EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS IRELAND

Cochrane Ireland

Foundations of Evidence Synthesis (Postgrads only)

Background
An understanding of evidence synthesis is important for researchers, clinicians and the public.

Aim
To introduce evidence synthesis methods and explain why they matter.

Workshop Format
A mixture of short presentations and discussion.

Learning outcomes
By the end of the workshop, participants will have an introductory understanding of the different types and modes of evidence synthesis; formulating a research question; developing and registering a protocol; developing and running a comprehensive search strategy; screening citations; data extraction and synthesis; risk of bias assessment; certainty of evidence; report writing; and rapid reviews.

Target Audience
Post grads (PhD, MSc).

Facilitators:
Dr Linda Biesty
Senior Lecturer, School of Nursing, Midwifery & Evidence Science, University of Galway.

Dr KM Saif-Ur-Rahman
Director, Ireland GRADE Network; Evidence Synthesis Methods Lead, Evidence Synthesis Ireland and Cochrane Ireland, University of Galway.

Dr Paula Byrne
Postdoctoral Researcher, Evidence Synthesis Ireland and Cochrane Ireland, University of Galway.

Date
30 November 2026

Time
09:30 - 16:00

Duration
Full Day

Venue
University of Galway

Skill level
Introductory

Capacity
70 Attendees

Prerequisites
A basic understanding of research study designs is preferable but not required.

Registration fee
€20 (to register, go to evidencesynthesisireland.ie/training/)

HRB An Bord Taighde Sláinte Health Research Board

HSC Public Health Agency Research and Development

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Topic	Detail of Topic	Time
Introduction	• Ice-breaking and introductions • Background to evidence synthesis • Why does it matter?	09:30 – 09:45
Types and modes of evidence synthesis	• Evidence synthesis family • Types of evidence synthesis • Modes of evidence synthesis	9:45 – 10:05
Formulation of the research question	• Why does it matter? • Question frameworks • Worked examples of developing PICO & other question frameworks for students • Inclusion and exclusion criteria • Worked example of inclusion and exclusion;	10:05 – 10:25
Protocol and registration	• What goes in a protocol • Why it matters? • PROSPERO and other sites for registering/publication	10:25 – 10:45
Break	Coffee break	10:45 – 11:00
Comprehensive search strategy	• Introduction to databases • MeSh terms etc. • Construction of search terms • Running a search example	11:00 – 11:30
Screening	• Screening basics • Introduction to Covidence and Rayyan • PRISMA flow diagrams	11:30 – 11:50
Data extraction	• Data extraction templates • Go through an example	11:50 – 12:10
Data synthesis	• Methods of data synthesis: quantitative (meta-analysis), narrative synthesis (SWiM), etc.	12:10 – 12:40
Lunch	Lunch break	12:40 – 13:40
Risk of bias assessment	• Introduction to critical appraisal and risk of bias assessment • Why it matters? • Description of risk of bias assessment tools that can be used in different contexts	13:40 – 14:10
Certainty of evidence	• Introduction to GRADE (Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development and Evaluation)	14:10 – 14:40
Write up and presentation of results	• What to include • Reporting guidelines (PRISMA-2020; PRIMA-ScR) • Why they matter	14:40 – 15:10
Rapid reviews	• When to conduct a rapid review • What is methodological streamlining in rapid reviews?	15:10 – 15:40
Q & A and resources		15:40 – 16:00

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