

EVALUATING A TECHNOLOGY-ASSISTED LEARNING CENTER - CASE STUDY

Directions to Participants

Read and study the case study individually. As a group, agree on the answers to the questions at the end. When all of the groups have finished their discussion, the case study and answers from all of the groups will be reviewed in a group discussion.

Background

ReproTrain is a non-profit training company specializing in strengthening reproductive health learning systems in developing countries. Under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development, ReproTrain has been working with the Universidad de San Luis, a collection of health sciences schools in Peru, to strengthen its reproductive health (RH) curriculum.

The Universidad consists of 250 faculty members and 11,000 students. The faculty is hindered in incorporating up-to-date RH information in course materials by lack of access to publications. The Health Sciences library has been the victim of extensive theft and the shelves are mostly empty. Few faculty members have access to computers and, though Internet connectivity is available in the country, there is no Internet connection at the Universidad. The situation is so severe that the medical school has lost its accreditation.

While ReproTrain has provided learning materials to the faculty, they realize that, more importantly, they need to empower the faculty to perform research and update their knowledge. For this reason, ReproTrain has decided to fund establishment of a technology-assisted learning center (TALC) for one year. By the end of the first year, the Universidad is expected to have instituted a cost sustainability plan to take over payment of operating costs. The Universidad has told ReproTrain that they intend to open up the TALC for use by students so that they can charge them an hourly usage rate to recovery costs.

Product Description

The TALC will be set up in a room adjacent to the Health Sciences library and will be accessible by faculty of all the schools at the Universidad. The TALC will be equipped with eight, networked computer workstations with CD-ROM drives; a server (including proxy server software); a printer; and an Internet connection through a private Internet Service Provider. The TALC will also include a collection of health CD-ROMs. ReproTrain will hire a local computer trainer to train faculty in use of the computers, the Internet, the CD-ROMs, and the company's RH website.

Intended Audience

The intended audience is the faculty and staff of the Health Sciences schools (e.g., medical, nursing, public health) and regional RH trainers affiliated with ReproTrain.

Distribution Mechanism

ReproTrain will purchase the computers and CD-ROMs in the United States and have them shipped to Peru. They will work with a local computer consultant to purchase peripherals and supplies in-country. ReproTrain will also contract with a local training consultant to provide computer training to the faculty and staff.

Available Data

Available data will include user sign-in logs; proxy server access logs; and ReproTrain's web access logs.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you want to evaluate use of the TALC? What are the specific objectives of this evaluation?
2. How will you use the information you have collected about use of the TALC?
3. What methodologies will you use to collect evaluation information?
4. What are the challenges in evaluating use of the TALC ?
5. Particularly, what strategies will you use to measure the impact of the TALC at the results level?