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Evaluating the All-Digital Library

Nancy K. Roderer
Director, Welch Medical Library and Division of Health Sciences Informatics Professor,
School of Medicine and School of Public Health
Johns Hopkins University
nroderer@jhmi.edu

The focus of this presentation is on the evaluation of the all-digital library. As background, we note that any of the current approaches to managing and evaluating library services relate to the physical facility in which the library is housed, and to the availability of services through that facility. As we move toward the all digital library, there is a need to change some of our approaches to evaluation.

Medical libraries are on the forefront of the all digital library. Their collections consist primarily of scientific and technical journals and databases, almost all available online, and their users tend to be interested in the very latest information, delivered quickly. The ready availability of electronic databases and journals has made it possible for medical libraries to modify their services and to begin to provide information wherever and whenever it is needed.

The presentation will describe how the Welch Medical Library of Johns Hopkins University carries out evaluation activities with a focus on how its digital library is used. The program includes three components:
-   a monthly report or dashboard of key aspects of the use of the digital library, used by library management and by all library staff to keep aware of and up to date with how the library is being used
-   the collection of comments from users of the library, for review both by library staff and by other users
-   more specific tracking of progress against the most important goals in our action plan

With these three approaches, the library is able to maintain awareness of the impact of its services and to make data-based decisions about those services.