

Using the existing evidence base

This fact sheet provides tips and helpful links when beginning your assessment of the evidence around an emerging issue or need.

| Assessing evidence quality | |
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| Indexed in quality databases | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals) • Pubmed • Scopus |
| Article types | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic and scoping reviews • Meta-analyses • Rapid reviews • Look for article title “A systematic review of...”or “...: a systematic review.” |
| Recency and relevance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the evidence applicable to your population or group? • Is the evidence up-to-date information? |
| Consistency with other trusted evidence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the evidence answer a question? • Are the results and conclusions credible and logical? |

| Start with a question | |
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| Why do I need this information and how will I use it? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask stakeholders what matters to them (e.g. service users, co-workers, communities, Elders, funders). |
| Who is the group of people, what is the issue and what do I want to change? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question frameworks can help answer these. • P → population, problem • I → intervention or program • C → comparison or context • O → outcome |

| Searching for evidence | |
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| Databases | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Google Scholar ● ProQuest ● EBSCO |
| Keyword searching and BOOLEAN searching | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Search syntax that allows you to search multiple co-occurring concepts. ● E.g. 'young people' AND 'mental health' AND 'homelessness' |
| Document your search using a excel spreadsheet | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● your question ● where you searched and found evidence ● keywords and search terms ● sources of evidence you found |
| Reference managers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Zotero ● Mendeley ● End Note |
| When to stop your search | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refer to your question, purpose and audience. ● Search doesn't need to be exhaustive ● Might have one very reliable source, e.g. systematic review |