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EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR LIBRARY MANAGEMENT

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COLUMN EDITOR'S NOTE
This *JLA* column will consider issues of education and training for management positions in libraries and other information organizations from the perspectives of both the provider and the recipient. The column will appear in odd-numbered issues of the journal and focus on management education/training at various stages of the individual's career including the effectiveness of these efforts, their content, and the specific challenges of teaching and learning within the field of librarianship. The column will address both theoretical and practical concerns. Prospective authors are invited to submit articles for this column to the editor at aa3805@wayne.edu

Memory Cafés and Dementia-Friendly Libraries: Management Considerations for Developing Inclusive Library Programs

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ABSTRACT
Memory Cafés bring services to families and individuals experiencing memory loss, mild cognitive impairment, early Alzheimer's, or other dementias. Memory Cafés situated in libraries are designed to be safe, engaging, and welcoming gathering spaces. These equalizing opportunities provide mind-stimulating activities and respond to the growing need to create dementia-friendly library environments. The aim of this article is to highlight management considerations for creating Memory Cafés. Issues such as building community partners, budgeting, planning, library staff training, and marketing are highlighted. Overall, Memory Cafés can be inclusive library spaces for people experiencing different phases of memory loss and their care partners.

Introduction

Many communities are examining ways to create dementia-friendly environments to help enrich the lives of people living with Alzheimer's and related dementias. In particular, a "dementia-friendly library" can be a valuable part of creating a safe and welcoming community that is supportive to people living with memory loss and their caregivers (Dementia Friendly America, 2018). The dementia-friendly library movement embraces the key principles of diversity, inclusion, and respect of everyone.

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Dementia is the loss of cognitive functioning (i.e., thinking, remembering, and reasoning) that interferes with accomplishing daily tasks and activities (National Institute on Aging/NIA, 2017). Alzheimer's disease is a progressive brain disorder and also the most common cause of dementia in older adults (NIA, 2017). The Alzheimer's Association predicts that there will be about 13.8 million Americans with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias by 2050 (Alzheimer's Association, 2019a). In response, libraries are undertaking efforts to support the needs of this growing segment of their communities.

Public, academic, and medical libraries can play an important role in supporting the information and social needs of this population. Numerous dementia-friendly library programs have emerged that vary in their scope. Examples of programs in public library settings include hosting support groups, group storytelling, speakers on caregiving issues, and pet therapy. This article focuses on one type of program in particular, known as Memory Cafés; and management considerations for developing these programs are highlighted.

An overview of Memory Cafés

Memory Cafés serve people with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia and their caregivers by providing socialization opportunities to enhance participants' health and well-being. Often memory cafés are hosted in senior centers, elder care facilities, or in memory care units at assisted living centers. Public libraries are also ideal locations for memory café gatherings. Libraries are safe, welcoming places that offer their spaces for meetups of various groups. They serve people of all ages from infants, toddlers, young children, teenagers and adults. Older adults who are used to visiting the library regularly suddenly find they are unable to do so when their cognitive functioning starts diminishing. A targeted program that offers activities that this niche population can enjoy would draw them back to the library. Caregivers would welcome an opportunity to take their loved ones to the library as it is a public gathering space. Attendees can keep any diagnosis or health information private if they choose. There is no stigma attached to a visit to the library. By creating a safe and welcoming environment, visitors are assured that other attendees in the café will understand the challenges, behaviors, and limits of dementia and caregiving.

Memory Cafés at the Shrewsbury Public Library

To help illustrate with a practical example, the Shrewsbury Public Library in Shrewsbury, MA, started the first Memory Café in a public library in Massachusetts. The Library Director and Assistant Director were part of a Community Outreach Partnership with the local Council on Aging, local police and fire personnel, Elder Services, activity coordinators of private nursing homes, physicians from local private clinics, and members of the faith community. This group collectively discussed issues that affected the senior population in the community and brainstormed ideas to address these issues. The idea to apply for a grant to seek support and funding to start a Memory Café at the library came from this partnership initiative. Librarians felt that

this service would supplement the outreach services already in place where materials were delivered to residents in assisted living centers and nursing homes.

Librarians learned that socialization opportunities for the elderly, and especially individuals with dementia and their caregivers, can positively impact their overall mental health and well-being. Background research revealed that the Memory Café model would benefit both people with dementia and their caregivers as this would provide some respite and networking opportunities for caregivers. In addition, the opportunity to participate in activities and to be in a communal setting helps people with dementia to relax and enjoy themselves.

Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grants sponsored by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) are disbursed by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). The MBLC offers an "innovative" category among LSTA grant options for libraries. In 2016 the Shrewsbury Public Library applied for a grant for the Memory Café under this category. The project included staff training, enhanced collections to be used during the café meetings and for loan to patrons, and suitable programing that the group could benefit from. The Library Director and Assistant Director visited area Memory Cafés in other settings to gain first-hand knowledge of how they are run. The Library also established great relationships with local elder care facilities. Activities coordinators from a couple of the facilities lead appropriate and engaging activities like Bingo about twice a year at the library's Memory Café. Residents from these facilities sometimes attend the meetings.

All library staff participated in training sessions on providing services and having interactions with persons with dementia and their care partners. This training was provided by professionals who worked at a memory care unit in a local nursing home. This training gave front-line library staff the confidence to interact briefly with visitors to the Memory Café for the purpose of directing and guiding participants to the meeting rooms. While planning programs and activities, the librarians reached out as well to some activity coordinators in nursing homes for their expertise and resources. These community partnerships are vital to libraries as more people learn about the resources available at libraries.

Program planners invited a range of speakers and organized activities including musicians, crafters, storytellers, and therapy dog handlers to perform and entertain visitors to the Cafés. By talking to the caregivers, librarians learned that visitors enjoyed the camaraderie, new friendships, refreshments, and entertainment. The chief benefits mentioned by caregivers were that their loved ones looked forward to the visits to the Memory Café and enjoyed the activities. As a result, attendees to the Memory Cafés reported being cheerful and happy when they left the library.

Considerations for library management

In the following section, a number of issues pertinent to library management are discussed related to developing Memory Café programs. Issues spanning from identifying a need, building community partnerships, providing staff training, and planning a program budget are described. Considerations for hosting the events and promotional tips are also provided.

Identify need

It is important to perform a community assessment as part of determining the need or demand for a new library program. At the national level, the Alzheimer's Association (2019a) projects that there will be a 40% increase of people age 65 and older with Alzheimer's disease by 2025. Libraries should consider how this increasing demographic affects the library and the communities they serve. New programs and innovative services may be warranted to reach this growing population with Alzheimer's and related dementias.

At the state and local level, there are a number of resources to consult to gain more information. The Alzheimer's Association website (2019a) provides a wealth of statistics and information for each state. Libraries can access annual reports from the organization to better understand the effect Alzheimer's is having in each state. When attempting to identify the need in a particular community, libraries can talk to care facilities to gain a better understanding of the needs of this audience. In addition, census data, local Alzheimer's chapters, and Area Agencies on Aging could be other useful resources for demographic and related information.

Build community networks

Community partners, including aging specialists, local elder care facilities, and dementia research organizations, can provide valuable guidance when starting to develop Memory Café programs. Libraries can engage with these groups to solicit their expertise and knowledge. For example, someone with experience running and facilitating activity programs in various types of nursing facilities could be invited to review plans and provide suggestions to libraries for age-appropriate activity ideas. These conversations will help to gain input for Memory Cafés while also building support for targeted programs for people with memory loss. Libraries might find it helpful to inventory community assets as they start doing more work in this area such as collecting information about experts in the field, free memory screening programs, care facilities, and caregiver support groups.

Another important partner would be the local Council on Aging. There could also be statewide networking groups of Memory Cafés that one could reach out to. For instance, the Jewish Family and Children's Service in Massachusetts has a strong networking group with invaluable resources. This "Percolator Memory Café Network" has an email list, a collection of online resources, and webinars (2019).

New community partners and organizations could also be identified by thinking about the additional skills, expertise, and resources they could bring to the Memory Café programs. For instance, advocacy groups or local healthcare systems might maintain educational materials related to care planning, exercise, and healthy eating for older adults. Libraries could establish an advisory council for the Memory Cafés with older adults and care providers as a more formal way to solicit input and feedback.

Another recommendation for connecting with libraries doing similar work is to contact state library associations. Often they are aware of libraries across a state that might be working with individuals with memory loss, mild cognitive impairment, early Alzheimer's, or other dementias. This approach could further facilitate the sharing of ideas and learning among colleagues.

Provide training for library staff

Training can contribute to having a library staff prepared to interact with individuals experiencing memory loss. An introduction to the Memory Cafés concept can begin with emphasizing the linkages between dementia-friendly communities and the library's mission of striving to be an inviting and inclusive environment. Core values that are shared among organizations creating dementia-friendly communities include diversity, respect, and the opportunity for all members of a community to participate in meaningful activities. In addition to library staff, volunteers and student workers should be included in any training opportunities.

Training should aim to educate and build an understanding of memory loss, Alzheimer's disease, and related dementias. Topics can include an overview of the types of dementias and the difference between dementia and Alzheimer's. Training may be available from area organizations or health care providers. For example, local chapters of the Alzheimer's Association may be able to provide training on effective communication techniques when working with people with dementia. This type of training can help to build staff comfort levels to respond appropriately and in a supportive manner. It can also inform staff about non-verbal communication, such as eye contact and body language, which can further convey kindness and support.

In addition, local universities may have faculty conducting dementia-related research. Libraries can check with various disciplines, including but not limited to gerontology, social work, or nursing, to identify faculty that would be willing to speak with library staff. Overall, library workforce training can empower staff, build capacity, decrease stigma and stereotypes of adults with dementia, and create enthusiasm for Memory Café programs.

Prepare budget plan

When planning to host Memory Cafés, there are a number of budget items and costs to consider. Speakers or entertainment fees, marketing costs to advertise programs, and event space should be factored into the budget. If the library does not have a facility to host the Memory Cafés, then room rental fees might apply. Likewise, event planners should be mindful of parking and accessibility issues. If needed, pre-paid vouchers for attendees to have accessible parking and ramps closer to the event location may be additional expenses to figure into the budget.

To help library management with the planning process, examples of costs for a coordinator and speakers for Memory Cafés are provided. If the library hires a coordinator, this could be a monthly or quarterly stipend. The hourly rate will depend on the frequency of the Memory Café programs (i.e., monthly or bimonthly) and the role of the coordinator including time for overall planning, set-up, and the actual program. The Shrewsbury Public Library allocated $450 per quarter for the coordinator, and entertainment fees for performers ranged from $100.00 to $200.00 for a one-hour program. Information on the costs for performers in a particular community, as well as average hourly rates for coordinators, might be obtained by networking with other organizations that have hosted Memory Cafés or similar events.

New books, DVDs, and memory kits can be purchased using municipal funds as these will be part of the library's loanable collection. The Alzheimer's Association has

compiled a number of resource lists that libraries can use to identify materials to add to their collections (2019b). Books can also be purchased through regular library vendors. Additional materials for memory kits can be acquired from Amazon or other online marketplaces.

Refreshments for attendees at the Memory Cafés are another expense. In the case of the Shrewsbury Public Library, refreshments were paid for and provided by the Friends of the Library. Sometimes, libraries can also seek sponsorships from private nursing homes, assisted living centers and other facilities for charitable donations for refreshments. Local businesses might also be willing to make donations or cover the cost of refreshments.

With regards to marketing and printing expenses, costs can range from free options to fee-based outlets. Each library can determine the most suitable approach for advertising the Memory Cafés to their communities. Local newspapers may list for free such events along with other library programs. However, purchasing an ad would cost money. Social media posts can be free, or the library can choose to boost posts by paying a fee to increase the visibility of the announcements. Print flyers could be distributed to area elder care facilities, senior centers, and other relevant organizations to promote awareness of the Memory Cafés.

Distribute promotional materials

As noted, libraries can consider advertising venues and any related expenses for publicity. Possible outlets for promoting the Memory Cafés include library newsletters, local newspapers, press releases, local radio, or public television channels. Libraries could also distribute bookmarks or calendars with dates of upcoming events. In addition, social media announcements and print flyers at select locations to reach target audiences may be useful. Community contacts could help distribute flyers or brochures to senior centers, assisted care facilities, grocery stores, and churches. Overall, library management can consider these venues and promotion tips as part of their marketing plan when advertising the Memory Cafés.

Consider event location and logistics

Regarding event and logistical considerations, the location of the event is important. Parking, walkways, ramps, building entrances, and bathrooms should be accessible for wheelchairs and other mobility issues. As a safety precaution, libraries can specify that a family member or caregiver should attend the Memory Cafés to lessen the risk of someone leaving the event unnoticed. In addition, the library can include a disclaimer on event registration forms stating that the library is not liable for any injuries or accidents. Depending on the demand for the events and availability of meeting space, Memory Cafés can be a monthly event or biweekly (two times per month). If libraries need to plan in advance for adequate seating or to reserve room space, attendees could be asked to register to ensure that enough seating, refreshments, and volunteers are on hand for the event. Attendees may register for programs online, in-person, by telephone, or mail.

Evaluate programs

Libraries often track program attendance to chart if there are any changes over time. Additionally, libraries can collect voluntary information from attendees, such as care partners attending Memory Cafés, as a way to follow up with caregivers and invite them to future events. A questionnaire at the end of the programs may also yield useful information to help libraries identify current and future needs. For example, survey questions could ask caregivers about additional resources or topics that are desired for future programing.

Another area to assess would be the perspectives and experiences of library staff. For instance, a survey or interviews with staff could elucidate if more training is needed and what was most rewarding or challenging about the Memory Café experience. Staff members could further share thoughts and observations with planners to improve future programs.

The Public Library Association (PLA) has a free "Project Outcome" toolkit designed to help libraries with the evaluation process (2019). These performance measurements offer a way for libraries to gather information about their efforts and to share the impact of their services and programs. The toolkit provides standardized patron surveys which can be used to collect data. Libraries can then use their data to create custom reports to share with stakeholders as a way to demonstrate their effectiveness and gather ideas for future actions.

Explore funding opportunities

The Shrewsbury Public Library in Shrewsbury, MA, received an LSTA grant to cover some of the startup costs of developing new Memory Cafés. Such short-term funding may be available elsewhere, and libraries can consult with their state library about funding opportunities. The Public Library Association (PLA), American Library Association (ALA), the Foundation Center online database, or local community organizations in each state may be good starting points to explore for funding opportunities.

While funds are often helpful to defray some of the startup costs, a long-term strategy is needed to sustain Memory Cafés and related programing for individuals with memory loss. Libraries can provide in-kind contributions if appropriate, such as donating librarian or staff time on the Memory Cafés project and public meeting space for the event. Some libraries have incorporated ongoing costs into their regular budget as part of their overall organizational mission to provide dementia-friendly programing for their communities. The model of applying for initial funding to offer new programs for this target audience is one example of how libraries have supported the startup costs of Memory Cafés; however, both short-term and long-range planning will need to be considered to acquire permanent funding.

Additional resources

The Interest Group for Alzheimer's & Related Dementias (IGARD) is part of the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies within the American Library Association. The IGARD interest group serves a valuable network to share ideas and experiences with other libraries interested in expanding outreach to this target

audience. In addition, the group has produced a freely-available guide for dementia-friendly library services (IGARD, n.d.). As already mentioned, the "Percolator Memory Café Network" has a nice collection of online resources and webinars that libraries could find beneficial (Jewish Family and Children's Service, 2019). Other related resources that may be helpful include the handbook entitled "Keys to Engaging Older Adults @ your library" (ALA, 2010) and the "International Federation of Library Services (IFLA) Guidelines for Library Services to Persons with Dementia" (Mortensen & Nielsen, 2007).

Conclusion

In summary, Memory Cafés are designed to be safe, engaging, and welcoming gathering spaces. These programs respond to the growing need to create dementia-friendly library environments and present an opportunity to reach this often underserved and isolated population. The aim of this article was to highlight management considerations for creating Memory Cafés. Using an example from the Shrewsbury Public Library in Shrewsbury, MA, issues such as budgeting, planning, library staff training, and marketing were discussed. Overall, this article provides practical guidance to help build more inclusive library spaces for individuals experiencing memory loss, families, and their caregivers.

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