Introduction to the Library’s Strategic Planning and Agenda Setting Framework

The Robert M. Bird Health Sciences Library (BHSL) is organizationally located within the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Faculty Development (VPAA&FD) at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (OUHSC). In goal setting discussions with the Vice Provost, the Library Director and Associate Director established a plan for development of a Strategic Agenda for the Library. Significant changes in the field of information sciences and in OUHSC library services and supports merit a broader look at opportunities and risks on the horizon to ensure that the OUHSC library is maintaining its leadership role within the state and national medical library network and is prepared to engage in and advance initiatives in service to HSC faculty and student patrons, the community, state and region.

Early in the 2013 academic year (July 2012), through the Library leadership, a series of data gathering conversations were organized with Library faculty and staff, members of the health sciences center’s senior leadership, and representatives from the HSC Student Government Association (SGA). In addition HSC faculty and staff were invited to participate in three strategic thinking opportunities involving national experts. These individuals consulted with library leadership and the VPAA&FD and made a presentation to the HSC community as part of the “Navigating the Future” lecture series, sponsored by the Library as a component of the strategic agenda setting process. Each expert provided an environment overview on a specific “hot topic” and opened the way for discussion on emerging issues in the library and information sciences arena expected to influence future opportunities and risks.

Information gathering events concluded in late fall 2013 with feedback from the SGA about students’ preferred uses of the library. An assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and actions proposed for the BHSL follow. Initial review by the VPAA&FD has been completed. Following general review by the OUHSC leadership including the Graduate
College Dean, where the Library academic department of Health Sciences Library and Information Management is based, and the Senior Vice-President & Provost, and Deans’ Council, a specific timeline to accomplish the highest priority goals and objectives will be proposed to the VPAA&FD and the Dean of the Graduate College for approval.

Robert M. Bird Health Sciences Library Purpose

BHSL faculty, belong to the Department of Health Sciences Library and Information Management, an academic department within the Graduate College. BHSL faculty are health information professionals whose expertise furthers the mission of the University; the faculty, as well as the Library facility and website serve as the most comprehensive resource for bioscience, medical and health information, publications, data and services in Oklahoma. BHSL’s core purpose is to make these resources available to facilitate discovery of and access to health information for education, research and creative activities, continuing education, public service, and clinical care at the OUHSC.

Setting a Strategic Agenda

Sustaining the BHSL as an excellent resource for biomedical sciences, medicine and health information requires positioning both strategic and operational services, access, and resources to enhance health literacy, and research. While operational matters are handled through day-to-day management and decision-making, this strategic agenda for the BHSL includes forward thinking to accomplish three objectives:

1) Sustain BHSL financial capability and assets necessary to ensure resource accessibility including a) personnel, b) information resources, c) technology resources, and c) physical facilities;
2) identify emerging opportunities to leverage BHSL strengths and address gaps due to changes in the external or internal environment; and
3) ameliorate systemic weaknesses that may threaten the quality and necessary scope of BHSL initiatives.

These objectives frame the core strategic agenda for BHSL. Opportunities and weaknesses are addressed by thematic area and financial capabilities; assets are addressed as either “infrastructure (I)” or the specific component (I-personnel; I-information; I-technology; or I-facilities). Although patrons may typically view the library as a “place,” each of these four components are critical and contribute value. The first and most crucial infrastructure component is library personnel who offer services and make resources available. The broad category of personnel include faculty and staff, and these individuals are the driving force
behind the availability of services, material resources, and maintaining a welcoming physical space. A second infrastructure component is BHSL resources made available via both electronic and physical access. Third is the library’s physical infrastructure including the Bird Library building, computer-based utilities linking users to the library collection, and the BHSL networked infrastructure and collaboration as a Resource Library in the National Network Libraries of Medicine (NNLM).

Developing the strategic agenda included internal and external consultation followed by a series of meetings with BHSL faculty and staff and the VPAA&FD. Key contributors to those discussions included:

**Consultation with Health Sciences Center Leaders.** HSC Deans Benefield (Nursing), Raskob (Public Health), Rudeen (Allied Health), Tomasek (Graduate), and Young (Dentistry) and Associate Deans Akins (Medicine/Research), Britton (Pharmacy), Candler (Medicine/Academic) and Mitchell (Medicine/Clinical) individually set aside time to discuss their perspectives on BHSL services to their respective college in the areas of education, clinical and research support, as well as the potential for collaborative opportunities. Their views contributed to the identification of strengths, weaknesses and the strategic agenda items noted herein.

**Consultation with Experts in the Field.** In addition to internal consultations, BHSL engaged three national experts to inform the discussion on future direction. Bioinformatics, information integration into the electronic health record, open access and scholarly publishing, and return on investment (ROI) are top of mind issues that will impact libraries into the future. With this in mind the BHSL invited experts in each of these areas to speak at OUHSC and also share their insights and experiences with BHSL faculty and staff in an effort to educate and inspire both the HSC community and Library personnel and seed the direction for moving ahead in these areas.

Most important and timely among the topics was discussion about **return on investment.** ROI has gained attention among library leaders due to the manner in which libraries traditionally function. Libraries must maintain a broad inventory of services and materials however, much of this inventory is unseen by the average user. This inventory of resources and services is perceived to require substantial monetary investment and is also perceived to offer little to no monetary return. During her visit with the BHSL, Ms. Betsy Kelly from the Bernard Becker Medical Library, Washington University in St. Louis, reinforced the need for libraries to look at themselves in terms of a business model. “Librarians must be prepared and proactive so when asked to justify budget allocations they have the tools to show their library’s value and understand the importance of expressing value in terms familiar to the administrators.” (Betsy
Kelly, 2012). BHSL is investigating how to accomplish an ROI assessment appropriate for their role in the OUHSC environment.

**Open access and scholarly publishing.** Publish or perish is a familiar phrase in academia and today traditional publishing models are being augmented by open access (OA) models that are changing the face of scholarly communications. OA has dredged up numerous questions: Is open access sustainable? What are the rights of the author? Who pays for open access? Are OA publications peer-reviewed? Traditional publishers, electronic OA publishers, academics and librarians are all trying to find ways to address these questions within the current climate and to advance open access.

Consultation with Ms. Gail Yokote, University Library, University of California Davis Campus (UC-Davis), enhanced our understanding of OA issues. UC-Davis has been a long-standing player in open access. Ms. Yokote painted scholarly communications with a broader stroke, to include not only publishing and open access, but other methods for sharing and collaboration. Librarians are instrumental in negotiating with publishers and evaluating research and information tools. Given where librarians are situated in health sciences institutions, they acquire a broader picture of what is happening on the campus as a whole, they serve all individuals within the campus faculty, and because they are outside of the traditional academic silos that tend to exist in universities. This institution wide perspective enables librarians to more easily facilitate interdisciplinary relationships based on shared interests among patrons.

**Bioinformatics and Information Integration.** Collaboration reaches beyond the university to partners with similar missions. Health education is not complete without the hands-on patient experience provided by hospitals and clinics and the electronic health record (EHR) is an integral part of clinical care. Integration of health information into the health record may seem tangential to the Library’s goals, however, the EHR provides a wealth of possibilities for providing information and extracting data. Librarians are skilled at obtaining and managing information and data. Of particular interest is the information provided to give to patients and for the support of patient care. For many of the EHR systems, the information provided comes from a particular vendor, which limits the resources within the system and increases the potential for bias. Often those in charge of procuring an EHR are not aware of this issue.

In a campus lecture sponsored by the BHSL, Dr. Leslie Lenert, Professor of Medicine and Biomedical Informatics at the University of Utah, outlined the relationship between informatics, the EHR, and clinical and translational science from a public health perspective. The EHR is an environment that is a virtual warehouse of data, which can be added to the data that comes from experimental research. Finding ways to share data from a system like an EHR or raw experimental data raises many issues. The management, organization and retrieval of
information are a set of skills that also lend themselves to data; librarians possess those skills and have an interest in contribution to the discussion and process of working with data stores.

In Summary

A common theme that came out of conversations with the Dean from each college, student representatives and faculty representatives is the desire for more electronic books and journals. The library staff continually adapts to address this increasing monetary commitment that is complicated by the various models of publishing, licensing, pricing, and access for these resources. A secondary theme that came from discussions with college Deans is the desire to find ways to insert librarians into the curriculum to assist students in improving their research skills as they pertain to information, whether it is through a single class, a series of classes or more long-term interactions.

The BHSL Strategic Agenda addresses each aspect of the mission and concludes with recommendations for resource utilization specific to BHSL budget, personnel and facilities changes to accomplish noted goals.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION. BHSL: the Primary Health Information Resource in Oklahoma

ENVIRONMENT. Emerging issues include the following:

1. **Purchase and management of electronic resources.** Electronic resources are becoming the standard for access. For collection development there has been a shift to acquire resources in electronic format vs print. The University provides resources to their primary clientele: OUHSC faculty, students and staff, however the public also has access to these resources when visiting the library. To facilitate access to health professionals in the State, the BHSL initiated and continues to manage the Oklahoma Consortium for purchasing resources.

2. **Collecting, storing, and managing data.** Access for the masses to information in a free and unfettered manner, as generated through research and other means, is one of the goals of open access. The BHSL is engaging individuals and groups on the HSC and main campus, to actively participate in collaborative efforts within the University, state, region, and nation. This includes utilizing the expertise of information professionals to collect, store and manage data produced at the University.

3. **Institutional and community outreach.** The BHSL serves as the primary resource for health information in the state of Oklahoma, for both current and historical information. Funded by the taxpayers of the state, part of the mission of the BHSL is to serve the public. This mission is supported by initiatives of the National Library of Medicine (NLM) and the NNLM, of which BHSL is a member.
STRENGTHS, CAPABILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES.

1. BHS L collaboration within OU Library System. Collaborative efforts between the four University of Oklahoma libraries have consistently expanded during the past decade in an effort to improve the mechanisms for sharing physical materials and to cooperatively purchase electronic materials. There is cooperation between the libraries when evaluating information systems for collecting, storing and managing data; this provides for greater purchasing power and leveraging the use of large scale technology platforms.

2. Cooperative purchasing. Health sciences libraries in Oklahoma may participate in the Oklahoma Consortium spear-headed and coordinated by the BHSL for approximately 20 years. As early adopters of electronic products using the consortium model, the group has been able to add resources that would have otherwise been out of reach. Growth of the consortium through the addition of participating institutions lowers the cost and increases the number of accessible resources for all members. Many more health professionals in the state have access to resources because of the efforts of the consortium.

3. Regional collaborative purchasing. (SCAmEL). The BHSL was instrumental as a founding member of South Central Academic Medical Libraries (SCAmEL) consortium in 1982. Comprised of academic medical libraries in a five state region (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas) the consortium increases purchasing power and provides a platform for a united position when dealing with issues such as publisher pricing. This relationship expands the number of resources that are available to university users.

4. Dissemination. Interacting with other Oklahoma colleges and universities creates an awareness of health materials available in the state. In addition, BHSL librarians have a thirty year history of outreach to health professionals and consumers.

WEAKNESSES and LIMITATIONS

1. Cost distortion. Cooperative purchasing can distort the actual cost of products; the cost fluctuates based upon a number factors. Two of the predominant criteria are: 1) the number and type of members that are part of the consortium and 2) other products that are purchased through the provider. If the consortium is disbanded for a particular product, the cost for the BHSL library has the potential to increase significantly to retain the product as an individual institution.

2. Maintaining an OUHSC Unique Data Repository. It will be difficult for the HSC to develop its own data repository due to financial and organizational constraints. The BHSL is working with the University Libraries to make a repository available to the OUHSC campus.

3. Consistent Participation in Innovations. The limited number of professional librarians at BHSL makes this more difficult as the library faculty provide an increasing number of consultations and collaborate with other educational, research and administrative units on campus.
BHSL STRATEGIC AGENDA AND PRIORITIES

- Continue to work with and look for consortium partners to allow access to an increasing number of electronic resources.
- Evaluate and classify resources into tiers of priority in the event cuts need to be made to the collection development budget.
- Market the expertise, services, and resources available through the library to affiliated users and health professionals and consumers within the state.
- Identify opportunities for engagement and continue to keep monitor the trends involving big data.

OUHSC MISSION ALIGNMENT: Health Information for Education

ENVIRONMENT. Emerging issues include the following:

1. **Re-configuring library space to meet changing needs of patrons.** Space reassignment is an issue facing libraries universally as users are re-inventing how they perceive the library as place. User priorities include individual spaces, collaboration areas, and expanded access to library faculty expertise; many information sources and library services are accessible remotely. The Library’s central location on campus and the mission to serve the entire OUHSC population make it a natural choice to meet the need for collaborative learning spaces.

2. **Designing spaces that provide for breaks in studying.** The Library currently provides lounge seating in the way of comfortable couches and chairs. Other items for consideration are collaboration spaces, a TV/gaming room, break room and rooms for special activities (e.g. breastfeeding). The SGA conducted a survey and presented results to Library Administration. The desire for more individual study rooms was the highest priority item.

3. **Incorporating information seeking sessions into the curriculum.** Librarians have always provided classroom instruction both within and external to the library. Librarians are specialists in information seeking and access. Ideally, information seeking skills taught by or in conjunction with a librarian is preferred, to initiate skill building early in the curriculum with timely reinforcement throughout the students’ educational experience. A library faculty representative was invited to and now sits on the College of Medicine curriculum committees, although librarians are not formally involved in the curriculum of any of the colleges.

4. **Acquiring information not available through the BHSL.** The BHSL works diligently to provide pertinent resources to its use, however, the ability to provide every resource users could need is not practical. Gaps in the collection are supplemented through the provision
of materials from various local, regional and national networks of which the BHSL is a member and the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC).

STRENGTHS, CAPABILITIES, OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Physical Space Design.** Libraries are reimagining space for collaboration as the use of the physical collections diminishes. Students are the predominant user group of the library and have expressed the desire for more individual and group study rooms. In formulating a response to this request the opportunity can be taken to provide rooms or areas that will serve multiple functions. The library is an ideal place to provide flexible space and appropriate technology to foster both intra- and interdisciplinary collaboration. In addition, students who spend a lengthy amount of time in the library want spaces that allow for diversions such as napping, eating, watching TV, and gaming.

2. **Center for Teaching and Learning.** The Library is a natural fit for development of a Center for Teaching and Learning which would provide support for academic endeavors at the institution level. Developing this idea further, the Library can provide the physical space to house the Center, a resource that would support OUHSC Colleges and faculty and expand efforts of the Office of Academic Affairs and Faculty Development.

3. **Access to On-Site Technology.** Although students, faculty and staff are very connected through mobile devices, there is still a need for computer labs for teaching, testing or training. In the current environment labs are scarce; the library is a universal, centrally located facility that could meet these needs.

4. **Managing the Physical Collection of Resources.** Re-allocation of library space for the purpose stated above requires evaluating the collection to reposition and/or downsize it. Establishing on or off-site storage for a portion of the collection must be considered. This provides an opportunity to identify storage that will also accommodate a growing History of Medicine collection.

5. **Curriculum Integration.** The shift to problem based learning emphasizes the need for students to be able to search for, select and evaluate resources as part of this process. The goal is to incorporate library faculty into the curriculum to teach skills that are essential to evidence based practice.

6. **Course Development.** Working with the College of Allied Health the Library developed an online one hour credit course to improve students’ information seeking and retrieval skills. This course can be adapted to other disciplines.

WEAKNESSES AND LIMITATIONS TO ADDRESS

1. To increase the participation in teaching activities the BHSL would need to hire a minimum of two librarians. Develop courses for various disciplines requires customization to create a meaningful experience for the learner.
2. Space reallocation is eminent; the magnitude to which it can aspire will be dependent on funding available to carry out the projects.
3. Managing technology requires staff with specific expertise and funding to maintain the technology.
4. The ability to offer resources that don’t meet the standard for purchase, but exceed the standard of fair use requires a membership with the CCC. Items purchased through the CCC are more costly than those provided through library networks, however participation in the CCC would allow the Library to provide materials within the standards of copyright.

BHSL STRATEGIC AGENDA AND PRIORITIES
- Advocate for more staff to address increasing involvement in college curricula and other academic activities.
- BHSL continues to evaluate and manage the collection while conceptualizing space redesign to facilitate collaborative learning and research.
- Identify partners on campus to share technology and minimize costs.

OUHSC MISSION ALIGNMENT: Health Information for Research and Creative Activities

ENVIRONMENT. Emerging issues include the following:
1. Scholarly publishing and open access. The BHSL has been actively engaged in scholarly publishing and open access activities for 12 years. In spring 2013 BHSL hosted a series of lectures open to the campus that included a librarian from UCLA who addressed the landscape of open access. There is a growing consensus that the current publishing model needs to change and OUHSC authors and the library faculty have collaborative roles to play. Potential authors have approached the BHSL for assistance with submissions to electronic resources, as well as guidance on platforms used for publishing electronic books and journals. BHSL faculty have also been engaged with OU Norman faculty and staff to move forward in the activities involving open access. To encourage faculty to publish via open access the Library is a member of Biomed Central (BMC), which provides discounted fees for authors to publish in one of the BMC journals.
1. NIH Public Access Policy. Library faculty are partnering with the Office of the Vice President for Research to improve compliance at the OUHSC. Librarians are pro-active in assisting faculty with understanding the policy and fulfilling their responsibility to deposit manuscripts into PubMed Central (PMC).
2. Collaboration on systematic reviews. Faculty involved in performing a systematic review will benefit from the search expertise of a librarian, who is ideally involved in the project from inception. The expertise and skills of a qualified librarian are essential to developing
and executing the search protocol and are crucial to writing the methods section as they lay the groundwork for the review.

3. **Participation in governing bodies.** In many institutions librarians are involved in the activities of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and other research oriented groups.

**STRENGTHS, CAPABILITIES, OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Collaborative training and research activities can open the door to discussion concerning open access and scholarly publishing.

2. Working together on systematic review teams benefits both librarians and researchers and can lead to other opportunities for joint research and publishing.

3. Librarians often sit on committees as part of the working team, to provide expertise in answering questions that arise, alternative viewpoints or practical experience as it relates to operations such as purchasing and employee management. Examples of governing bodies in which librarians participate are IACUC, Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC), Enterprise Systems Change Management Team. These experiences contribute to collegiality and can facilitate future opportunities for collaboration.

**WEAKNESSES AND LIMITATIONS TO ADDRESS**

Participation by librarians in these activities is very time intensive and requires experienced library faculty. Library faculty participate on a limited basis in working with other faculty on systematic reviews or sitting on research related committees, due to the time commitment involved.

**BHSL STRATEGIC AGENDA AND PRIORITIES**

- As a result of conversations with the VP, the Vice-President for Research, and Associate Deans for Research, this has opened the door for librarians to be invited to participate on committees for which they have never been considered.

- Attention is being focused on translational science and bioinformatics at the national and campus levels. The BHSL should be involved in endeavors on campus related to these initiatives as librarians possess skills that can contribute to moving these initiatives forward.

**OUHSC MISSION ALIGNMENT: Health Information for Continuing Education**

**ENVIRONMENT.** Emerging issues include the following:

1. Librarians have been active members in the planning and implementation of the Annual Workshop on Teaching and Practicing Evidence Based HealthCare (EBHC), which began in
2006. Additionally, 1-2 mini-workshops have been offered since 2010 to provide more opportunities for people to be involved.

2. Continuing education (CME, CNE, CPE) is available through various resources to which the library subscribes.

STRENGTHS, CAPABILITIES, OPPORTUNITIES

1. As a result of librarians participating in university EBHC workshops, they were invited to participate in workshops at national meetings of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and the National Lipid Association (NLA).
2. The model used at the national level can be shared with other organizations interested in doing something similar.

WEAKNESSES AND LIMITATIONS TO ADDRESS

Preparation for each of these workshops whether local or national requires preparation as the target audience, subject matter, and the approach for presenting material changes for each activity.

BHSL STRATEGIC AGENDA AND PRIORITIES

- Initiate a conversation with the Office of Continuing professional Development to determine areas of collaboration.
- Advertise resources to which the library subscribes that offer CE opportunities.

OUHSC MISSION ALIGNMENT: Health Information for Public Service

ENVIRONMENT. Emerging issues include the following:

1. Highlighting resources and current topics pertinent to health professionals and the public. Sponsored by funding from the NN/LM SCR, the BHSL hosted a regional symposium on EBHC in 2009. A shift is occurring in health care to evidence-based practice; the symposium served as a platform to investigate the role of the librarian in EBHC. Health librarians can contribute to better patient outcomes, but currently are not included as part of the health care team.

2. Collaboration with populations that have health disparities. The BHSL serves as a resource library in the NN/LM SCR and many NLM initiatives focused on the needs of disparate groups are carried out through the NN/LM. The BHSL receives funding from the NN/LM SCR to conduct outreach activities associated with these initiatives, which include but are not limited to teaching at host sites in Oklahoma, consulting, and exhibiting at meetings and health fairs. BHSL staff have worked and continue to work with public libraries to identify populations with which to collaborate.
3. **Support Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) pipeline activities.** The BHSL can assist with campus efforts to support the pipeline for students by providing information and creating activities for the targeted students. For the past five years the BHSL has participated in the Oklahoma Library Association’s (OLA) Information Matrix Camp, a week-long event that provides middle school-aged Oklahomans the opportunity to learn more about libraries and librarians.

**STRENGTHS, CAPABILITIES, OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Patients are now their own advocates. Helping them to find and access reliable resources provides a useful service and is positive marketing for the University, giving back to the citizens of the State of Oklahoma.

2. Through outreach efforts the BHSL has established relationships with other entities such as the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH), Chickasaw Nation, Cherokee Nation, public libraries, community groups and others, with a common interest in providing access to health information. Access to health information and health literacy is important in changing the outcomes in disparate populations.

3. The nation is focusing on STEM education as a priority to bolster the United States’ ability to compete in the future on an economic level. Library staff provides instruction on research and information seeking to K-12 groups with which the University is partnering.

4. Establishing clinical relationships with OU Physicians and OU Medical Center will facilitate librarian involvement as members of the health care team.

**WEAKNESSES AND LIMITATIONS TO ADDRESS**

- Enhanced marketing of services is essential to create an awareness of the services and partnerships available to public groups.
- Establishing clinical relationships requires an administration and clinicians who are willing to try a new approach and contribute to making it successful.
- These activities take time away from the regular operations of the library and services provided to students, faculty, and staff.

**BHSL STRATEGIC AGENDA AND PRIORITIES**

1. Marketing efforts must target a variety of groups to highlight pertinent resources and services.

2. Working with disparate groups can be more challenging if the librarian is not a member of the specific group.

3. Working with K-12 groups can require a totally different approach to ensure content and presentation is age appropriate.
OUHSC MISSION ALIGNMENT: Health Information for Clinical Care

ENVIRONMENT. Emerging issues include the following:

1. **Embedding librarians at the point of need.** Clinicians have little time to search for information that isn’t available at their fingertips. Often they don’t follow-up on inquiries that may require more in-depth research. Embedded librarians are able to actively participate in patient rounds or in the clinic setting to provide immediate searching and retrieval expertise.

2. **Supporting Evidence Based Practice at the point of care.** For OUHSC clinicians the BHS provides access to point of care tools. These are extremely useful in the time constrained environment in which health professionals practice.

3. **Integration of information into and extraction of data from the EHR.** Hospitals utilize an EHR system, which provides health information from limited sources, introducing the potential for bias; librarians can objectively assess these sources. Additionally, the librarian can identify and facilitate the use of free and licensed reputable sources to incorporate into EHRs.

   As part of the library lecture series Dr. Leslie Lenert, discussed big data, efforts in clinical and translational science and how bioinformatics can help bridge the two. Bioinformatics as a field is fairly young and is still in the development phase and librarians are integrally involved in varying levels of informatics; often the bioinformaticist is part of or works closely with library faculty.

STRENGTHS, CAPABILITIES, OPPORTUNITIES

1. Clinics can provide an opportunity for librarians to become part of the health care team. Once included, a skilled embedded librarian can make a difference in patient outcomes, thereby helping to demonstrate their worth (ROI).

2. A skilled library professional can evaluate resources and retrieve more precise, accurate information, freeing up time for the health professional to perform duties for which they’re trained.

3. If provided access to the EHR an embedded librarian can evaluate and make recommendations as it pertains to information targeted for both the health care professional and the patient. Participation in this process is difficult if the librarian is not a regular, integral part of the clinical setting.

4. The EHR provides a wealth of information for public health research as it is a data warehouse, offering the potential to gather, organize and manage data for research projects.
WEAKNESSES AND LIMITATIONS TO ADDRESS

1. To be effective the librarian must be embedded in the clinic environment to interact with providers and patients when information is needed.
2. The embedded librarian requires the right personality and skill set to make the experience meaningful for all members of the team.
3. Unfortunately the trend in hospitals is to eliminate the librarian or the library altogether.

BHSL STRATEGIC AGENDA AND PRIORITIES

1. Conversations with the chief medical officer for the OU Medical Center planted the seed for the idea of the embedded librarian. The BHSL will gather research that promotes librarians and the ROI which demonstrates the importance of librarians in retrieving information and providing other services that can be directly related to improved patient outcomes.

Action Items

Accomplishing this strategic agenda will require improvements and re-direction of some BHSL facilities, personnel and financial resources. Near term (12-24 months) and mid- to longer term (24-56 months) items are included.

BHSL Facilities

Study Rooms (12-36 months)
A survey conducted at the OUHSC SGA Annual Leadership Retreat in September 2013 indicated that study rooms are the top priority for the library.

Collection Management (12-48 months)
Two things need to happen to accomplish space redesign: downsizing of the collection with off-floor storage and construction of additional individual and group collaboration rooms. The library is looking into the feasibility of using an empty elevator shaft in the building as a space for storing archival and History of Medicine materials. Based on feedback from the SGA, carrels would be an acceptable alternative to adding individual study rooms. Group study rooms could also serve as collaboration spaces if equipped properly. Based on input from the SGA and the Library Advisory Committee (LAC), Library staff will formulate a plan for evaluation of the collection and the construction of rooms to accommodate the various activities summarized above.
Center for Teaching and Learning (24-56 months)
The library as place is changing; users are looking to the library as a destination for individual study or collaboration. The University has a wealth of resources for faculty and students, but does not have a central place to manage and coordinate these resources. A Center for Teaching and Learning would be a tremendous addition to the campus community; the BHSL could provide the physical space for the Center as the library is centrally located, serves the entire campus population and has extended hours of operation.

Responses to issues identified by the Annual Student Survey:
- Wi-fi connectivity in the library has been improved by OUHSC Information Technology through the installation of additional access points.
- Library staff have redesigned the web site taking into consideration the requests of the students.
- Power bars have been placed on the third and fourth floors to increase accessibility to electrical outlets.
- New electronic titles are added to the collection as the budget will allow.

BHSL Personnel

Salary Adjustments for Staff (24-36 months)
Current pay for staff is well below where it should be based on pay for other campus positions and external market salaries. New Library Technicians will require an elevated skill set to meet the needs of the changing environment.

Salary Adjustments for Professional Personnel (24-36 months)
Current pay for BHSL librarians is below the regional and national average. Additional funding will be needed to retain current faculty.

New Funding for Additional Professional Personnel (12-24 months)
Library faculty have a wide breadth of knowledge and diverse skills that can be used to support teaching, research and administration in both academic and clinical settings (see Professional Skills below). These areas of interaction require experience and expertise. Although the existing faculty has been proactive in many of these arenas, it cannot continue to accommodate the increasing volume of user requests with the existing professional staff. Planning is underway to reconfigure existing hourly staff positions to create some funding for additional professional positions, however additional funding will be needed. Competitive salaries will affect the ability to attract individuals needed to fill these new positions.
Professional Skills

**Academic**
Collaborating with students, teaching faculty and researchers requires a tremendous outlay of time in preparation and interaction to be successful and to meet the needs of the user.

- Customize instruction to an individual or group based on educational level, experience and need.
- Collaborate with researchers to identify, search and evaluate information resources necessary for the specific area of interest.
- Co-author publications based on contributions to systematic reviews and other comprehensive projects.
- Consult on organizational schema and data management plans for data sets.
- Use search and retrieval skills to locate information for education, research, patient care, administration, and outreach.

**Administrative**
Health sciences librarians possess a wide range of skills that are often overlooked. This document describes areas in which the BHSL library faculty play a role.

- Evaluate electronic resources or products as they relate to information or data.
- Leverage long-standing relationships with vendors and skills in negotiating pricing for resources or products.
- Participate in curriculum and other teaching activities to provide information and to teach information seeking skills to faculty and students.
- Serve as facilitators for topics and initiatives that are important not only to the library, but to faculty, students and administrators as well.
- Serve on committees to provide searching skills and acquire information, as well as provide an impartial perspective as part of the Graduate College faculty which serves all faculty, students and staff. Librarians can also contribute the patient perspective when participating in groups where members are primarily health professionals.
- Organize information and make it accessible is what librarians do; the librarian perspective can be valuable when addressing the gathering, organization, maintenance, and retrieval of locally produced information (print, electronic, data, graphic, etc.).
- Health libraries are at the forefront of utilizing technology to provide materials and services. BHSL faculty are very knowledgeable about computing and other changing technologies and utilize them to benefit users.
- The BHSL manages a variety of employees (faculty, staff, students and graduate assistants) and interacts with the public. This provides a unique perspective when addressing administrative issues.
• The BHSL interacts with a variety of users. Developing policy must take into consideration students, faculty, staff, the public, as well as reciprocal and consortium partners. Again, this provides a unique perspective when addressing administrative issues.

The current BHSL faculty have numerous duties related to the normal day to day operations of the Library and have been involved in scholastic and research activities when possible, however, they can and should play a larger role. To do this effectively, additional experienced staff with the appropriate knowledgebase need to be added to the department (e.g. digitization/data curator, instruction and research librarian, bioinformaticist). Faculty of the Schusterman Library on the OU Tulsa campus belong to the Department of Health Sciences Library and Information Management and provide another source of personnel to collaborate with to accomplish particular goals.

Planning for the future provides an opportunity to look at overall processes in the library and to evaluate what staff are currently doing. Although current staff can be re-directed to activities such as digitization, in the future job applicants will need different skills than what current employees may have. A focus will be made to re-educate and re-train current employees to be able to take on these new activities.

BHSL Finances

Collection Development (24-48 months)
The BHSL receives the majority of its funding through State appropriations. The major expenditures are for information resources and staff, and these costs will continue to increase over time. Subscriptions have become more costly in the electronic era partly due to the ability to accommodate simultaneous users and accessibility to the resource regardless of location. Faculty and students consistently ask for more electronic access to books and journals and funding levels need to be appropriate for continued collection development. The Library serves seven colleges; the BHSL is evaluating current subscriptions to identify titles to cut for cost savings and titles to add to fill gaps in the collection.

Personnel (12-48 months)
The strength of the library is in its personnel, both faculty and staff, who make the various services and materials available to users. There are several fronts outlined in this document in which library faculty can lend their expertise for the enrichment of themselves and those with whom they would collaborate. The anticipation is that librarians will be more involved in current and forthcoming projects or initiatives that are taken on by departments within the University. This will require additional library faculty to fill roles that lie outside of day to day
operations of the library. The BHSL will look at the current staffing structure to consolidate and reassign where possible, but additional funding will be necessary to add personnel as outlined in the section above.

Space Allocation (12-48 months)
The library as place is changing; users are looking to the library as a destination point for individual study or for spaces to use for collaborative purposes. Two things must be accomplished to do this: evaluation of the collection with the provision for off-floor storage; and construction and equipping of additional individual, group and specialized rooms. Some limited funding is potentially available through foundation monies, but one-time monies would be needed to complete the space re-allocation.

Final Words
Health libraries continue to be faced with the challenge of justifying their worth. Library endeavors require substantial financial investment. The return on investment includes making best use of fixed asset resources through the available materials, use of the physical space to enhance learning and investigation, and capitalizing on the skills of the professional faculty and staff to further institutional mission and goal achievement. This strategic agenda focuses on 1) embracing innovation in library sciences in a manner that maintains the quality and increases the accessibility of resources in the health and biomedical sciences, 2) enhancing OUHSC capacity to leverage the value library faculty knowledge and skills, and 3) enhancing effective utilization of the physical facility.

References


