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Do Health Sciences Libraries and Librarians Have an Impact on the Cost of Health Care and Research? A Systematic Review

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Do Health Sciences Libraries and Librarians Have an Impact on the Cost of Healthcare and Research? A Systematic Review.

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Do health sciences libraries and librarians have any measurable (statistically significant) positive impacts on consumer health, the outcomes of medical care, the productivity of biomedical researchers and the knowledge obtained by graduates of biomedical and health sciences training programs, and at what total cost?

Question broken down.

1. Health science libraries or librarians.
2. Impact - statistically significant (quantitative measures).
3. Consumer health knowledge, medical care outcome, research productivity, or student success.
4. Total cost – one of:
 - actual monetary value,
 - some other measure that can be calculated, for example does it save time in program being studied,
 - cost of providing the service of the library/librarian.

June 2013

Tried Google Sites for project management and 4 Google Sheets to collect subject headings and keywords for each part of the question.

Email conversations used for planning and reporting. Lots of good subject headings and keywords collected in Google Sheets. Project stalled due to team leader surgery and recovery.

November 2014

Databases assigned after noting availability at different sites. Searching started.

April 2015

Reviewed over 4,400 citations in Zotero. Found over 80 that fit initial criteria. (Article must include all 4 parts of question breakdown.)

Future Plans:
Publish review.

Challenges:

- Large group with job related priorities.
- Hard to find a time convenient to all.
- Finding a bibliographic management tool that was available to all group members that could handle large volume of citations. (Zotero is slow.)
- Some team members had to leave due to other commitments.

Observations:

- Don't try to learn a new, fancy collaboration tool and try to start work on a big project at the same time.
- Deadlines help. This year's MLA deadline has been helpful to finally pull everything together. A self-appointed deadline might have worked as well. (But then again, maybe not.)

Eldredge, J. D., Ascher, M. T., Holmes, H. N., & Harris, M. R. (2012). The new Medical Library Association research agenda: final results from a three-phase delphi study. *Journal of the Medical Library Association : JMLA*, 100(3), 214–218. doi:10.3163/1536-5050.100.3.012

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