Translating your systematic review search for other databases
A streamlined process for accurately translating your final search strategy from Medline to other databases

Databases without Subject Headings

Copy and print the search history box from Medline into a Word document as a table. Copy and paste the textword search lines below this table three times. Keep the different concept search lines.

Copy 3. Use for databases without subject headings
- Remove .tw,kw. at the end of search lines
- Add double quotes around phrases (two words or more), including hyphenated terms
- Globally change lowercase ‘or’ to uppercase ‘OR’
- Make 2 copies of this

Scopus
- Reduce any adjacency numbers by one (e.g. adj3 becomes adj2)
- Change adj to W/ (i.e. adj2 becomes W/2)
- Change internal ? wildcards to * (i.e. wom?n becomes wom*n)
- Spell out single character end truncation, e.g. memo? becomes memo OR memos

Web of Science
- Reduce any adjacency numbers by one (e.g. adj3 becomes adj2)
- Change adj to NEAR/ (i.e. adj2 becomes NEAR/2)
- Change wildcard ? to $ 
- Make 1 copy of this search

ProQuest and Cochrane
- Replace $ with * - unless $ indicates single character end truncation. In this case, spell out truncation.

Copies 1 and 2. Use for databases with subject headings (see next page)
Databases with Subject Headings

Copy 1

Emcare (or Embase)

Subject headings
For each Medline subject heading, find the corresponding Emcare headings. Explore narrower headings.
Note: Headings and their layout in the tree hierarchy may be quite different in this database.

Textword searches
• Textword search lines remain the same as for Medline (i.e. end in .tw,kw.)
• Make one copy of the textword strategy for adapting in CINAHL

Copy

CINAHL

Subject headings
For each Emcare subject heading, find the corresponding CINAHL ones. Explore narrower headings.

Textword searches
• Remove .tw,kw. at the end of textword search lines
• Add double quotes around textword search phrases (two words or more). Include hyphenated terms.
• Reduce any adjacency numbers by one (e.g. adj3 becomes adj2)
• Change the adj to N (i.e. adj2 becomes N2)
• Change ? to #
  Note: Do not use # as an internal wildcard if also using end truncation. Write out variations instead, (e.g. gyn#ecolog* must be searched as: gynaecolog* OR gynecolog*)
• Copy and paste each concept search string in both the first and second search boxes. Chose TI Title from the dropdown menu to the right ("Select a Field") for the first line and AB Abstract for the second.
• Change the Boolean operator to OR between these two lines and click on Search.
• Combine the subject heading lines with the textword lines for this concept using OR
• Repeat this for each concept.
• Combine final concept search lines together with AND.

Copy 2

PsycINFO

Subject headings
For each Medline subject heading, find corresponding subject headings in PsycINFO.

Textword searches
• Change .tw,kw. at the end of textword search lines to .ti,ab,id
• If one of your concepts describes geographic location(s), make the extension .ti,ab,id,lo. instead.
• Combine the subject heading lines with the textword lines for this concept using OR
• Repeat this for each concept before combining final concept search lines together with AND.
**Special database considerations**

**Scopus**

There are two options for entering search terms in Scopus.

**Option 1. Entering one long search string**

- Combine your search into one long search string by bracketing your individual concept searches and combining them with AND.
- Go to the Advanced search tab
- Click in the search box to get the cursor there and then select “Title-Abs-Key” in the Field Codes box to the right of the page. You should now have the following showing in the search box: TITLE-ABS-KEY()
- Copy and paste your single search string between the brackets () and click on Search.

**Option 2. Entering concepts on separate lines**

- Put each concept textword search string on a separate line
- Select Article title-Abstract-Keywords as the search option at the RHS dropbox.
- Combining concept lines with AND using the dropdown menu at LHS.

Note: If one OR more of your concept strings are too long for their line, you must search each concept separately, splitting long ones across lines and combining with OR. Once each concept has been searched, combine search sets with AND using the **Combine Queries** search box.
ProQuest

- Once in ProQuest, click on the **Databases** link at the top of the screen and choose relevant subject areas for the search, e.g. ProQuest Health & Medicine Complete. Otherwise all databases are included.

- Use **Advanced Search** option
- Copy search string into the search box
- Change **Anywhere** option (right drop down menu) to **Anywhere except full text** (too sensitive)

- Consider also limiting to ‘peer reviewed’ articles, dissertations & theses, conference papers (i.e. eliminate trade journals and magazines etc.)

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