# Opportunities and Efficiencies in Building a New Service Desk Model

## Health Sciences and Human Services Library | University of Maryland, Baltimore

*In Summer 2015, HS/HSL Merged the Reference and Circulation Desks*

## Two Separate Desks, 2014

Given the decline in reference, shelving and circulation activities, the library's model of separate circulation and reference desks with distinct staffs and expertise no longer made sense.


*Desks are about 60' apart*

## Org Chart

*January 2014*

**Head of Information Services**
*13 Total FTE*

**Circulation Desk Staff**
*7 FTE*

Evening Supervisor
Weekend Supervisor
Reserves Coordinator
(2) Library Technicians
(2) Library Assistants- Shelving/Circ Desk

**Open 104 hours per week**

**Reference Desk Staff**
*5 FTE*

Reference Services Manager
Library Associate
3 Library Technicians

**Open 72 hours per week**

## Timeline

*January 2014*
Leadership Team agrees to create a single service point and to refresh service vision

*June 2014*
Focused discussion with each staff member within the Information Services Department (13 people)

*October 2014*
Department-wide meeting to review discussion points

*November 2014*
HS/HSL Intern performed lit search and environmental scan

*December 2014*
Rewrote position descriptions to include core competencies – University System of MD

*February 2015 – July 2015*
Teams of 3-4 met to design new service desk

## Single Information Services Desk, 2015

**Information Services Desk**


*Benefits to Users:*
Eliminates handoffs, improving user experience
Renovations to Desk enhance approachability
Frees up high traffic space for innovation
New staffing model allowed for extended library hours

*Benefits to Services Team:*
One solid team pushes new services forward
Improved communication
A flexible, cross-trained staff
Opportunity to discuss values, expectations

*Established Staff Core Competencies:*
Advanced skills in verbal communication, written communication, database searching, problem solving, technology

## Org Chart

*August 2015*

**Head of Information Services**
*10.5 Total FTE*

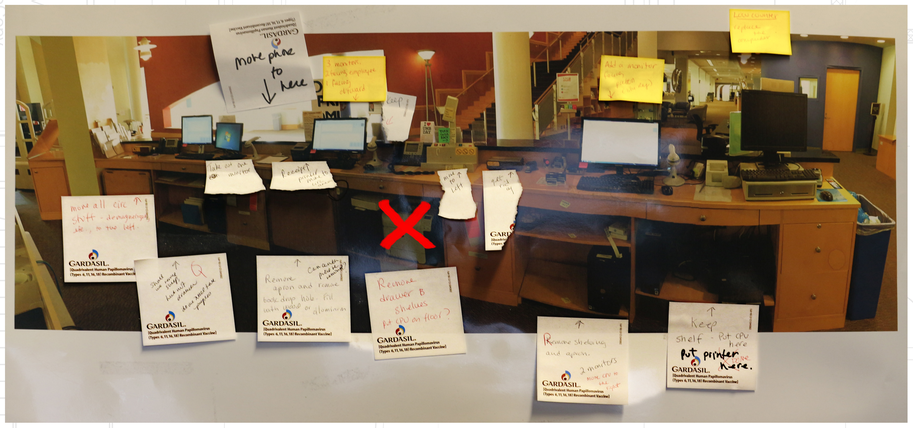
**Information Services Desk Staff**

Reference Services Manager
Evening Supervisor
Weekend Supervisor
Reserves Coordinator
Library Associate
3 Library Specialists
1 Library Technician
.5 FTE Library Assistant (evening)

**Open 116 hours per week**


The area formerly used by Reference was redesigned as an Innovation Space. Rolled out October 2015.

## Process of Change




Teams of 3-4 met to design single service point:

Renovations to the desk
Reorganize/reconfigure space
Furniture
Refresh procedures
Technology
Reaffirm service values

## Focused Discussion

We will be creating a single service point within the library. I am interested in hearing your thoughts about how we would merge the activities of the circulation and reference desks.

1. What activities do you think we should offer at the desk?
   What activities should we move away from?
2. What is most important about creating a shared desk?
   What should we make sure we do?
3. What are your reservations about having a shared desk?
4. Where do you see as the best location for a single desk? Describe its layout.
5. This is an opportunity for change.
   What are your ideas for change?

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Mosaic | Mosaïque
May 13–15, 2015 • Toronto
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Medical Library Association