

# Systematic Review Support

## Why ask a librarian to support your systematic review?

Involving librarians in the systematic review process has been shown to produce significantly higher quality reported search strategies. Having librarians assisting in formulating search strategies and performing literature searches across multiple databases helps researchers minimise bias in their reviews.

## How librarians can support systematic reviews

We can support your review in a number of ways:

- Carrying out scoping searches to check how much literature is available and check for existing systematic reviews on your topic that might duplicate your work
- Providing advice on suitable databases to search
- Designing search strategies to retrieve any relevant articles (these will be reviewed by two librarians)
- Providing details of search strategies and numbers of results to enable completion of the PRISMA flow chart (<http://prisma-statement.org/>)
- Provide advice on appropriate search filters if your search is looking for a particular study design or population
- Assist with using citationchaser (<https://estech.shinyapps.io/citationchaser/>) to carry out backward and forward citation searching for included studies
- Providing lists of references in your chosen format (for example, RIS)
- Providing access to a RefWorks account if you don't have access to reference management software

Libraries can also supply full-text copies of articles (subject to copyright). Unfortunately, we're unable to provide a proof-reading service.

## Requesting support for a systematic review

Please provide full details of your search question, PICO strategy if possible, and include details of your PROSPERO registration (<https://www.crd.york.ac.uk/prospero/>) if applicable. Note that if you're planning to publish the review, PROSPERO registration is expected by many publishers.

You can make an initial request by our online form at [www.library.sath.nhs.uk/search](http://www.library.sath.nhs.uk/search), and then arrange a meeting to discuss your search requirements and timescales with us.

If you have examples of any previous searches you have carried out on the topic or examples of particularly relevant papers, these would be helpful too.

Due to the work involved in supporting a systematic review we ask for at least 10 working days' notice for the initial searches.

## Databases available

Library staff have access to the following databases for systematic review searching:

- BMJ Case Reports (medical case reports)
- CENTRAL (Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials)
- CINAHL (nursing and allied health)
- Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR)
- EMCARE (nursing and allied health)
- EMBASE (medicine and pharmacology)
- ERIC (education)
- GreenFILE (environment)
- HMIC (health services management and policy)
- Medline (medicine)
- medRxiv (pre-prints in medicine)
- OTseeker (occupational therapy)
- PEDro (physiotherapy)
- PubMed (medicine)
- Web of Science (general science search engine)

Medline, EMBASE, and the Cochrane Library's CENTRAL database, are the recommended minimum for coverage of medical topics.

We can suggest a search strategy for Google Scholar if required but cannot provide a list of references due to the limitations of Google.

We can also search some grey literature sources such as OAIster Database and the British Library Document Supply Centre Inside Serials & Conference Proceedings, and we can also search for clinical trials in progress via ClinicalTrials.gov and the International Standard Randomised Controlled Trial Number Registry (ISRCTN registry).

We don't do hand searching of journals, and we don't do any filtering of results against your inclusion or exclusion criteria. We can assist with automated citation searching of included studies only, using citationchaser (<https://estech.shinyapps.io/citationchaser>).

## Reference management software

If you don't have access to a suitable reference manager package, we can arrange access to RefWorks through NHS England.

We can also supply references in RIS format for import into any reference manager package.

As the search strategy will need to be very 'sensitive' to ensure that no relevant article is missed, it is likely that you will have a large number of results to de-duplicate and filter, and we would recommend the use of reference management software.

## Acknowledging the work of the librarian

If the review is to be published, we ask that the librarian designing the search strategy is given credit as a co-author and has the right to review the search strategy section of the paper prior to submission. If the review is not being published, the librarian should still be credited or acknowledged for their work.

We would also ask that an impact case study form is filled in after the review is published and/or disseminated, as evidence of the impact that library services have had.