

## CHAPTER 10

# Medical Libraries

### 10-1 GENERAL

Medical libraries are programmed by the U.S. Army Health Facility Planning Agency as part of their overall programming effort for military hospitals. Therefore, this chapter only discusses medical library facilities, in a general way, for military hospitals. Medical libraries in both teaching and non-teaching hospitals are for staff use only. Patient libraries, when provided, usually have separate collection and reading areas, but may share common control and technical service areas with the medical libraries.

A medical library is an integral part of a medical facility and is established for the purpose of providing professional education and research materials for the hospital medical staff. These libraries may be established at all medical centers and hospitals subject to the approval of the Office of the Surgeon General.

a. REFERENCES. AR 40-2 Army Medical Treatment Facilities General Administration, 10-0-10.3; Attachment G, Circular No. A-57, Administrative Space Planning Criteria for Federal Hospitals.

b. FUNCTIONS OF MEDICAL LIBRARIES. Medical libraries usually perform all or some of the following functions as appropriate considering local requirements.

(1) *Medical Reference*. Make available to the medical and allied staff reference material concerning the most recent as well as historical developments in medicine, surgery, and other specialties in the medical and allied fields. The compilation of reference lists and bibliographies is an integral part of the reference function of the medical library. Related reference work consists of interlibrary loan services, assistance in the preparation of the professional papers, and assistance to medical journal organizations to facilitate the interchange of information on Army trends. Medical references include the use of secondary sources such as Index Catalogs to the Surgeon General's Library, Current List of Medical Literature, Quarterly Cumulative Index Medicus, Cumulated Index Medicus, Current Index Medicus, abstract journals, and special bibliographies.

(2) *Journal and Book Selection*. The medical librarian, subject to review and final selection by the Medical Library Committee, recommends books and journals to be purchased, discarded, replaced, or rebound. Recommendations for additions to the library are to be based upon scope of the subject as related to the needs of the medical program and the present book stock and periodical subscriptions. Recommendations for retention or removal of material are based on its use, indications of future needs and requests, condition of material, and budgetary limitations.

(3) *Training Medical and Allied Staff in Use of Library*. Conduct a continuous program of orientation lectures and instructions for the purpose of training the medical and allied staff in the use of medical reference tools and inform users of the types of reference and other services available.

(4) *Cataloging of Materials*. Catalog, classify, and arrange medical library collections in such a manner as to insure their ready access.

(5) *Referring Literature to Appropriate Individuals*. Make a continuing examination and analysis of all journals, books, pamphlets, and other materials upon their receipt in the library to determine possible application to all studies and research programs either planned or presently conducted by the staff and to bring pertinent material to the attention of the individual concerned.

(6) *Promoting Use of Medical Library and Facilitating Interlibrary Loan of Material*. Develop effective public relations within the medical facility in order to promote the use of the medical library resources and to attain maximum use of medical literature. Also, maintain professional relationships with other medical library staffs and actively participate in the National Library of Medicine's Regional Library Program to ensure full cooperation in the interchange of information and interlibrary loan materials.

### 10-2 PLANNING AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS.

a. LIBRARY USERS. As distinct from a general library, the medical library, both teaching and non-teaching facilities, usually serves a tripartite mission—patient care, education and research. Library users consist of three primary groups: the professional medical staff including all of the health profession groups from occupational and physical therapists to physicians; in teaching hospitals, students form a strong user group for library services. Students consist of the interns, residents, nurses, and other allied health profession groups which use hospital facilities for training purposes; and support staff which is the least intensive user group in the hospital.

b. STAFF. The number of medical librarians and technical staff required to staff the medical library should be in relation to the type and amount of administrative and operational duties, to include reference work, resulting from the size of the medical and allied staff, and the teaching and research programs of the medical facility. Assistant medical librarians may be employed when the need exists, subject to the approval of the major commander concerned. Staff requirements should be developed in conjunction with the chief librarian subject to final approval of the major commander.

c. COLLECTION. Generally, the medical library collection may be developed using the following guidelines:

(1) *Classifications*. Classification of books and periodicals should be determined locally in accordance with accepted library practices.

(2) *Acquisition*. In selecting books and periodicals for acquisition, the following principles are usually considered:

(a) Books are selected in response to the needs of the staff of the medical facility. With few exceptions, books and monographs should have been published within the last 10 years. Representatives of all staff groups should be consulted concerning medical book procurement.

(b) Current medical periodicals and publishers' catalogs and announcements should be reviewed regularly for listings of new books. A file of current publishers' catalogs should be maintained.

(c) The following materials are generally used in the selection of medical books, periodicals, and journals:

R. R. Bowker's *Medical Books in Print*—a comprehensive list of medical books issued by all medical publishers in America.

Ulrich's *International Periodical Directory*—a listings of periodicals of every field.

(3) *Periodicals*. Each library may subscribe to a selection of periodicals covering the various specialties in the medical facility program. The list may be reviewed each year to eliminate those periodicals not used but only after due consideration of the mission of the facility and the probability of future requirements for this subject matter. The principles pertaining to book selection are also applicable to periodical selection. These principles should be supplemented by giving consideration to the procurement of abstract periodicals in order to provide for a broader coverage of the field of periodical literature than would be possible by the procurement of individual titles under a limited budget. Although it is recognized that many staff personnel other than physicians and nurses make use of the hospital medical library, the full time equivalent employment of physicians and nurses has been considered to be a reasonable index for measurement of library collection requirements.

d. *READER STATIONS*. There are three potential user groups for which reader stations may be provided: the professional staff which includes physicians, nurses, and allied health professionals; the student group, in the case of teaching hospitals, including residents, interns, nurses, and allied health students; and the support staff. Each of these groups exerts a different pressure on the library facility. It has been found that students exert nearly three times the pressure for services and space than the professional staff does, whereas the support staff exerts very little pressure at all.

3. *LOCATION*. The medical library is usually located in the hospital building, accessible from a major corridor, and should not require access through another department. It should be easily accessible from the main entrance of the hospital. Convenience to the heavy users is more important than equal convenience to all eligible users.

### 10-3 INDIVIDUAL SPACE CRITERIA

Individual space criteria which are considered general to all library types have been provided in Chapter 4. The criteria given below are intended to supplement the information in Chapter 4 with criteria specific to medical libraries in both teaching and non-teaching hospitals. Figure 10-1 illustrates the spatial relationships of areas described.

a. *ENTRANCE AND LOBBY*. The medical library is located in a hospital building. For that reason, the lobby and entrance area in the library itself can be kept to a minimum. It should also be adjacent to the card catalog area and have reasonable proximity to public toilet areas.

b. *CARD CATALOG AREA*. The card catalog area is used by both library users and staff to locate materials and should be adjacent to the circulation desk, in close proximity to the reference area, and should be visible as one enters the library. The card catalog should also be easily accessible from the staff work area. In such an environment, the card catalog should provide easy consultation space either on top of the catalog itself or via pull-out shelves in the catalog cabinet. For larger card catalog areas, a consultation table close at hand is required.

c. *CIRCULATION DESK AREA*. The circulation area provides space to maintain records of materials charged to readers, to provide assistance and direction of the usual circulation activities; to provide space for the return of library materials; and generally to provide visual control of entrance/lobby area. The circulation desk should be immediately adjacent to the entrance/lobby area as well as providing close proximity to the card catalog, the reference area, and the administrative librarian. It is also helpful to be close to the staff work area. An after-hours book return should be provided as well as a book return at the circulation desk.

d. *PERIODICAL AREA*. The periodical area houses current periodicals and provides easy access to other unbound issues of the current year. This area should be adjacent to the circulation desk and the entrance/lobby area. It should also have close proximity to the staff work area. The copy machine, if provided, should be in close proximity to this area. Lounge type seating should be provided in this area.

e. REFERENCE AREA. The reference area provides accommodations for printed bibliographies, abstracts, indexes, handbooks, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other heavily used reference material. The reference area should be visible from the entrance/lobby area. The reference librarian, if provided, should have a desk in this area in order to provide general reference service and to provide access to the MEDLINE terminal in the case of MEDCEN/Teaching Hospital Medical Libraries. The MEDLINE terminal should not be at the reference desk, but located in a relatively isolated space due to the fact that this activity often involves intense concentration and consultation. The heavily used indexes should be accommodated at index tables.

f. STACK AREA. The stack area houses the bound periodicals and the monograph portion of the collection. The bound periodicals portion of the collection should be near the reference collection/MEDLINE area since much use of this material will be generated by these activities. A variety of reader stations should be close to these stacks in order to accommodate the intense use that this part of the collection will receive. As with unbound periodicals, this element should be near the copy machine and the microform area. Stack areas should be close to and interspersed with table and carrel seating.

g. USER SEATING. Reader stations are dispersed throughout the library in the current periodicals area, the reference area, the stack areas, and the A/V area. Reader station requirements are based on staff and students served. Research and reference activities in medical libraries dictate the necessity for providing individual reader stations and small table groups. Some of the individual carrels may also be equipped as A/V learning centers. Readers and reader/printer stations should also be provided when microform materials are part of the collection.

h. MICROFORM/AV AREA. The microform/AV area, if included, should provide storage for information in various microformats, user space for readers and reader/printers, and storage for a variety of non-print media. This area should be located adjacent to the staff work area because of the supervision and training work tasks associated with this area. This also allows easier supervision of the checking out of A/V materials for use at the study carrels which are equipped with A/V facilities. Since it is likely that much of the material held in microformats will be periodicals, this area should be in close proximity to the periodical collection.

i. LIBRARIAN'S OFFICE. The head librarian provides direction to the library staff and coordinates the library's efforts with those of the rest of the hospital. If possible, a private office should be provided for staff and user consultation. If the staff is small, the librarian needs to be in

the midst of the staff operations, and at the same time must be easily available to consult with library users. The two most significant interfaces are with the circulation desk and the staff work area. In larger facilities, the head librarian may require a secretary to supply clerical support and to maintain records. In addition, in a larger facility, a conference room should be provided for use by both staff and larger users. If provided, it should also be equipped as a media room for group study.

j. TECHNICAL PROCESSING AREA. The technical processing area provides storage and space for the non-public service functions of the library such as shipping and receiving, processing, preparing materials for binding, ordering, cataloging, interlibrary loan processing, record storage, and other support services. This area should be adjacent to the librarian, the circulation desk and card catalog, the reference area, and the stack area. This is a high use, high noise area and should be isolated from the quiet study areas of the library. A work counter and sink should be provided for pasting and other operations.

**SPATIAL RELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM**

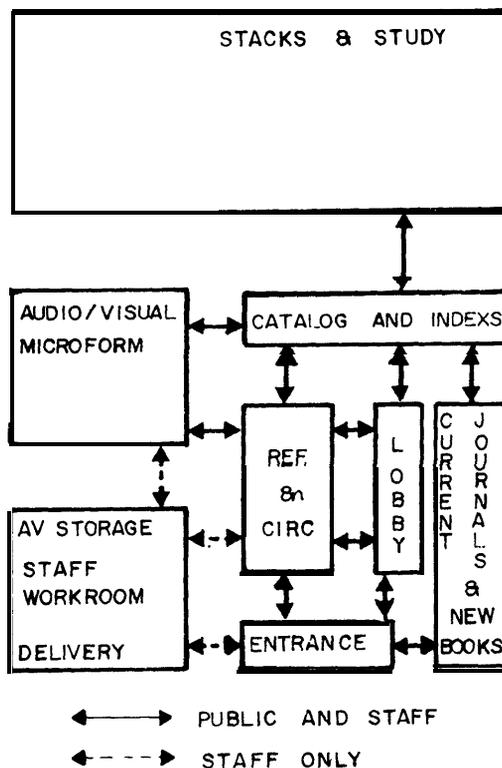


FIGURE 10-1