

Literature Searching

What is a literature search?

“A **literature search** is the act of gathering existing knowledge or data around a topic or research question.”

McMaster University, 2023

What does it involve?

Steps	Think about...
1) Define your topic	The assignment question; clarify the topic
2) Decide on the scope	Is your topic too broad? Do you need to focus on a specific aspect?
3) Draw up a list of keywords	Medical & technical terms; alternative spellings (e.g. English /American); synonyms
4) Set limits to your search	Publication date, i.e. how far back do you need to go? Geographical limits. How many references do you need?
5) Decide which sources to search	Library catalogues, books, journals, databases etc.

Based on University of West London (2023)

PICO – search strategy

Four different potential components of a health question ...

- **Patient or Population** - How would I describe a group of patients/population similar to mine?
- **Intervention** - Which intervention am I considering?
- **Comparison Intervention** - What is the main alternative to compare with the intervention?
- **Outcome** - What can I hope to accomplish?

Patient – who?	Intervention – what?	Comparison – compared with?	Outcome – with what result?

Example

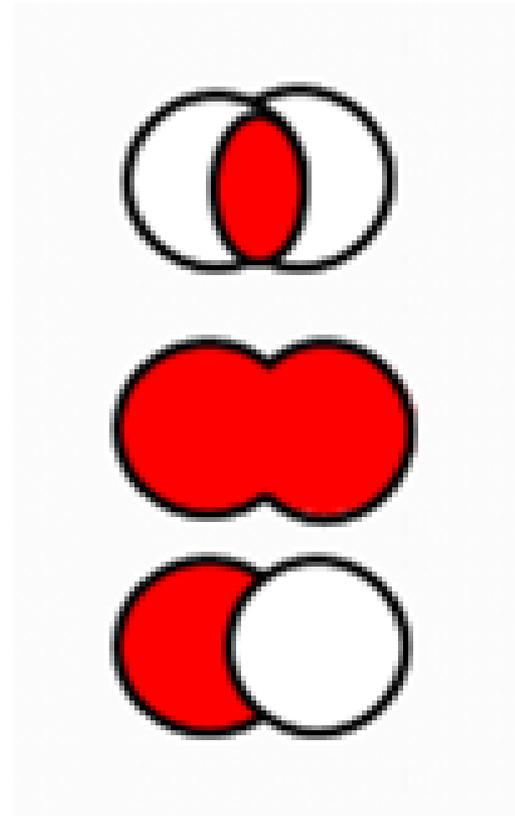
Topic / Assignment question: In teenagers who smoke [Population], are support groups [Intervention] as effective as nicotine replacement therapy [Comparator] for quitting smoking [Outcome]?

Population – who?	Intervention – what?	Comparison – compared with?	Outcome – with what result?
Teenagers who smoke	Support groups	Nicotine replacement therapy	Quitting smoking
teen* OR adolescent OR Adolescent/ OR MH Adolescence	“peer support” OR “support group*” OR “self help group” OR Social Support/ OR MH Support Groups	“nicotine replacement” OR “nicotine patch*” OR Nicorette OR Tobacco Use Cessation Products/ OR MH Nicotine Replacement Therapy	“quit smoking” OR “stop smoking” OR “former smoker*” OR Smoking Cessation/ OR MH Smoking Cessation
AND	AND	AND	

Key concepts are the elements/ideas that will be present in an ideal search result

Combining search terms

- **A AND B** Diabetes **AND** Insulin
AND finds references containing all/both of your terms when you combine different concepts
- **A OR B** Sport **OR** Exercise
OR finds either of your terms when you are combining similar concepts such as synonyms or alternative spellings
- **A NOT B** Allergy **NOT** Gluten
NOT allows you to exclude an unwanted term(s) from your search



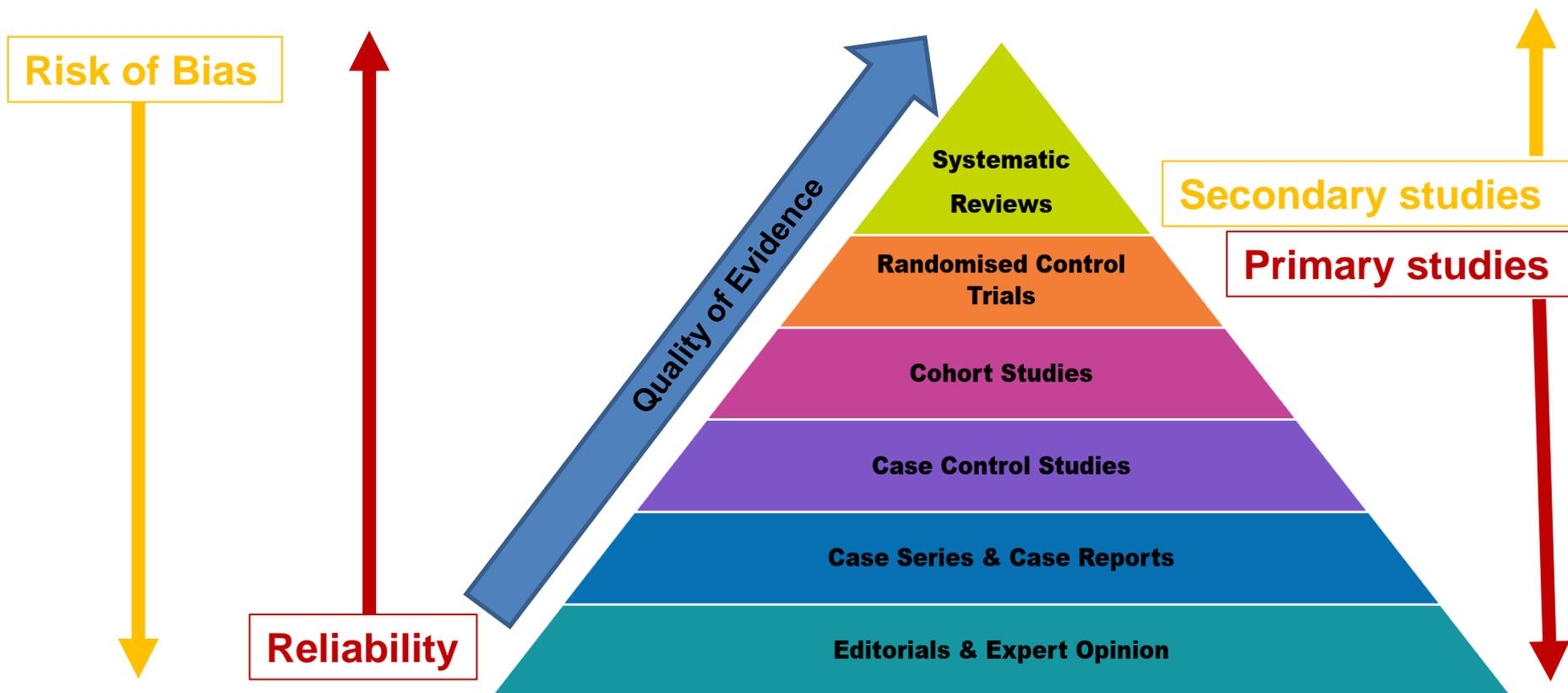
Key types of information and where to find them

Type of information needed	Publication type/resource likely to have this information	Specific library resources that can help you find these
Topic overview	Books Beyond the Basics Patient Information	Online library catalogues UpToDate
Primary research for focused / specific queries	Journal articles	Healthcare databases* e.g. Medline, CINAHL etc. PubMed NHS Knowledge Hub*
Meta analysis of studies / trials	Systematic reviews	Cochrane Library Databases NHS Knowledge Hub
Evidence summaries	Regularly updated (online)	UpToDate BMJ Best Practice* ClinicalKey*
Best practice	Guidelines and care pathways	NICE website TRIP database Royal College websites
Detailed anatomy, slides and animations	Online interactive anatomical resources Videos covering physical examination etc	Anatomy.TV* Bates' Visual Guide to Physical Examination*

* NHS OpenAthens password required

Levels of evidence

The Evidence Pyramid shows evidence ranked according to its quality:



Pros & Cons of Google / Google Scholar

Pros	Cons
Quick access (no password required)	Google isn't searching the entire live web, only the pages that it has indexed
Quick to find relevant results	It shows you the results that it thinks you want to see
	Limited full text content; might not tell you what access you have through your organisation
	No peer review limiter; may not be high quality, academic sources
	Doesn't provide abstracts to export

Based on Bournemouth University (2023) and University of Essex (2023)

NHS Knowledge and Library Hub



Search journal articles, e-books, guidelines and clinical decision tools, **all in one place.**

Go directly to full text, as an immediate download or on request from an NHS library.

Avoid the less-reliable sources you might find in a general web search.

Seamlessly connects NHS staff and learners to a range of **high quality** knowledge and evidence resources in **one place.**

- journals, books and databases
- clinical decision support resources including NICE Guidelines and BMJ Best Practice
- resources purchased nationally and locally
- one-click links to full-text, request a copy or 'Ask-A-Librarian'

Full access is free to all NHS staff and learners using your NHS OpenAthens account

<https://library.nhs.uk/fhft>

NHS Knowledge and Library Hub

Use to search for a topic, a journal article or a book/journal title

<https://library.nhs.uk/fhft>

Remember to login with **OpenAthens** to access all licensed content - nationally and locally purchased resources (otherwise it just defaults to 'Guest' access)

The screenshot shows the NHS Knowledge and Library Hub homepage. At the top, a yellow banner reads "Welcome, Guest. Sign in to your institution for full access to your library's resources." Below this is a blue navigation bar with links for "New Search", "Browse Journals", "Register for NHS OpenAthens", and "library.nhs.uk". On the right of the navigation bar are "Language" and "Help" options. The main content area features the NHS logo and the title "Knowledge and Library Hub". A search bar is prominently displayed with the text "Searching: Health and care evidence, from Health Education England". The search bar includes a "Keyword" dropdown, an input field with the placeholder "Enter any words", and a "Search" button. Below the search bar are links for "Search Options", "Basic Search", "Advanced Search", "PICO Search", and "Search History". The page is divided into four columns of resources: "Clinical decision making" (with links to NICE Guidelines, NICE Evidence, and BMJ Best Practice), "In-depth searching" (with links to AMED, British Nursing Index, CINAHL, Cochrane Library, EMBASE, EMCARE, Medline, HMIC, PsycINFO, Trip Pro Database, and Pubmed), "Other resources" (with links to NHS Learning Hub, Directory of Health Libraries, Patient Experience Library, How to search the literature effectively, Health literacy, and Knowledge Mobilisation Framework), and "NHS OpenAthens" (with links to OpenAthens Registration, OpenAthens Password Reset, and Having Problems with OpenAthens?).

Look out for the Hub's **search box** on its, and at the top of our library's, homepages...

Links to additional resources -

You can also search for it via the Trust intranet's 'Applications search' box

The screenshot shows the 'Applications search' box on a Trust intranet. It has a search bar with the text "hut|". Below the search bar, a result for "NHS Knowledge and Library Hub" is displayed. There are three search tabs at the top: "Search whole site", "Search applications", and "Search all forms".

A collage of interface elements from the NHS Knowledge and Library Hub. It includes the "Frimley Health Library & Knowledge Service" logo, a "Latest news" section with "Green Libraries" and "Every Day" icons, and a search bar with the text "Enter any words" and a "Search" button. At the bottom right, there is a small text box stating: "The NHS Knowledge and Library Hub connects staff and learners to high quality knowledge and evidence resources in one place. View our quick use guide to find out more."

NHS Knowledge and Library Hub

Use filter options on LHS of the page to focus your results

Continue your search by using further resources on the RHS of the page

Click 'Get PDF' to see the full text; if it's not available, click on 'Request this item' and you'll be able to complete and submit our online interlibrary loan form

'Research Starters' / 'Evidence Summaries' appear at the top of your results.

Detailed record

Add results to folder to work with them

NHS Knowledge and Library Hub

If you see a 'Sign In' button, click on that first

Sign In Folder Preferences Ask-A-Librarian Language Help

Once in your folder, you can print, email, save or export the items in it.

Acute Care Assessment: Articles

13 of 3
Page: 1

□ Detect / deselect all Delete Items Copy To Move To

Date Added Page Options

Print
E-mail
Save
Export

□ 1. Validation of a Falls Risk Screening Tool Derived From InterRAI Acute Care Assessment.
By: Peel, Nancie May; Jones, Lee Vanessa; Berg, Katherine; Gray, Leonard Charles. Journal of Patient Safety, Dec2021, Vol. 17 Issue 8, pe1152-e1155. 5p. Publisher: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. Database: Supplemental Index.
Academic Journal
Request this item

□ 2. Comparison of the Responsiveness of the FIM and the interRAI Post Acute Care Assessment Instrument in Rehabilitation of Older Adults
By: Gieny, Christine; Stoebe, Paul; Husted, Janice; Thompson, Mary; Berg, Katherine. In Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Comparison of the Responsiveness of the FIM and the interRAI Post Acute Care Assessment Instrument in Rehabilitation of Older Adults
Subjects: Activities of daily living; Geriatric assessment; Rehabilitation
Academic Journal
Access Item View Complete Issue

□ 3. Reliability of an Online Geriatric Assessment Procedure Using the InterRAI Acute Care Assessment System
By: Martin-Khan, Melinda G.; Edwards, Helen; Woodson, Richard; Counsel, Steven R.; Varghese, Paul; Lim, Wen Kiang; Darzins, Peters; Dakin, Lucy; Khan, Karenaffali; Gray, Leonard C. In Journal of the American Geriatrics Society. Sep 01, 2017 65(9) 2029-2036 Language: English. Database: Journals@OVID
Academic Journal
Get PDF Access Item View Complete Issue

Include when saving:

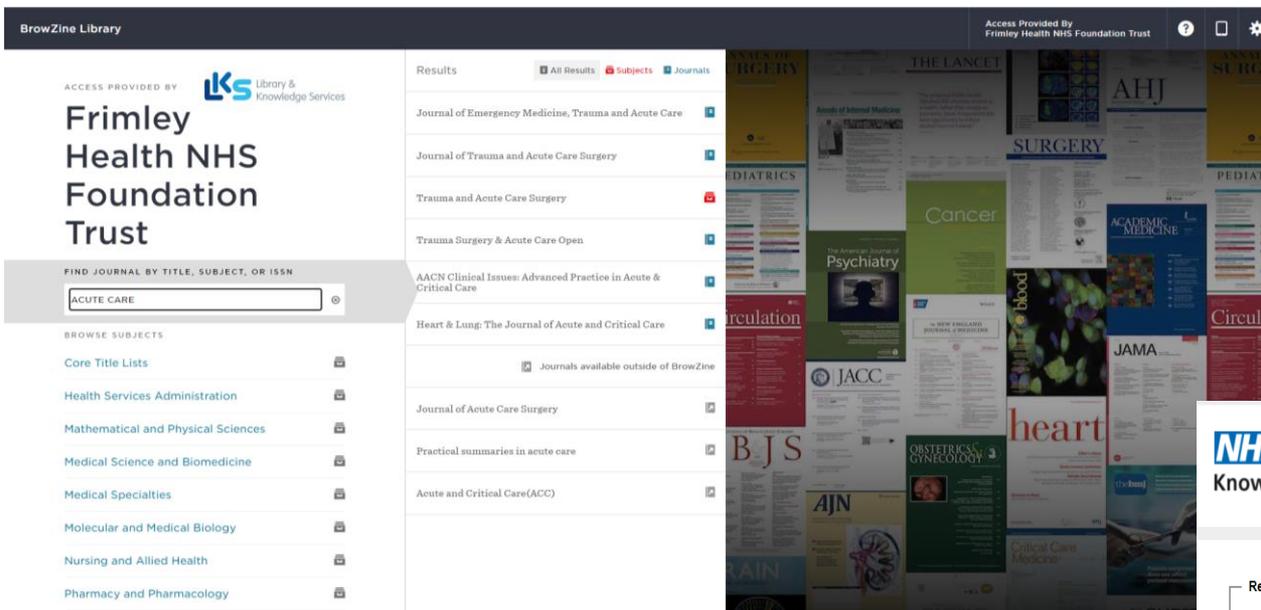
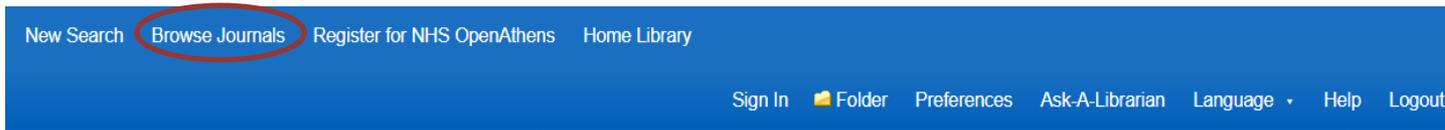
- HTML Full Text (when available)
- HTML link(s) to article(s)
- Standard Field Format

Brief Citation and Abstract

To save the list of articles as a Word file, click *Save*, then choose the *Brief Citation and Abstract* format.
Click *Save* again, then copy the list on screen (Ctrl+A then Ctrl+C) and paste into a blank Word file.

eJournals

- **BrowZine** is a virtual news stand for the library's eJournal collections
- Use it to browse and access thousands of academic journals
- Click on the '**Browse Journals**' link on the Hub toolbar to be taken into the **BrowZine Library**:



NHS Knowledge and Library Hub Request Form

Requester Details

First Name *

Surname *

Email *

Phone

Organisation

Tick here if you would like a copy of this request to be sent to your email address

Item Details

If the journals aren't available in full text for the years that you require, you will be offered the chance to request your item via the online form -



Knowledge and Library Hub

Searching: Health and care evidence, from Health Education England

Keyword [Create Alert](#)

[Search Options](#) [Basic Search](#) [Advanced Search](#) [PICO Search](#) [Search History](#)

Live Demo

Clinical decision making

- [NICE Guidelines](#)
- [NICE Evidence](#)
- [BMJ Best Practice](#)
- [UpToDate](#)

In-depth searching

- [AMED](#)
- [British Nursing Index](#)
- [CINAHL](#)
- [Cochrane Library](#)
- [EMBASE](#)
- [EMCARE](#)
- [Medline](#)
- [HMIC \(Health Management Information Consortium\)](#)
- [PsycINFO](#)
- [Trip Pro Database](#)
- [Pubmed](#)

Other resources

- [ClinicalKey](#)
- [Anatomy.TV](#)
- [BMJ Learning](#)
- [BMJ Case Reports](#)
- [Royal Marsden Manual Online](#)
- [NHS Learning Hub](#)
- [Directory of Health Libraries](#)
- [Patient Experience Library](#)
- [How to search the literature effectively](#)
- [Health literacy: you can make a difference](#)
- [Knowledge Mobilisation Framework](#)

NHS OpenAthens

- [OpenAthens Registration](#)
- [OpenAthens Password Reset](#)
- [Having Problems with OpenAthens?](#)

Any Questions?

