



# EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS I R E L A N D

## Search Techniques for Systematic Reviews, HTAs and Guidelines (Online – 2 days)

### 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 who 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.

### Teaching strategies

The workshop will consist of a mixture of short presentations, small group and plenary discussions, together with practical exercises.

### Date:

**1st & 2nd June 2021**

### Time:

**10.00am - 3.00pm**

### Facilitator:

**Ms Carol Lefebvre**

Independent Information  
Consultant

### Skill level:

**Introductory**

### 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.**

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# EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS IRELAND

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### 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

### 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.

### Places:

**25 places available for individuals who are resident on the island of Ireland**

### Fee:

**€200 (General)  
€120 (Student)**

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### Course content/timetable

PROGRAMME – DAY 1	
10.00	Welcome, introductions, housekeeping
10.15	The librarian's role in systematic reviews and other evidence syntheses
10.45	Systematic reviews, meta-analyses and forest plots
11.15	Defining the question – beyond PICO
12.00	Text mining for term selection and ranking search output (incl. exercise)
12.45	Lunch
13.15	Methodological search filters (incl. exercise)
14.00	Retractions, errata and comments (incl. exercise)
14.45	Wrap up of day 1 and discussion
15.00	Close
PROGRAMME – DAY 2	
10.00	Welcome, introductions, housekeeping
10.15	Review of day 1 – further questions and comments
10.45	Cochrane and The Cochrane Library
11.30	Searching trials registers (incl. exercise)
12.30	Lunch
13.00	Peer review of search strategies (incl. exercise)
14.00	Documenting and reporting the search process
14.30	Wrap up, discussion and evaluation
15.00	Close

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### 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.

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