

Quarterly Report

April 26, 2004

Name of reporting institution:

Boulder Public Library
1000 Canyon Blvd.
Boulder, CO 80302

First and last name of person submitting report: Chris A. Engleman

Internet email address: englemanc@boulder.lib.co.us

Telephone number: 303-441-4144

Reporting Period start date: 01-04-2004

Reporting Period end date: 04-04-2004

Publicity:

We had no new promotional materials this quarter for our work at the People's Clinic. I taught a MedlinePlus, PubMed class at the library on March 10 and all the publicity was handled "in-library." Fliers listing all library instruction classes (including this NLM class I taught) are placed in kiosks around the library and the classes are listed in the library's monthly calendar publication. I have enclosed examples of these in previous quarters where I have taught this class.

Outreach Sessions:

We again, this quarter, had a volunteer at a table one day a week for three hours at the People's Clinic in Boulder. With a laptop computer, the volunteer was then available to research questions from patients there using the Spanish-language version of MedlinePlus. We had only about a dozen requests this quarter.

I also taught another MedlinePlus, PubMed class at the Boulder Public Library on March 10. We are limited to 8 attendees (8 computers) and 6 people showed up for this class.

Other accomplishments:

The administration of the People's Clinic completely changed during this reporting quarter, so my co-director Carol Salter and I had to meet with the new administrators to go over our outreach project with them. We also brought over the MedlinePlus prescription pads for information, to give to the staff and physicians at the clinic.

The Library Instruction Director at the Boulder Public Library has now asked me if I would like to teach an NLM database class regularly (i.e. once a month) as she feels it has been a very successful training program. So I will be doing this even though this will go beyond the parameters of this subcontract. All publicity material comes through the library, so this will not entail the need for any expense on our part to advertise these classes.

Target audience:

The patients at the People's Clinic tend to be the very economically disadvantaged and also undereducated Latino population of Boulder. We have learned that the average educational level of patients coming in are at about a 6th-grade Mexican level, and therefore, we see that there is a good chance that this population is not educated enough to know what medical questions to ask, or even how to ask the question if they have one. This has been a problem with our lack of success in getting this group to use our service. Also, there are probably a number of illegal immigrants that come in, and therefore, do not want to talk to any more people than they have to. This has been educational for me to learn about. And though we haven't had a presence at the Family Learning Center this quarter, it was interesting to see that we had more success there. The reason for that it seems, is that the Family Learning Center draws a Latino population that is a little more educated...they are there taking English as a Second Language classes, for example, and so it is clear that the people coming to this place are more able and open to get out and learn and ask questions. This has compelled us to try and come up with other ways of trying to reach the people that come to the People's Clinic.

Goals, Outcomes, Objectives:

Because we have come to realize the economic, educational and cultural barriers to getting the Latino population of Boulder to use our service, we have tried a few different things to overcome this. None of these, I might add, have been very successful to date. It has been a bit discouraging that our numbers are not up, but we learn more about our target population all the time and it leads us to want to keep trying different things. Whether we can get the outcome we desire, I am somewhat uncertain. It may be that we need to target the "more educated" population...or, at least, put a little more energy into reaching that group and see if we have more success there.

Evaluation:

I really have not much of anything to send here. I have a couple of evaluation forms from the class I taught on March 10... I could send those. I will not send the actual research forms we used for the research we did at the People's Clinic, due to confidentiality. Again, we only had about 12 of those questions this past quarter.

Impacts and Observations:

The fact that our volunteers at the People's Clinic now wear People's Clinic badges I think has been helpful. It gives us a more "authoritative" look and I think maybe people feel more comfortable approaching our volunteers because of this. Again, this is not really reflected in overall usage numbers, but I think this remains still to be seen over a longer time. The physicians have been very supportive of us being there and our presence is made known to them when we are there, but, again, the usage numbers are not really reflecting great improvement. I, again, would like to see if this might change over time. I just have concerns that the barriers we encounter with this population group--economic, educational and cultural--may be very difficult to overcome...maybe even over the long term. I guess I would say that I am encouraged (or challenged) enough that we plan to continue this project for a while longer (if not longer than that) and see what can happen.

Planned Activities:

This was the final quarter of our subcontract term. We plan to continue our project, however, as the places we are visiting (People's Clinic mainly), have been very supportive, and it seems the financial constraints are somewhat minimized there. It might be nice at some point to print up "nice" Spanish-language brochures (we have some somewhat less-than-great brochures). I will also continue to teach an NLM database class once a month at the Boulder Public Library. Here again all costs for publicity are now provided by the library so I can continue this teaching without further need of funds (for now). Therefore, we have no cost reimbursements for this quarter.