

Abstract

Aims and objectives: The aim of this two-part paper is to identify the main transferable lessons learned from both the quantitative and qualitative evaluations of the KA24 (Knowledge Access 24) service of online databases and selected full-text journals for health and social care staff in London and the south-east of England. The objectives of the qualitative evaluation were to assess the enablers and barriers to usage, and to assess the impact of the service on patient care.

Methods: Telephone interviews (n = 65) and a questionnaire survey (n = 296) were conducted with various types of user, in various Trust settings. Some nonusers

were also contacted. Selection of interviewees and questionnaire recipients was not random, and aimed to cover all groups of users representatively.

Results: Results show that policy goals were being delivered, with indications of changes to clinical practice, and improved clinical governance. Promotion, training and support needs to be extensive, and tailored to needs, but users are not always aware they need training. The sharing of passwords cast doubts on the reliability of some usage data.

Conclusions: Digital health library services, delivered at the point of care, are changing the way some clinicians practise. A combination of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods are needed to assess digital library services.