Literature Searching Tips and Tricks

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This toolkit was developed in full partnership with the PORTAL Patient Engagement Council (PEC) patient stakeholders. These materials may be used to help engage patients as research partners. The PEC is no longer a funded or active group. If you would like to reach out to one of the PEC members to engage them in a future project, please email Carmit McMullen, PhD, Senior Investigator, Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Research: Carmit.McMullen@kpchr.org.
Why Conduct A Literature Search?

- Learn more about circumstances that impact us
- Context…what we know vs. what we don’t know
- Save time and avoid reinventing the wheel
- Help refine research question
- Safety or risk avoidance (John Hopkins/Alkis Togias/hexamethonium)
- It’s often rewarding
Consider This Before You Begin

Literature searching involves two parts:

1. Discovering that a source exists
2. Determining where you can obtain the source once you’ve found it

- Kaiser Permanente Sunnyside Medical Center Library
  Method: PubMed Loansome Doc Feature
  Contact: Jennifer McBride / 503.571.4165 / 503.310.5787
  jennifer.a.mcbride@kp.org
- Public Library
Consider This Before You Begin

Break down your research question into concepts. These will be the building blocks of your search.

Question

In people with colorectal cancer, congenital heart defects or obesity does patient centered care positively impact patient satisfaction?

Concepts

colorectal cancer, congenital heart defects, obesity, patient centered care and patient satisfaction
Consider This Before You Begin

With some research questions PICO\textsuperscript{1} may help identify concepts for your literature search.

\textbf{P=Population} \\
\textbf{I= Intervention} \\
\textbf{C= Comparison} \\
\textbf{O= Outcome} \\

\textbf{Question} \\
\textit{In people with colorectal cancer, congenital heart defects or obesity does patient centered care positively impact patient satisfaction?}

\textbf{P= CRC, CHD, obesity} \hspace{1cm} \textbf{I= patient-centered care} \\
\textbf{C= non patient-centered care} \hspace{1cm} \textbf{O= patient satisfaction}

General Guidelines on How to Search

- If looking for multiple sources on a topic (search broadly)
- If looking for one source (be specific)
- If the database you are searching uses subject headings, descriptors or other controlled vocabulary try using it. In PubMed, these are called Medical Subject Headings (MeSH)
- AND/OR

Child AND Abuse = Green
Child OR Abuse = Yellow Or Green OR Blue

Use AND to narrow and OR to broaden

You always get more with OR
Organizing What You Find

Tools to help you **collect, organize, cite, and share** your research sources.

**Zotero**

http://www.zotero.org/

**Mendeley**

https://www.mendeley.com/

Placing your selected sources in an Excel spreadsheet or a word document is another option.
Where to Look

You won’t catch a tuna fish in a freshwater pond

*With literature, you have to be “fishing” in the right spot (database)*
Where to Look

HEALTH DATABASES
Health Databases

- PubMed (Journal articles)
  

- PubMed Health (Prevention and treatment plain language summaries)
  

- MedlinePlus (Background)
  
Questions

KP Center for Health Research Library