The Informationist and Information Specialist Revolution: Career Pathways for Physicians?

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MD/MSIS or MD/MSLS
Dual Degree Program
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Library and Information Science
  - 2-year LS/IS program
- Duke University School of Medicine
  - 3rd scholarly/research year of medical school
- First student enrolled August 2006
- Duke and UNC mentors/advisors

Medical Information Specialists Training (MIST) Program
- Funded by Institute of Museum and Library Services
  - Librarians for 21st Century Program
- Study unique model for creating informationists
- Funding for 4 students over 3 years
- In-state tuition, annual stipend and travel for one conference

Recruiting Future Physician Informationists
Recruitment Strategies
- Focus on 1st and 2nd year medical students
- Promote the degree & IMSLS grant support
- Identify potential career pathways
  - Change agent in information management; Designer of web, software, and information resources; Manager of clinical information systems; Knowledge manager in pharmaceutical firm; Information specialist on clinical or research team; Director of library or IT functions; Faculty member; Biomedical librarian
- Expose students to role models
  - Medical faculty with an information focus
  - Library faculty with a health focus

Web survey of 2nd year students
- Online survey conducted at end of year
- Goal: assess awareness & interest
- Results show a high level of awareness
  - 64.9% knew of the IMSLS/MS program
- The degree has increased the desire to pursue higher education
- Most students plan to take courses in health informatics
- Three students applied to the IMSLS program
- Three students will start in Fall 2001

Interviews with MD Informationists
Purpose
- Input from 40-50 MD’s with information careers
- Background, training, career trajectory, current roles
- Academic training in information work? Regrets?
- Recommendations based on their experience
- Additional academic training
- Skills important for effectiveness in medical information work
- Opportunities for graduates with MD & information degrees

Preliminary findings
- About half of those without academic information training had regrets
- Primary skills and training most often cited:
  - Business management skills, negotiation, personal productivity, project management, teamwork, presentation
  - Communication & interpersonal skills: verbal & written effectiveness, ability to communicate and listen
  - Information skills: data management and databases, programming, literature searching, analysis, data management, statistics, computer science, library use, web design, and design
  - Health care processing, managing, interoperability, HIPAA, ethics
  - Other: statistical skills, research skills, hard working, problem solving, leadership, writing, creativity, enthusiasm

Opportunities/obstacles
- Opportunities: additional grants, increased opportunities, policy impact, public policy, CHIO, PAs, EMR, health care roles, clinical librarians, corporate library
- Obstacles: decreased funding, funding requirements, demands, time constraints, other demands, personal contacts, networking, travel, support, personal or professional rewards