



Eviscore Foundation Course

Module 2 – ACQUIRE

Worksheet 2A : Search Strategy Planner

Estimated Time: 15–20 minutes

Difficulty: ★ Beginner

Name: _____

Date: _____

Learning Objectives

After completing this worksheet, you should be able to:

- Convert a clinical question into searchable concepts.
- Identify the main search terms.
- Select an appropriate evidence source.
- Plan an efficient literature search.

Why Plan Before Searching?

A well-planned search saves time and improves the chances of finding relevant, high-quality evidence.

Remember, think before you search!

Clinical Question

Use the clinical question you developed in Worksheet 1E. If unavailable, use the example below:

In adults recovering from stroke, does robot-assisted therapy compared with conventional physiotherapy improve upper-limb function?

Step 1 – Write Your Clinical Question

Step 2 – Identify the Main Search Concepts

Break your question into its key concepts.

Concept	Your Answer
Patient / Problem	_____
Intervention	_____
Comparison (optional)	_____
Outcome (optional)	_____

Tip: Most searches begin with the Patient and Intervention. Comparison and Outcome are often omitted if they make the search too narrow.

Step 3 – Identify Keywords

Write common words or phrases you might use.

Concept	Keywords
Patient	_____
Intervention	_____
Outcome	_____

Step 4 – Where Would You Search First?

Tick the resource you would search first.

- ☐ PubMed
- ☐ Cochrane Library
- ☐ Clinical Practice Guideline
- ☐ TRIP Database
- ☐ Other

Why did you choose this resource?

Step 5 – What Type of Evidence Are You Looking For?

Tick the highest level of evidence that would answer your question.

- ☐ Clinical Practice Guideline
 - ☐ Systematic Review / Meta-analysis
 - ☐ Randomized Controlled Trial
 - ☐ Cohort Study
 - ☐ Case-Control Study
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Step 6 – Search Planning Checklist

Before opening a database, have you:

- ☐ Identified the patient/problem?
 - ☐ Identified the intervention?
 - ☐ Selected suitable keywords?
 - ☐ Chosen an appropriate database?
 - ☐ Decided what type of evidence you want?
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Reflection

What do you think will be the biggest challenge when searching for evidence?

- ☐ Too many search results
 - ☐ Too few search results
 - ☐ Choosing keywords
 - ☐ Selecting the best article
 - ☐ Using databases
 - ☐ Other
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Self-Assessment

- ☐ I can identify searchable concepts.
 - ☐ I can choose appropriate keywords.
 - ☐ I can select an appropriate evidence source.
 - ☐ I am ready to perform a database search.
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Evidence Pearl

Good searches begin with good planning. Spending a few minutes identifying key concepts and choosing the right evidence source can make your search faster, more focused, and more successful.

Faculty Notes (Instructor Version)

Suggested Answers (Example Case)

Step	Example Answer
Patient	Adults recovering from stroke
Intervention	Robot-assisted therapy
Comparison	Conventional physiotherapy
Outcome	Upper-limb function
First Resource	Cochrane Library or PubMed
Preferred Evidence	Systematic Review; if unavailable, Randomized Controlled Trial

Teaching Tips

- Encourage learners to focus on the main concepts rather than trying to search every word in the clinical question.
- Explain that comparison and outcome terms are often left out of the initial search to improve sensitivity.
- Reinforce that search planning is an essential step before using any database.

Carry Forward to Worksheet 2B

Keep your completed search planner. In the next worksheet, you will:

- Convert your keywords into MeSH terms.
- Identify synonyms and alternative spellings.
- Build a stronger, more comprehensive search strategy.