

Workshop 1: Where does one look for evidence? An introduction to searching

Time: 10h00 – 11h30

About this workshop

This workshop will consist of an interactive illustrated lecture on searching for studies using transparent and structured methods. We will cover why searching is important, include practical activities on developing effective searches.

Objectives

- Understand the need for a comprehensive search
- Know what databases and types of literature to search
- Know how to identify key concepts for a search and the search terms
- Understand Boolean operators and MeSH terms and how to use them
- Understand how to build a search strategy
- Understand how to conduct a search in PubMed and the Cochrane Library using a search strategy

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Facilitators: Ameer Hohlfeld & Mashudu Mthethwa



Ameer Hohlfeld is based at Cochrane SA. He is the coordinator of Cochrane Africa, a sub-Saharan African network and conducts systematic reviews. Ameer co-convenes the evidence-based health care course that forms part of the University of Cape Town (UCT) Masters' in Public Health. He has a Master's degree in Public Health from UCT and is currently pursuing a PhD from Stellenbosch University.



Mashudu Mthethwa is a senior scientist at Cochrane SA. She has a PhD in Medical Physiology from Stellenbosch University and a Masters in Public Health from UCT. Her interests include epidemiology, biostatistics and evidence-based healthcare. She has previously worked on HIV projects, including multimorbidity in people living with HIV/ART and the effects of HIV/ART on cardiovascular function. She is currently involved in various projects including priority setting for universal healthcare, vaccine equity and clinical practice guidelines for newborn and child health.

Workshop 2: Clinical trials registration: Individual patient data (IPD) sharing and results reporting requirements

Time: 10h00 – 11h30

About this workshop

This session will consist of an interactive illustrated lecture on clinical trial registration and why it is important, including practical activities on distinguishing between IPD sharing and results reporting.

Objectives

- Describe clinical trial registration importance
- Outline the steps to register a clinical trial
- Describe the difference between IPD sharing and results reporting
- Discuss data sharing statements for clinical trials

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Facilitators: Lindi Mathebula & Thobile Malinga



Lindi Mathebula holds an MSc Clinical Epidemiology, BTech Pharmaceutical science, BSc Honors in Physiology and Environmental health, and BSc in Molecular and Life sciences. Lindi is the project manager of the clinical trial registry portfolio where she manages two clinical trial registries namely, the Pan African Clinical Trials Registry and South African National Clinical Trials Registry. She is also a researcher in her profession and conducts research that includes mapping of clinical trial activities, and research around vaccine implementation, and evidence-based healthcare. She has authored and co-authored several peer-reviewed publications in high-impact factor journals.



Thobile Malinga is currently employed as a Scientist at Cochrane SA, where she plays a key role in supporting the management of data collection for the clinical trial registries hosted by Cochrane SA, Pan African Clinical Trials Registry and South African Clinical Trials Registry. Moreover, she plays a key role in writing evidence-based research protocols for systematic reviews and other relevant research. Thobile has worked in the health sector for over 20 years, gaining experience in nursing, health research, and project management. Thobile holds a Degree in Nursing (BCur), Certificate in Elementary Critical Care, and Master of Nursing in Health Service Management. She is currently finalizing her Master of Philosophy degree in Cancer Sciences.

Workshop 3: Introduction to Qualitative Evidence Synthesis (QES): What, why, how

Time: 10h00 – 12h00

About this workshop

Qualitative evidence synthesis (QES), or systematic reviews of primary qualitative research, are becoming more common. Findings from QES are increasingly used in decision making processes across a wide range of public health and other areas. This workshop will provide a brief overview of what QES is, how its findings can be applied, and the key methodological steps in conducting a QES. We will use presentations and exercises to illustrate learnings, with time for questions and discussion. No previous experience in qualitative evidence synthesis or conducting a systematic review is necessary for the workshop.

Objectives

- What is a qualitative evidence synthesis (QES)?
- Why undertake a QES?
- How to formulate a good QES question
- What are the main steps in conducting a QES?
- What is GRADE-CERQual?

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Facilitators: Sara Cooper and Bey-Marrie Schmidt



Sara Cooper is Senior Scientist at Cochrane SA, an Associate Professor Extraordinary at the Department of Global Health, Stellenbosch University and Honorary researcher in the School of Public Health at UCT. Sara has a PhD in medical sociology and a Master's in Public Health. Her research interests include the application of social science theories and methodologies within public health research, policy and practice, and how qualitative health research can be both 'critical' and 'applied'. Her most current research is exploring these issues in the fields of vaccination research and qualitative evidence synthesis.



Bey Schmidt is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Public Health, University of the Western Cape. She has training in anthropology and epidemiology. Bey's expertise are in qualitative and quantitative systematic reviews of public health and health system interventions, and implementation science and knowledge translation methods that can bridge research evidence into health policy and practice.

Workshop 4: Introduction to Meta-analysis

Time: 10h00 – 12h00

About this workshop

This workshop is aimed at the meta-analysis novice. The topics will cover the key features of meta-analysis after which the participant will be able to read and understand research containing meta-analyses. The workshop also presents practical tips to consider when conducting a meta-analysis such as how to select the appropriate model and how to address heterogeneity.

Objectives

- Understand the statistical methodology used in meta-analyses research
- Understand how results are reported in meta-analysis research
- Interpret the data presented in forest plots
- Understand when it is appropriate to conduct a meta-analysis
- Understand the differences between fixed effects and random effects models
- Identify heterogeneity and appropriately account for it during analysis

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Facilitator: Yusentha Balakrishna



Yusentha Balakrishna is a Senior Statistician within the Biostatistics Research Unit at the South African Medical Research Council. She holds a Masters of Science in Statistics and is currently completing her doctorate in Statistics at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. During her eight years of research experience, Yusentha has co-authored over 30 peer-reviewed articles in various areas of health such as nutrition, non-communicable diseases, women's health and environmental health and has developed expertise in meta-analysis. Yusentha regularly collaborates with Cochrane SA on systematic reviews and training events.