Search Techniques for Systematic Reviews and other Evidence Syntheses *(2 Days)*

Duration	2 days
Skill level	Introductory
Target Audience	Healthcare professionals, academics, researchers, decision makers, librarians, information specialists, and Evidence Synthesis Ireland fellows and teaching faculty who would like to learn more about the process of searching for studies for systematic reviews and other evidence syntheses.
Prerequisites	A basic knowledge of searching databases such as MEDLINE/ PubMed; An interest in improving their own search skills and/or understanding better how to work more effectively with their librarian/information specialist to identify studies for evidence syntheses. Participants are requested to bring their laptop to the workshop for the practical exercises.
Venue	Room CA005, JE Cairns Building, NUI Galway
Date	June 6th and 7th 2019

Background

Systematic reviews attempt to collate all the relevant evidence that fits pre-specified eligibility criteria. One of the key features of a systematic review is a systematic search that attempts to identify all studies that would meet these criteria. The reliability of a systematic review or other evidence synthesis is dependent upon the reliability of the search process and the search results.

Aim

This workshop provides an opportunity for those who undertake their own searches for evidence syntheses, and those how work with librarians/information specialists on the study identification, to learn more about the process of searching for studies for evidence syntheses. It addresses many of the key aspects of searching for evidence syntheses, in particular how this differs from searching for routine clinical practice/everyday questions.

Learning outcomes

In this course, participants will be enabled to:

- Understand better the role of the librarian / information specialist in identifying studies for evidence syntheses
- Distinguish systematic review from meta-analysis
- Consider alternative frameworks to PICO (for questions beyond clinical effectiveness)
- Use basic search term identification (text mining) software to assist in identifying possible search terms
- Understand the importance of study design filters and the need to critique them
- Explore the various sources of information in The Cochrane Library
- Understand the importance of clinical trials registers and gain some insights into searching them
- Critique their search strategies using an evidence-based peer review checklist (PRESS)
- Understand the importance of documenting and reporting the search process

Teaching strategies

The workshop will consist of a mixture of short presentations, small group and plenary discussions, together with practical exercises. The number of participants for the course is limited to 25.

Facilitators

Ms Carol Lefebvre

Carol is an independent information consultant and was previously the Senior Information Specialist at the UK Cochrane Centre in Oxford from 1992 to 2012. She is a founding member of Cochrane and a founding Co-Convenor of the Cochrane Information Retrieval Methods Group. She serves on the Cochrane Methods Executive and is lead author on the searching for and selecting studies chapter of The Cochrane Handbook, which is currently undergoing a major revision.
She was awarded a M.Sc. in Library and Information Science from the University of Loughborough (UK) in 1985 and an Honorary Fellowship of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) in 2007.
She now focusses on teaching and consultancy in information retrieval for evidence synthesis, such as systematic reviews, health technology assessment and guideline development.

Course content/timetable

PROGRAMME – DAY 1	
0900	Registration
0930	Welcome, introductions, housekeeping
0945	The librarian's role in systematic reviews and other evidence syntheses
1030	COFFEE
1100	Systematic reviews, meta-analyses and forest plots
1130	Defining the question – beyond PICO
1200	Text mining – for term selection and ranking search output (incl. exercise)
1300	LUNCH
1400	Methodological search filters (incl. exercise)
1500	TEA
1530	AND, OR and NOT – beyond the basics
1630	Wrap up, discussion
1700	Close

PROGRAMME – DAY 2	
0900	The Cochrane Library (incl. exercise)
1000	Searching trials registers (incl. exercise)
1100	COFFEE
1130	Peer review of search strategies (incl. exercise)
1230	LUNCH
1330	Documenting and reporting the search process (incl. exercise)
1430	TEA
1500	Wrap up, discussion, evaluation
1530	Close