

# Negotiating the librarian's role in research collaborations: a health sciences case study

Jill Barr-Walker, MPH, MS

## Objective

This poster aims to address key issues librarians face when collaborating on systematic reviews and other research projects.

## Methods

A new health sciences librarian at ZSFG Library created a systematic review service based on the interest of faculty, researchers, and students at UCSF. She explored the issues that arose around establishing the librarian's place within research teams at her institution.

### What is a systematic review?

- A high-level overview of primary research on a particular research question that tries to identify, select, synthesize, and appraise all high quality research evidence relevant to that question in order to answer it [1].

### How are librarians involved?

- Cochrane [1], Institute of Medicine [2], and PRISMA [3] standards recommend using a librarian for searching.
- Librarians are also involved in data management, writing, dissemination, and advising on best practices.

## Issues

- Awkwardness about acknowledgement (librarian)
- Lack of understanding about systematic review process (research team)
- Confusion about librarian's role (both)
- Lack of communication and uncertainty about who should be part of team meetings (both)

## Strategies

- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to clarify librarian's responsibilities & expectations
- Library-wide coauthorship policy
- Checklist for researchers before starting SR [4]
- Standardized schedule for librarian check-in at each stage of review process
- Proactive outreach (e.g. SR classes)

## Conclusions

- Discuss coauthorship and scope of work upfront
- Create and cite library policy
- Standardize documentation
- If researchers don't accept, don't work with them
- Embrace your role as an information expert

## Results

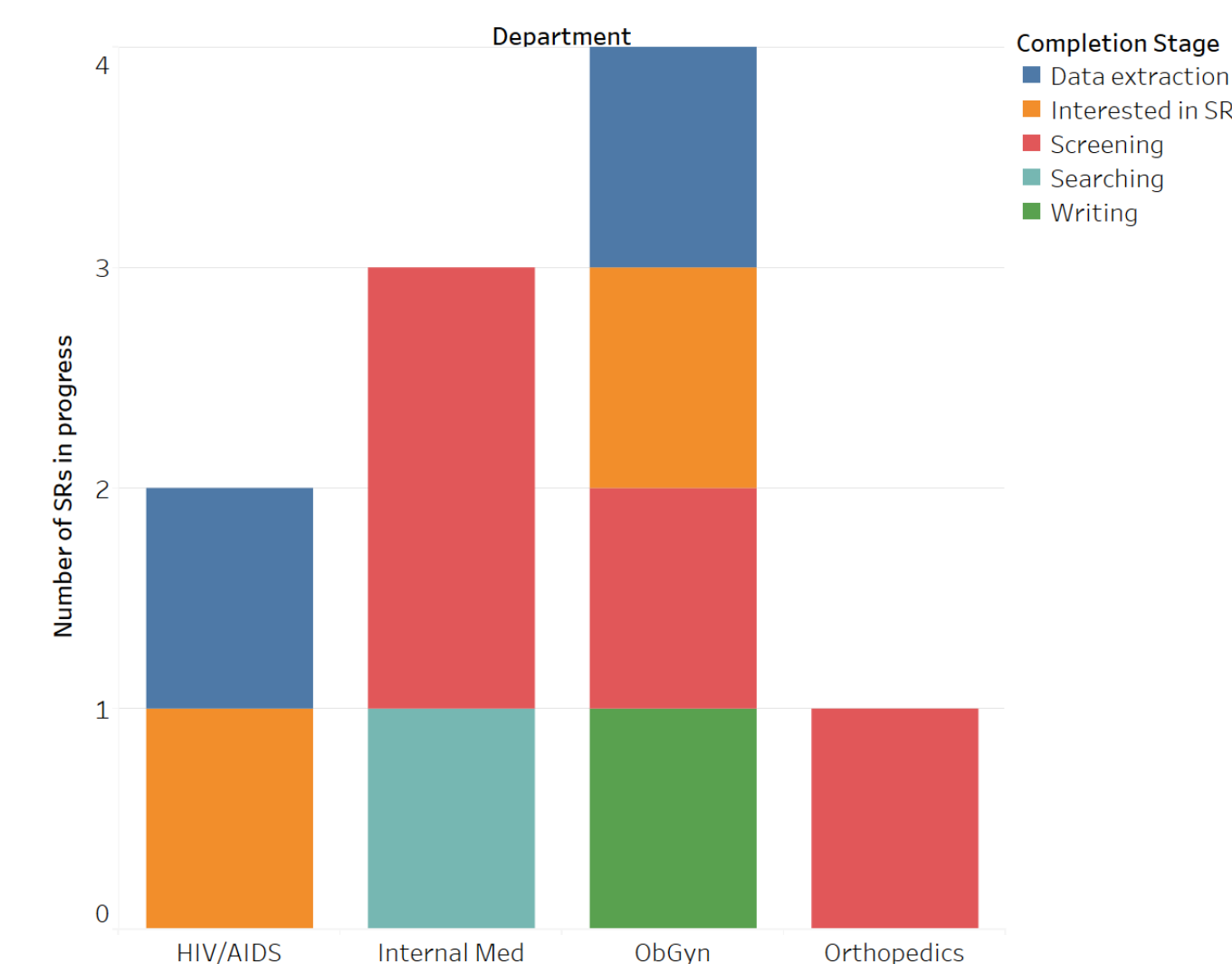


Fig. 1 Systematic review collaborations at ZSFG Library.

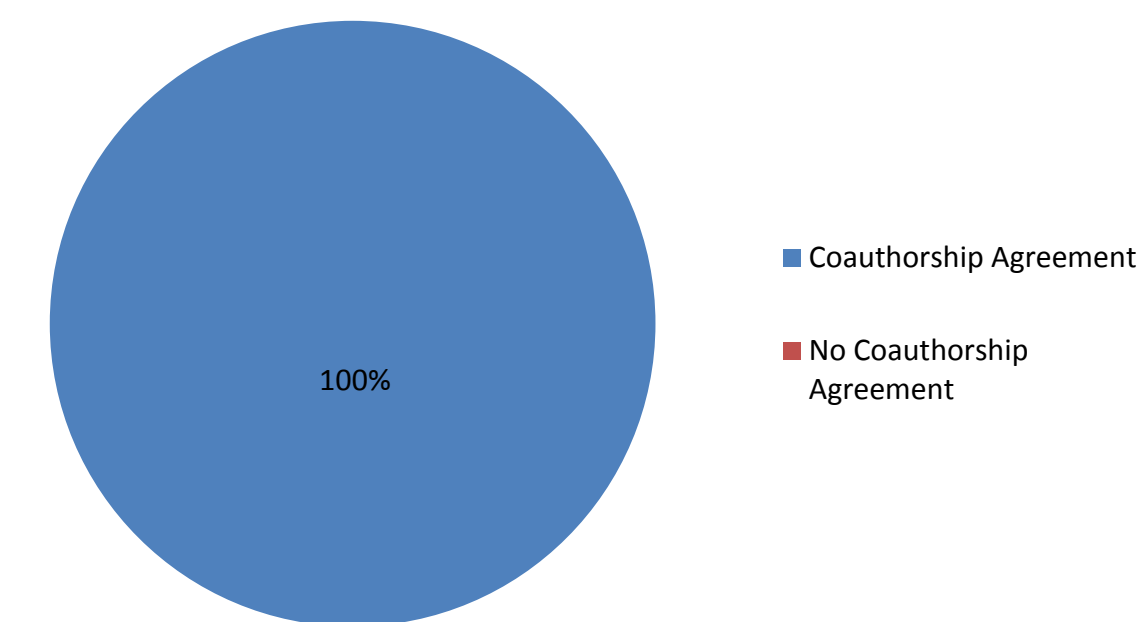


Fig. 2 Librarian coauthorship in ZSFG Library systematic review collaborations.

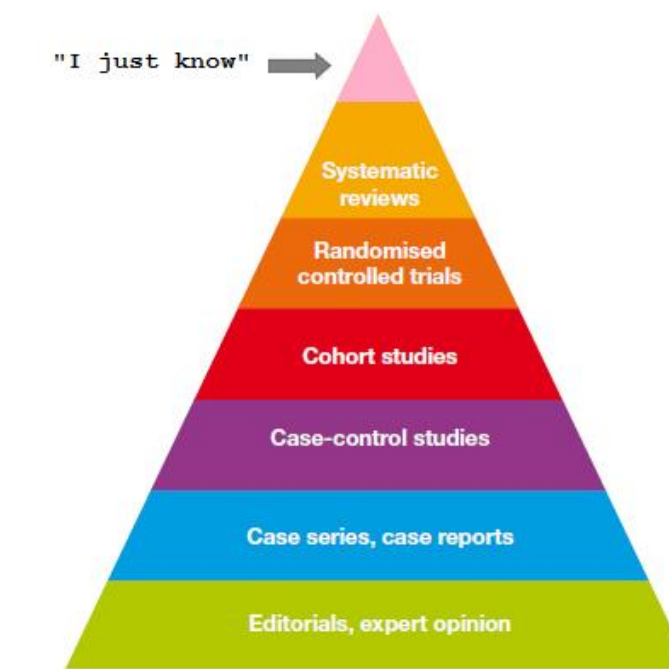


Figure 1. Levels of evidence

[5]

### References

1. Cochrane Collaboration. (2017). *Cochrane handbook for systematic reviews of interventions*. Higgins, J.P.T. & Green, S. (Eds.). <http://handbook.cochrane.org>.
2. Institute of Medicine. (2011). *Standards for systematic reviews*. Washington, DC: IOM.
3. The PRISMA Group, et al. (2009). Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: the PRISMA statement. *PLoS Med*, 6(7).
4. University of Pittsburgh Health Sciences Library System. (2016). *Getting ready for a systematic review: things to consider*. <http://hsls.libguides.com/systematicreviews>.
5. The Science Post. (2017). "I just know" replaces systematic reviews at top of evidence pyramid. <http://thesciencepost.com/i-just-know-replaces-systematic-reviews-at-top-of-evidence-pyramid/>