

Transforming a Literature Search Service

Adapting a Reference Management System

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Tertiary Pediatric Teaching Hospital

403 Beds

7,282 Employees

3 Librarians

354 Searches

We modified Altarama's RefTracker Express to improve our search quality, increase efficiency, leverage search expertise and demonstrate alignment with institutional goals.

Prior Inefficiencies



Unstructured Requesting

Ex: A client emails the library, requesting a literature search on testosterone administration. No contextualizing details are provided about the topic or requester.

Duplicate Search Requests

Ex: In March, Jackie completes a search for a client on spina bifida and learning disorders. In August, the same client contacts Peggy for an identical search.

Repetitive Search Topics

Ex: In May, a PICU nurse requests a search on best practices for central line care. In July, a different nurse from Hem/Onc requests a search on best practices for central line flushing.

Decentralized Records

Ex: A client had a search completed three years ago, by a now-retired librarian, and needs an update run with the original search parameters.

Lost Opportunities



Search Statistics

Ex: The library needs metrics to plan and design a new service line to support manuscript development and publication.

Data-Informed Strategic Planning

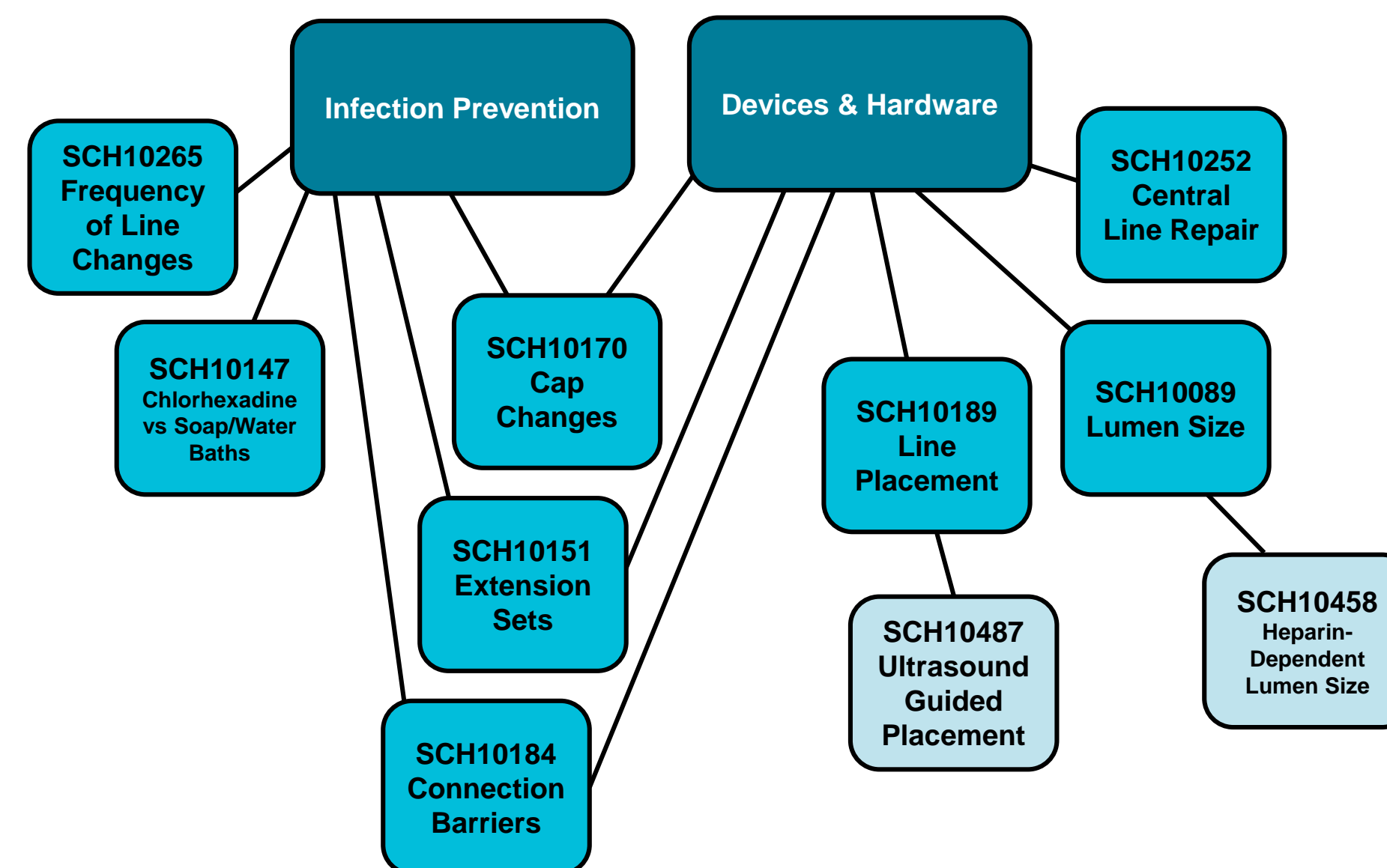
Ex: The library has a strategic goal to initiate a liaison service for nursing. Past nurse requesters could be identified as potential resources for a needs assessment.

Library Value Communication

Ex: Manager needs to highlight department value to the new CIO, demonstrating alignment with hospital strategic goals.

Staff View: Finding Search Strategies

PICC/Central Catheterization Search Strategy Relationships



Ten search records share a common base strategy. Initial search strategies were for questions on catheter devices or hardware, or the concept of infection prevention. Records #SCH10487 and #SCH10458 were more focused searches, using existing strategies from #SCH10189 and #SCH10089.

Client View: Search Intake Form

Staff View: Search Answer Form

Data-Driven Solutions



Improve Workflow

The RefTracker form captures client demographics and request information. Librarians are notified of incoming requests awaiting allocation.

Archive Communication and Work Product

Closed records contain search documentation, strategies, correspondence, and related file attachments.

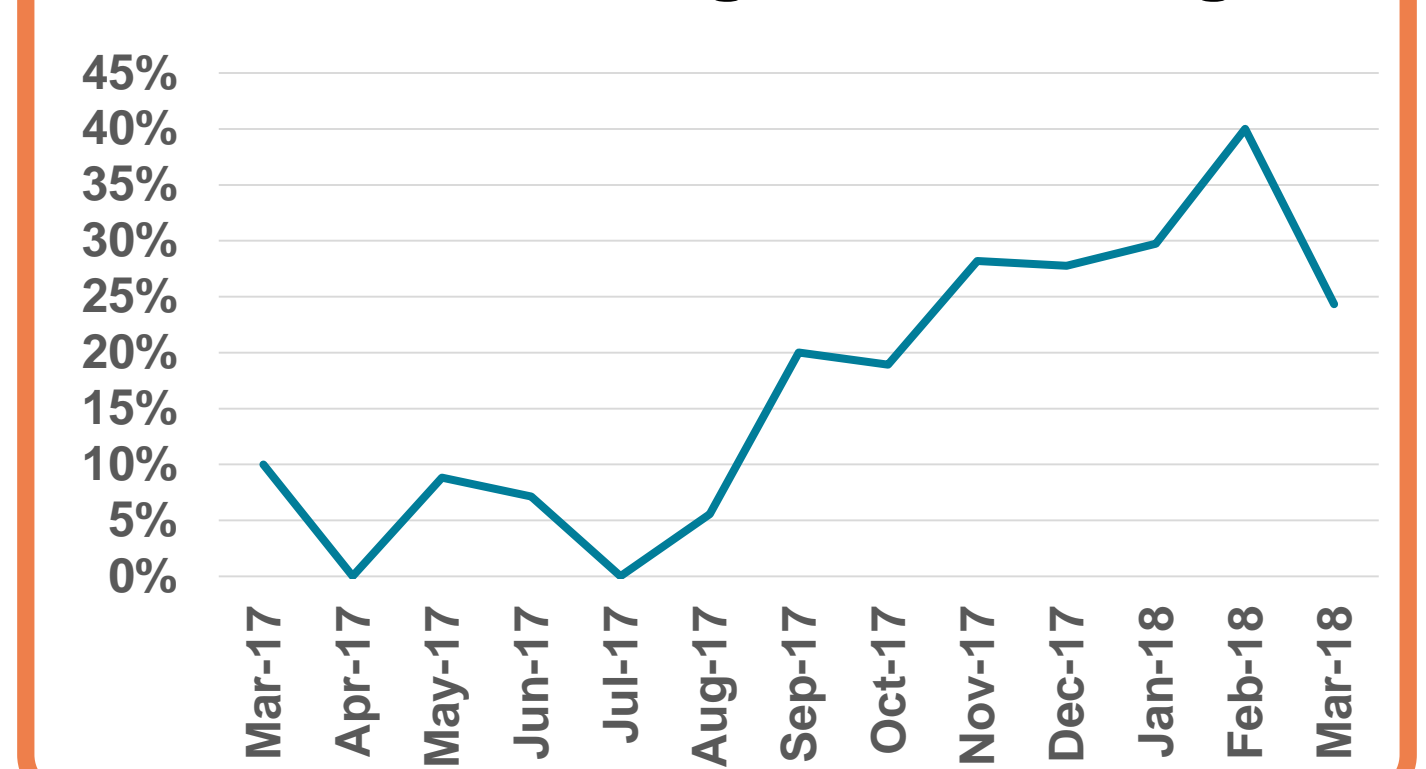
Leverage Search Expertise

Librarians search RefTracker to find, enhance, and reuse archived search strategies.

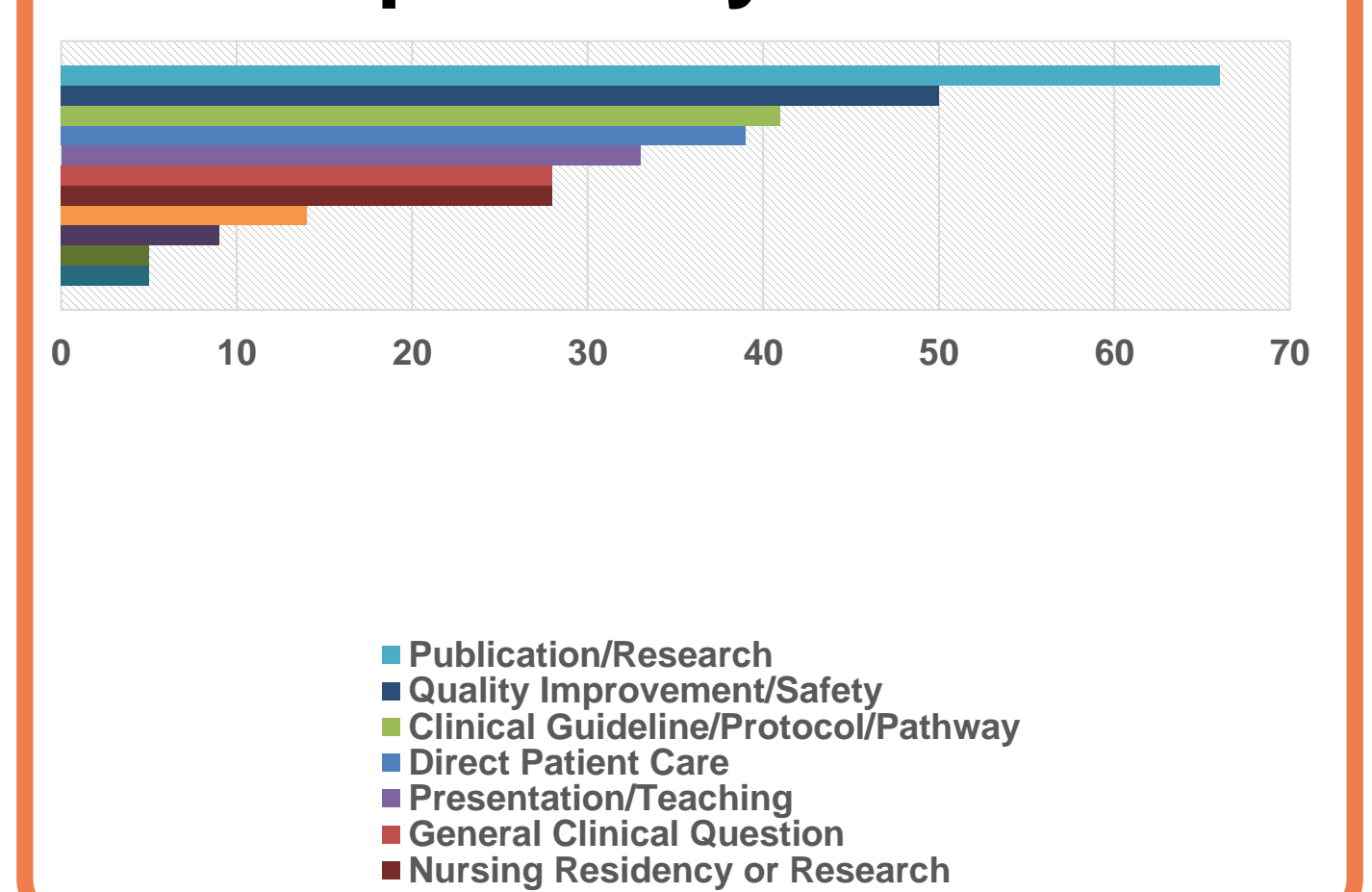
Improve Productivity

Librarians can identify duplicate requests and prevent rework.

% Searches Using Prior Strategies



Requests by Reason



Lessons Learned

RefTracker Express forms are flexible and easy to customize.

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Staff training, record audits, and form revisions improve entry compliance and reporting accuracy.

Lessons Learned

Demonstrating connections to hospital strategic goals are inconsistent and require ongoing surveillance.

Next Steps

Implement a RefTracker-automated literature search survey, deployed when records are closed.

Next Steps

Use system communication capabilities to record librarian-client interactions, rather than corresponding via email.

