Launching LibGuides:
Specialty-specific online library guides
for NHS Staff

Merinne Whitton
Library Operations Manager
November 2016
The Challenge: promoting resources and services across a large, changing Trust

- Barts Health NHS Trust has a workforce of **15000 staff** spread over 5 hospitals and various community and administrative sites, spread across central and east London.
- Barts Knowledge and Library Services (KLS) also supports **three CCGs** – Waltham Forest, Newham and Tower Hamlets.
- KLS have a physical presence on **only two sites**.
The Challenge: promoting resources and services across a large, changing Trust

- Limited professional staff in KLS - 5 FTE professional librarians including senior management (another, comparably sized Trust has only 3 sites and 6 FTE professional staff).
- Tightly controlled Trust communications policy – KLS not permitted own social media presence, all staff emails not permitted
- Frequent changes of management structure and churn of key staff makes it difficult to maintain key relationships and presence in relevant education forums/meetings
The Problem: low awareness of resources

The GMC Survey 2015 identified 6 specialties within Barts who were Below Outliers and 5 specialties which were Within the Lower Quartile for the indicator ‘Access to Educational Resources’.

Anecdotal evidence and KLS staff annual survey data confirmed a problem with the communication of resource availability.
The Solution? SpringShare LibApps

- **SpringShare** was founded in 2007, and developed LibGuides.
- **LibGuides** have been described as “the Web 2.0 development of subject guides”, designed to offer learners “state-of-the-art introductions to research resources.”
  
- They have since expanded to create a range of tools called **LibApps**, for librarians to manage resources, services, staff, space and schedules.
- LibGuides have been hugely popular in **university libraries in the USA**, and are growing in popularity in **UK Higher Education**.
What are LibGuides? Some examples

From small and simple ‘websites’…
Scottsdale Community College: http://library.scottdalecc.edu/index

To larger and broader subject guide collections…
Kings College London: http://libguides.kcl.ac.uk/home

To fully integrated specialist portals for resources and services…
University of West London: http://uwl.libguides.com/criminology

Turning LibGuides to other purposes – e-learning IL module from Bloomsberg University of Pennsylvania:
http://guides.library.bloomu.edu/genedtutorial
The Innovation: LibGuides in the NHS

Pros…

• A targeted solution to surface relevant, specialty-specific information and resources to groups of staff
• An opportunity to advertise general resources and services to specific staff groups
• A way to gain control over the library’s online presence

Cons?

• Time consuming to build/maintain?
• Designed for HE – transferrable?
• Potential conflict with Trust Comms?

Full disclosure: not a total innovation!

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust already had LibGuides…
The Process: piloting LibGuides

1. Draft template created and agreed
2. Working Group and action plan
3. Feedback from stakeholders
4. Finalised pilots published and publicised
5. Requests for more Guides received
6. 5 draft pilot Guides created
The Results!

http://bartshealth-nhs.libguides.com/
The Response: Usage and interest

Guides launched 1 October 2016

Views:

Cancer: 129
Nursing Care: 156
Diabetes & Endocrinology: 138

Requests for more guides from:
Child health, Acute and Critical Care,
Cardiology, Sexual Health
The Post-Mortem: what could’ve been better?

• Time-consuming implementation – be prepared
• Factor in training for Guide creators
• Start from nothing – think big, seek inspiration
• User stakeholders for development stage
• Consistency in format crucial – but challenging!
• Control of development – have a plan/rules (but be prepared to break them)
The Future: what next for LibGuides?

• Promotion, promotion, promotion
• Add more specialties
• Consider revising/removing guide ‘landing page’
• Consider adding an E-Learning/CPD tab
• Encourage use of the LibCal application
• Consider additional LibApps e.g. LibChat, LibAnswers to reduce email enquiry labour, interactive learning tools in LibWizard to replace/augment F2F info skills training
Any questions?

Merinne Whitton
Library Operations Manager
Tel: 07816 640906
Email: merinne.whitton@bartshealth.nhs.uk