation for Medical University of Lodz.

Its research teams include Interdisciplinary Research Panels which are supported by highly specialized laboratories. It will create a scientists' platform for implementing knowledge for the three main areas of interests or expertise such as *Public health threats; Large-scale studies on the benefit of bio-economy, biomedical sciences and pharmaceuticals, Potential Public Health Hazards Exposures and Health Effects; and BRaIn – Education*. Those interdisciplinary panels will initiate the Knowledge Triangle and will unite research, education and business. This undertaking will create a business model which will be executed through solving research problems in the area of medicine, pharmacy and biotechnology; availing modernized and expanded scientific infrastructure by business partners; comprehensive teaching activities that respond to contemporary demands of the job market in the field of medicine, pharmacy and biotechnology; fostering students' involvement in research performed for business needs; expand space for the development of new enterprises.

Thus, the new library building will not only be the shared space but also the place where a new model of library cooperation will be promoted. This initiative will expand the current function of library to the rank of the Information and Library Center. The library staff is expected to actively support and participate in projects of other University departments in addition to assisting library users. The library space had been planned in a way that it becomes a network zone for students, academic teachers and researchers as well as small business representatives, inventors and innovators accessible within one location[3].

There are advantages of this model for library cooperation.

Vicinity of the all units allows for smoothly flow of information among University units. The research papers, patents and related materials of the University scientists are accessible in one place along with other library resources such as book and journal collections. In addition, the librarians have the opportunity to share their experience and expertise with other staff members. Study shows that health sciences librarians frequently collaborate with other group of users within their organization by providing a range of data management services. They perform tasks such as systematic reviews and literature search, and are effective in saving health professionals time[4,5,6]. Results they deliver are relevant and useful what points out that scientists are satisfied with the quality of the services[4,5,6]. Such health sciences librarians often are called informationists or embedded librarians and are perceived as valuable members of research teams[5,7]. Furthermore, the bibliometrics librarian as a specialist may participate in research and grant-funded project, find collaborators for the next projects or track newest research trends in biomedical fields as well as provide trainings related to area of subject expertise. Such collaboration would reduce time spending on projects and provides expeditious information services.

Beside advantages there are also challenges in cooperation. The librarians at Medical University of Lodz have just started to adapt to the new environment and they lack of experience and standards in this kind of partnership. Also, the new centre requires the new skills and competencies from librarians. They must be open to new directions and opportunities as they mean more responsibilities. To succeed they have to adjust library services to contemporary demands of their clients especially in area of information technology, information literacy, metadata creation. As the printed library collection diminished they will be required to demonstrate in-depth knowledge of using electronic resources.

Conclusion

The new model of library cooperation involves not only sharing space among library staff and other University units but also shifting the role of the librarians. As a part of the larger department, the library services will transform in order to accommodate needs of internal and external clients. The librarians are expected to assist in University's projects using their experience and expertise in electronic resources.

Bibliography

1. EIT Health. <https://eithealth.eu/> [access 2016.03.15]
2. Mikolaj Grobelski. EIT Health. PowerPoint presentation. 2015.12.21
3. Agnieszka Piastowska-Ciesielska BRaInResearch, Development, Innovation in Łódź biomedicine and pharmacy campus. PowerPoint presentation. 2016. 03.09
4. Brett A, Maden-Jenkins M, Anderson L, McNally R, Pratchett T, Tancock J, et al. Evaluating clinical librarian services: a systematic review. *Heal. Inf. Libr. J.* 2011 Mar;28(1):3–22.
5. Federer L. The librarian as research informationist: a case study. *J. Med. Libr. Assoc.* 2013 Oct;101(4):298–302.
6. Janke R, Rush KL. The academic librarian as co-investigator on an interprofessional primary research team: a case study. *Health Inf. Libr. J.* 2014 Jun;31(2):116–22.
7. Martin E. Highlighting the Informationist As a Data Librarian Embedded in a Research Team. *J. eScience Librarianship* 2013;2(1):1–2.