Nov 17th, 11:25 AM - 12:40 PM

Open Access Challenge

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Description
This class activity is designed to help health sciences students understand challenges to accessing public health information in a variety of settings. The exercise was created for students in Prof. Dailey's Global Health class (HS 322) at Gettysburg College in Fall 2015.

The activity, as well as notes for instructors considering using this exercise, are both shared here.

Location
McCreary 202

Disciplines
Information Literacy | International Public Health | Library and Information Science | Public Health | Scholarly Communication | Scholarly Publishing

This activity was designed for HS 322, Global Health, at Gettysburg College. In Fall 2015, the class enrolled 18 undergraduate students (mostly juniors and seniors) and met for a 75-minute class period.

Notes about facilitating the activity

Activity setup:

1. **Before class, assign students a reading about how open/closed access affects patient care. We used:**
    a. **Don't Think Open Access Is Important? It Might Have Prevented Much Of The Ebola Outbreak (https://www.techdirt.com/articles/20150409/17514230608/dont-think-open-access-is-important-it-might-have-prevented-much-ebola-outbreak.shtml)**
    b. **The Case for Open Access (https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2012/08/the-case-for-open-access/)**
2. **Assign students to groups before class. Screen for Spanish language when assigning to group 3.**
3. **Group 1 used a laptop connected to campus wifi.**
4. **Group 2 used a laptop with internet access through a mobile hotspot borrowed from our IT department. Students were instructed not to enter campus credentials if prompted.**
5. **Group 3 used the classroom podium computer and projected it on the screen. This helped them translate together.**
6. **Group 4 used their phones, then dashed to the campus library. We briefed the reference librarian on duty in advance and asked her not to use the computer or online resources. She relied on her existing knowledge of the LC classification scheme to direct students to a call number area for print books.**

Activity debrief:

1. **The disease is Enterovirus D68.**
2. **We regrouped with 20 minutes remaining in class.**
3. **Each group reported their findings for question #1, beginning with the lowest access (group 4) and moving up. After all groups reported, we moved on to the next question.**
4. **We did not enough time for meaningful reflection during class. The instructor included this reflection question on the class take home exam due a few days later: "How did your group's level of information privilege contribute to your ability to diagnose and treat the disease?"**

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"The Access Challenge" – Class Activity

Group 1: Gettysburg College
Group 2: U.S. non-profit organization
Group 3: Cuban health care group
Group 4: Urban India health care group

You are friends with a physician working in an under-funded clinic in a rural area in India. She has observed several children presenting with symptoms including severe wheezing and neurological symptoms, including acute flaccid paralysis. India has not observed a case of polio since 2011, so she is immediately concerned that polio has re-emerged in her area. However, polio vaccination rates are reported to be quite high in this area. Thus, herd immunity for polio should be keeping new polio cases as bay. Unfortunately, it will take days to get lab results back, given the lack of transportation available and that the nearest lab for polio testing is in New Delhi. She is concerned that this infection will become an epidemic before the lab results are confirmed. The physician decides to call some of her colleagues around the world to try to figure out what is causing this disease and how to stop it from spreading to the entire community.

With the resources you have available, your job is to help her discover the cause of the disease and figure out a plan for containment.

Resources:

Gettysburg College: You have full internet access and can use any materials you have access to as a Gettysburg College student or faculty member.

U.S. non-profit: You have full internet access, but you will not be able to access materials that are behind a pay wall. Your institution does not have the resources for additional scholarly subscriptions. Please do not enter your Gettysburg College credentials if you are prompted to do so.

Cuba: The government of Cuba restricts access to materials on the internet. U.S. sources have been blocked. You may only access the Biblioteca Virtual en Salud de Cuba through the following website: http://bvscuba.sld.cu/.

Urban India: Electricity has been out today in New Delhi. Your computer's battery life has ended, but you have a small charge left on your phone. You have 5 minutes in which you may use your phone to answer the first question. You may go to the library to access information, but you may not use any electronics, as the library also experiencing a power outage.

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Questions:

1. Given the symptoms, what disease is the likely culprit? Check your answer with us before moving on.

2. How is this disease transmitted?

3. Where have outbreaks occurred globally in the past 2 years? Are the outbreaks associated with different strains? Is it possible that this disease has reached rural India?

4. Are there any detailed case studies from North America available to share with the physician?

5. How were patients in North America (2014) treated/managed? Be specific as you can, as the physician needs to know how to treat her patients and what equipment is necessary.

6. Under what conditions is isolation of patients in the clinic necessary?

7. Planning for future potential outbreaks of this disease, what tools should this physician ask for in her next request for funding from international aid organizations?

For each question, please write down your source (full AMA citations are not necessary for this assignment). Also write down whether you accessed full articles, or only had access to abstracts. Also, have one person in your group jot down *how* you searched for the information. We may ask you to replicate your search for the class.

For those who leave the classroom for this exercise, please return by 12:20 p.m.