

# Preserving Service Excellence in the Virtual Library

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## Objective:

To show how Group Health Medical Library staff maintained quality customer service while ensuring that all customers regardless of location have equal access to an increasing amount of online services and resources.

## Setting:

Group Health is a nonprofit health care system providing medical coverage and care in Washington & Northwest Idaho at more than 43 clinics. Group Health Medical Library (GHML) primarily serves the delivery system of more than 4,000 clinicians.

## Description:

GHML has made a commitment to offer an increasing number of online products. As a result, we have seen an overall increase in customer service requests.

## Method:

After introducing over 15 products and services in 24 months, we identified 10 components essential to successfully maintaining customer service in a virtual environment.

## New and Enhanced Products and Services

- Website re-design
- New public workstations in library for visiting staff
- PNC/MLA OVID online fulltext books
- Kaiser online fulltext journals
- EBSCO A-Z online fulltext journals database - *changed to:*
- SerialsSolutions online fulltext journals database
- FIRSTConsult
- Wiley Cochrane Library
- Clineguide
- GIDEON - Global Infectious Disease & Epidemiology Network
- Bandolier
- MDConsult Infectious Disease module
- PubMed re-designs and enhancements
- EOS International WebPac  
(Dec '06 release)
- EBSCO CINAHL - promote this interface over OVID

## Ten Steps to Ensure Quality Customer Service in the Virtual Library

1. Obtain Library staff buy-in:  
online access = more equitable access to for all customers.
2. Elicit input from customers.
  - Needs assessment
  - Advisory Teams
  - Evaluation forms
  - Anecdotal feedback
3. Increase collaboration with colleagues and departments.
  - New Clinical Knowledge Support department - includes Medical Library, Clinical Guidelines web team, CME
  - Regular meetings with all librarians within the Co-Op
  - Regular communication with peer departments = more efficiency, less redundancy
4. Manage transition period which may require increased workload:
  - Telecommute
  - Work flex hours
  - Reprioritize tasks
  - Increase staff
5. Make sure Library staff are familiar with new tools.
6. Introduce incremental changes rather than exposing customers to multiple new products
7. Market new products, services:
  - Make resources available through Electronic Medical Record (EPIC) system
  - Promote on website
  - Send emails to targeted audiences
8. Provide training opportunities, especially to remote users:
  - Site visits
  - Brown bag forums
  - 1:1 in-person, by phone or email
  - Web-based online tutorials (future)
9. Provide clear, optional instructions with multiple access points to help:
  - Website
  - Email
  - Phone
  - In-person
10. Give full attention to customer concerns:
  - Take time to understand facts and points being made
  - Ask appropriate questions
  - Make sure customers are satisfied and problems resolved