

Chapter 7.2 How to identify and access reports of existing research

Authors: Brice A, De Brun C.

Further reading

1. Akobeng AK. Principles of evidence-based medicine. Archives of Disease in Childhood. 2005; 90(8):837-40. adc.bmj.com/content/90/8/837.full.pdf+html (accessed 22 February 2022).

Summary of this document: Healthcare workers need to base their decisions on high-quality evidence. Evidence-based medicine (EBM) integrates evidence with clinical knowledge and patient preferences.

In this short article, the author outlines the principles of EBM and its five-step model. It argues that EBM allows clinicians to better scrutinize interventions and promote critical evaluations of interventions. It then describes the five steps of EBM: (1) identifying answerable clinical questions, (2) finding evidence, (3) appraising evidence, (4) applying evidence, and (5) evaluating performance. This article includes thorough guidance on preparing and executing an evidence search as part of its description of step 2. The author concludes that though these five steps form the basis of EBM, critically evaluating other forms of existing research also has value for EBM practitioners.

2. Borlum Kristensen F, Sigmund H. Metodehandbog for medinsk teknologivurdering. 2007. Denmark: Sundhedsstyrelsen. www.sst.dk/~media/1319CCE8BEC34952AD7746390DD8BDD5.ashx (accessed 22 February 2022).

Borum Kristensen F, Sigmund H. Method guide for medical technology assessment. 2007. Denmark: Sundhedsstyrelsen. www.sst.dk/~media/1319CCE8BEC34952AD7746390DD8BDD5.ashx (accessed 22 February 2022).

Summary of this document: This guide describes the methods for undertaking medical technology assessments. It is divided into 11 chapters, and includes all the stages from planning, ethics, and literature searching. The chapter on critical appraisal describes the different types of study design and statistics to help evaluate the quality of the literature. There is also a chapter dedicated to economic analyses. Chapter 10 describes the methods for synthesizing the evidence and applying it to practice, while the final chapter talks about the peer review process. At the end of each chapter, there are useful English and foreign language references for further reading on the topic. Throughout the text, there are useful models illustrating the theory.

3. De Brún C, Pearce-Smith N. Searching skills toolkit: Finding the evidence. Oxford: BMJ Books. 2014.

Summary of this document: The practice of EBM relies on identifying relevant, high-quality evidence. Tools exist to assist researchers in conducting effective searches.

In this textbook, the authors provide a guide to locating clinical evidence. It begins with an overview of conducting evidence searches, including evidence sources. It then provides guidance on preparing

a search strategy and how to analyze search results. The book concludes with chapters on reference management, “pearl searching”, using patient information, and critical appraisal. This textbook contains flowcharts and diagrams for reader use, in addition to clinical scenario case studies.

4. De Brún C. Finding the evidence for global and disaster health. Public Health England: UK. 2018. <https://www.ifla.org/publications/node/81736?og=25692> (accessed 22 February 2022).

Summary of this document: Humanitarian workers often need to obtain locally relevant evidence in a timely fashion. There exist evidence sources that specifically aim to address the evidence needs of Health EDRM practitioners.

In this short guide, Public Health England offers an annotated bibliography of useful collections of Health EDRM-related literature. These include publication, systematic review, guideline, and grey literature databases. It also highlights online networks and forums, including social media groups, for Health EDRM. Finally, the document includes a tip sheet on developing effective database search strategies. This resource is also available in Spanish.

5. De Brún C, Ansuategi E, Ubeda M. Encontrar la evidencia para la salud global y desastres sanitarios. 2018. Public Health England: UK
<https://www.ifla.org/files/assets/e4gdh/documents/leafletesfewglobaldisasterhealth20200602v2.00.pdf> (accessed 22 February 2022).

Summary of this document: Humanitarian workers need locally relevant evidence in a timely fashion. In this Spanish-language guide, Public Health England offers an annotated bibliography of useful collections of Health EDRM-related literature. These include publication, systematic review, guideline, and grey literature databases. It also highlights online networks and forums, including social media groups, for Health EDRM. Finally, the document includes a tip sheet on developing effective database search strategies. This resource is also available in English.

6. De Brún C. Multilanguage tools for evidence based practice. 2020. Public Health England: UK
<https://www.ifla.org/publications/node/93058?og=25692> (accessed 22 February 2022).

Summary of this document: Multilanguage evidence-based tools aim to provide locally relevant and timely evidence accessible to a broader audience.

In this guide, Public Health England offers an annotated bibliography of useful multilanguage Health evidence-based resources. It begins with an overview of commonly used translation tools and dictionaries. It describes Health Emergency and Disaster Risk Management literature sources that are available in non-English languages. The guide also highlights translation organizations and support resources for humanitarian interpreters. Finally, the document includes a tip sheet on developing database search strategies.

7. Higgins JPT, Thomas J, Chandler J, Cumpston M, Li T, Page MJ, Welch VA (editors). Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions version 6.1 (updated September 2020). Cochrane, 2020. Available from www.training.cochrane.org/handbook (accessed 22 February 2022).

Summary of this document: Cochrane offers official guidance for authors to consult when preparing their systematic reviews.

In this online handbook, Cochrane details its standardized guidance for systematic review authors. The handbook is divided into four parts: (1) about Cochrane reviews, (2) core methods, (3) specific perspectives in reviews, and (4) other topics. Each chapter provides instruction on a specific methodological topic (e.g., effect measures) or review approach (e.g., analyzing economic evidence). This resource also includes Cochrane's Methodological Expectations of Cochrane Intervention Reviews, a set of research, reporting tools, and expectations for authors to abide by.

8. Kugley S, Wade A, Thomas J, Mahood Q, Jørgensen AMK, Hammerstrøm K, Sathe N. Searching for studies: a guide to information retrieval for Campbell systematic reviews. Oslo: The Campbell Collaboration. 2017. onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.4073/cm.2016.1 (accessed 22 February 2022).

Summary of this document: This guidance can provide instruction on the Campbell Collaboration's information retrieval methods.

In this guidance document, the authors outline the information retrieval process and relevant techniques. It includes chapters on information retrieval principles, literature sources, executing searches, and managing retrieval. It also outlines the use of text mining and documentation. The authors emphasize the importance of "broad" searches which can be subsequently focused with search filters, as well as the use of bibliographic software and text mining tools for reference management and search filtering. The guidance concludes that all searches should be conducted in a manner that is properly documented and reproducible.

9. Mouillet E. Les essentiels de la recherche bibliographique en santé: chercher-organiser-publier. 2016. Doin: France.

Mouillet E. The essentials of health bibliographic research: Search, organise, publish. All the tools required for best searching, organising, and publishing of medical data. 2016. Doin: France.

Summary of this document: This book covers the essentials of health research methodology, providing the theory to and examples of searching, managing results, and how to publish research. The first section looks at how to search bibliographic databases, in particular PubMed. The second section describes the methods for managing references for systematic reviews, using tools such as EndNote and Zotero. The last section is about using those references to produce a thesis or a research paper, and formatting the references in a particular style, such as Vancouver, for the bibliography. Throughout the book, there are practical examples, and exercises for self-evaluation.

10. Sundhedsstyrelsen. Model metodehandbogen: Model for udarbejdelse af nationale kliniske retningslinjer. Denmark: Sundhedsstyrelsen. 2018. https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.magicapp.org/guideline/91d127df-bd9c-48ed-a368-3cbc07829999/files/Metodeha%CC%8Andbogen_2018_r125690.pdf (accessed 22 February 2022).

Sundhedsstyrelsen. Method handbook: Model for the preparation of national clinical guidelines. Denmark: Sundhedsstyrelsen. 2018.
https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.magicapp.org/guideline/91d127df-bd9c-48ed-a368-3cbc07829999/files/Metodeha%CC%8Andbogen_2018_r125690.pdf (accessed 22 February 2022).

Summary of this document: This practical handbook describes the methodology for producing national clinical guidelines. It is divided into three phases. The first phase describes what is needed to prepare for the process, including setting up steering groups to oversee the project. The second phase focuses on finding the evidence, describing the different stages, including formulating a focused question, choosing the right study design, searching bibliographic databases, managing the results, extracting the data, and using GRADE to assess the quality of evidence, in order to make recommendations. The final phase is about the publication process which includes a peer review process. Throughout the handbook there are useful links to further information and examples in practice.