

# Vision Librarian Core Competencies

## Introduction

Association of Vision Science Librarians (AVSL) members view our role as one of partnership in vision care, education and research. We are committed to high standards of service and provision of resources, including print and multi-media collections and electronic materials, with the goal of meeting our users' needs for knowledge creation and management. We are also committed to sharing both knowledge and resources, and have a history of informally mentoring new vision librarian colleagues.

Staff of vision libraries and Centers for Community Ophthalmology resource centers arrive with varying levels of information, biomedical and information technology skills, and knowledge. The right person, with commitment, opportunities, and institutional support, can succeed and make a substantial contribution to an organization's goals and mission.

These Vision Librarian Core Competencies are intended to aid new vision librarians in attaining and demonstrating a basic level of competency of librarianship related to eye and vision care. They will also assure that new vision librarians are integrated into the Association of Vision Science Librarians, to receive help and mentorship in achieving a high level of proficiency in providing library services to users.

This document identifies knowledge, skills, competencies and resources available freely to all; local and regional resources will also be identified and used as appropriate.

## General Information Competencies

Vision librarians will:

- understand core competencies of organization of information, collection development, maintenance, and evaluation;
- be aware of professional ethics concerning copyright, intellectual property, plagiarism, and user privacy;
- become members of local/regional library associations;
- participate in local/regional library associations, through attendance at meetings and workshops;

- become familiar with resources such as grant opportunities, information exchange, mentoring programs, and other occasions for collaboration, provided by local/regional library associations and professional networking;
- participate in continuing education programs, through a variety of means: in person, via teleconference, online tutorials, webinars, etc.;
- know how to use local resources to locate information.

The American Library Association's Core Competencies of Librarianship provide additional guidance:

(<http://www.ala.org/ala/educationcareers/careers/corecomp/corecompetences/finalcorecompstat09.pdf>)

### **Biomedical Information Competencies**

- Vision librarians will develop knowledge, skills and abilities in using and teaching online databases:
  - PubMed
    - Online PubMed tutorials (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/disted/pubmed.html>)
    - In person training
    - Be able to set up MyNCBI account
  - PubMed Central
    - Understand how and when to use
  - Regional databases such as IndMed and African Index Medicus
  - WorldCat
- Knowledge in use of print and online information resources, including monographs, journals, and other print resources, and grey literature;
- Familiarity with and ability to search:
  - DOAJ: Directory of Open Access Journals (<http://www.doaj.org/>)
  - OAISTER, a union catalog of digital resources (<http://www.oclc.org/oaister/>)
  - HINARI (if eligible)
    - Informational video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vx91YAR2pFY>)
    - Training Materials on HINARI Website (<http://www.who.int/hinari/training/en/>)
- Familiarity with the principles of evidence-based healthcare:
  - Evidence-Based Practice (e.g., <http://www.biomed.lib.umn.edu/learn/ebp/>) and MLA resources (<http://www.mlanet.org/education/telecon/ebhc/resource.html>)

- Develop competency in searching Cochrane Library (HINARI countries & India have free access—see <http://www.thecochranelibrary.com/view/0/FreeAccess.html> for list of locations with access)
- NHS (National Health Service, UK) Evidence (<http://www.evidence.nhs.uk/>)
- Center for Evidence-Based Medicine (CEBM), Toronto (<http://ktclearinghouse.ca/cebm/>)

Many of the biomedical training resources are available through online workshops and distance education.

The Medical Library Association's Competencies for Lifelong Learning and Professional Success provide additional guidance: (<http://www.mlanet.org/education/policy/>)

### **Vision-Related Competencies**

Vision librarians will develop knowledge, skills, and abilities through:

- Knowledge of and skills in using and teaching the use of online databases including
  - PubMed, Visionet, Visioncite, Reference Sight;
- Knowledge of vision-related terms and concepts, including anatomy and physiology, diseases, and therapies; resources in support of this competency include:
  - The Eyes Have It (<http://www.kellogg.umich.edu/theeyeshaveit/>)
  - All About Vision from American Academy of Optometry (<http://www.allaboutvision.com/>)
  - U.S. National Eye Institute
    - Diagram of the eye (<http://www.nei.nih.gov/health/eyediagram/index.asp>)
    - Vision-related terms (<http://www.nei.nih.gov/health/glossary.asp>)
    - Anatomy, physiology and pathology of the human eye ([http://www.tedmontgomery.com/the\\_eye/](http://www.tedmontgomery.com/the_eye/))
  - MedlinePlus (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/imagepages/1094.htm>)
  - Ophthalmology Made Ridiculously Simple (Stephen Goldberg; 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Miami: Medmaster, c2008)
  - The Ophthalmic Assistant : A Text for Allied and Associated Ophthalmic Personnel (Harold A. Stein, Philadelphia : Elsevier Mosby, c2006)

- The Karolinska Institute's compilation of links to eye diseases and related organizations and resources (<http://www.mic.stacken.kth.se/Diseases/C11.html>)
- Knowledge of patient/consumer resources, their evaluation and use, and such trusted sources as MedlinePlus (<http://www.medlineplus.gov>);
- Knowledge of resources for evidence-based eye care, including
  - American Academy of Ophthalmology Preferred Practice Patterns (<http://one.aao.org/CE/PracticeGuidelines/PPP.aspx>)
  - American Optometric Association's Clinical Practice Guidelines (<http://www.aoa.org/x4813.xml>)
  - International Council of Ophthalmology's International Clinical Guidelines ([http://www.icoph.org/enhancing\\_eyecare/international\\_clinical\\_guidelines.html](http://www.icoph.org/enhancing_eyecare/international_clinical_guidelines.html));
- Membership in and appropriate use of the AVSL network, for answering reference questions, structuring literature searches, and obtaining vision-related materials through interlibrary loan;
- AVSL formal mentorship:
  - Establish mentorship relationship with another AVSL librarian
  - Complete 10 vision-related searches with AVSL mentor
  - Understand how to use the Union List of Vision-Related Serials for interlibrary borrowing (handout provided to new members by AVSL chairperson)
  - Set MyNCBI preferences for appropriate vision libraries
- Review of "Guidelines for Vision Science Libraries" (AVSL Website/Resources) (<http://www.lhl.uab.edu/avsl/wp-content/uploads/2008/11/Guidelines.pdf>);
- Review of "Standards for Vision Science Libraries" (AVSL Website/Resources) (<http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/picrender.fcgi?artid=35231&blobtype=pdf>);
- AVSL Opening Day Collection ([http://www.lhl.uab.edu/avsl/wp-content/uploads/2008/11/opening\\_day.docx](http://www.lhl.uab.edu/avsl/wp-content/uploads/2008/11/opening_day.docx)) ;

### **Information Technology Competencies**

Vision librarians will:

- Be able to create documents and presentations using
  - Word and PowerPoint OR
  - Open Office (<http://www.openoffice.org/product/>) OR
  - Google Docs (<http://docs.google.com/>);
- Be able to collect, manage, and cite research sources through use of bibliographic management software, e.g., Zotero, EndNote, etc.;

- Have a critical understanding of the Internet as a useful resource for locating, retrieving and transferring information electronically;
- Be familiar with Web browsing relevant search engines and meta search engines, and methods to find Web-based sources, such as directories, portals and other electronic information resources;
- Understand how technology can be used to improve library services.

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