

Health Sciences Library System, University of Pittsburgh

Strategic Plan, 2019 – 2023

About

The Health Sciences Library System (HSLs) supports the University of Pittsburgh's schools of health sciences (Dental Medicine, Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, Medicine, Pharmacy, Public Health, and Nursing) and the University's wider health sciences community. The HSLs website (<https://www.hsls.pitt.edu/>) serves as the primary gateway to our services and resources. Falk Library is our physical home, with spaces and technology for study, learning, research, and collaboration. Our staff is composed of faculty librarians, professional staff and paraprofessionals. Clinical e-resources licensed by HSLs are available throughout the UPMC Health System. We also serve the broader community through cooperative agreements with the National Library of Medicine that engage with a variety of health information stakeholders, both regionally and nationally.

Mission

Through our innovative services, high-quality resources, collaborative spaces, expertise, and partnerships, we advance learning, teaching, research, and service across the health sciences community at the University of Pittsburgh. While maintaining our foundational commitment to excellence, we respond to the changing health sciences and information environments.

Trends

Several trends across health sciences libraries, scholarly communication, health sciences education, technology, and health care either have already impacted us or could potentially do so during the next five years.

- Rising costs for information resources outpacing growth in library budgets.
- Increasing need for library staff with specialized skills and domain knowledge.
- Improving user experience amid growing expectations for seamless access to content and services, supported by skillful marketing of the library's role and investment.
- Reconfiguring the library's physical facility to create varied study spaces, collaborative/learning spaces, and technology-driven spaces (e.g., maker and visualization spaces).
- Transforming historical and special collections from hidden and under-utilized materials to visible and unique institutional assets.

- Evolving scholarly communication landscape and publishing models that in turn impact academic culture.
- Growing acceptance of open science, open data, open educational resources and open access publishing, leading to greater access and transparency.
- Continuing focus on diversity and inclusion, including making resources accessible for all users.
- University of Pittsburgh encouraging community engagement and development of relationships with organizations outside the institution.
- University of Pittsburgh embracing entrepreneurship and commercialization.
- Ongoing innovations in education and training, including distance education, flipped classroom, simulation, and virtual reality.
- Increasing availability of cloud computing and connected devices amid decreasing costs associated with computing power to facilitate larger datasets, more in-depth analytics, text/data mining, and AI applications.
- Changing approaches to health care education and practice, including interprofessional education, precision medicine, population health, and focus on environmental and social determinants of health.
- Increasing market concentration through mergers and acquisitions among health care systems.

Environmental Assessment

Our Strengths:

- A history of successful recruitment and retention of a high-quality staff with a variety of training backgrounds and domain knowledge.
- Specialized information services using a variety of instructional formats to support advanced literature searching, molecular biology and bioinformatics, and data management.
- Ongoing collaborations with individual departments and centers across the University, as well as participation in University-wide initiatives.
- A robust collection of resources – including journals, databases, books, software, and streaming media – that is effectively maintained and routinely assessed.
- Strong partnership with the UPMC Health System, with budget support for clinical e-resources to further evidence-based practice and improve patient outcomes.
- Collection development approach that is user-focused and data-driven.
- Leadership in pushing discovery of online resources beyond books and journals into new types of content such as preprints and datasets.
- Prestige and high visibility among health sciences libraries, brought by a staff that actively publishes, participates in national organizations and initiatives (often in leadership roles), and trains others in the library profession.

- Relationship with the National Library of Medicine that fosters regional and national engagement beyond the University.
- Exhibition program that spotlights special or under-represented populations or topics.

Our Challenges:

- Addressing the needs of users and library staff during upcoming building construction and disruptive renovations.
- Managing ongoing budgetary pressures, which limit our ability to add new resources.
- Sustaining our scope of services amid dependence on competitive, external funding.
- Balancing user demands for time-intensive projects and/or new services with current staffing level/budget.
- Responding to varied library staff management issues, such as future retirements; balancing staff specialization and flexibility; ongoing staff development; and defining future staffing needs.
- Marketing the library on a systematic level.
- Making technology investments that are well-timed, cost-effective, and impactful.
- Addressing legal, administrative, budgetary, and access issues while initiating or enhancing digitization projects.
- Incorporating the expanding footprint of the UPMC Health System into licensing agreements for clinical e-resources.

Goals

- Foster discovery, scholarship and research with robust educational programs and quality information services and resources.
- Identify opportunities to support open science and data-driven initiatives.
- Optimize library physical and digital spaces.
- Create and maintain partnerships that expand the use of high-quality health information and the reach of our services.
- Conduct targeted marketing to actively promote library services, resources and advancement/fundraising.
- Recruit and retain a diverse and inclusive workforce that actively supports collaboration, lifelong learning, and service to the profession and the community.
- Explore methods to preserve our unique archival and historical collections, and enhance their discoverability and use.
- Conduct internal and external assessment of our services and resources to support data-driven decisionmaking.