



CareSearch: Six Steps To Information and Evidence

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Introduction

CareSearch is an online resource that provides nurses with practical, up-to-date resources to support education, clinical practice, audit and research. CareSearch is also promoting evidence based practice and have developed resources, pages and collections of information to support this.

As the evidence in palliative care continues to grow, and as the information in CareSearch also grows, it can be increasingly difficult to know how to search for the right information in a timely way and to optimum effect. For example, when confronted with a clinical question that needs to be answered such as approaches to dyspnoea, nurses need to know that they are not missing any vital research or the specific resources that CareSearch have made available.

Searching

When searching on the world wide web for information on palliative care, it is important to know how, why and where to search effectively. For example if the search term 'dyspnoea' is entered into a search engine such as Google, over 650,000 items are retrieved. Apart from an overwhelming number of sites and documents to review, the quality and reliability of what is found will vary considerably.

When looking for clinical information CareSearch has developed a six steps approach with the aim of facilitating easier access to the most appropriate type and level of evidence. Using a structured approach can make locating these resources easier and faster.

SIX STEPS

STEP 1: Is there a Clinical Practice page on the topic?

Clinical Practice pages are summaries of what is known from systematic reviews

Step 1

STEP 2: Check in the CareSearch Review Collection

Systematic reviews (SRs) are harvested from Ovid Medline, CINAHL, PsycINFO and Embase. To be included a SR needs a described search strategy and a described mechanism for data synthesis.

Step 2

STEP 3: Check in the PubMed Topic Searches

PubMed Topic Searches use the palliative filter and selected MeSH terms and textwords to automatically retrieve relevant citations from the (free) PubMed database.

STEP 4: Create your own PubMed Topic Search

If there is not a pre-written search you can create your own. Instructions are provided.

Step 3

Step 4

Conclusion

There are many information and evidence resources in CareSearch. Using a structured approach to finding the most relevant resource will make locating them easier and quicker.

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STEP 5: Check the Grey Literature

Grey Literature is hard to find because it is not published or not indexed. The CareSearch Grey literature database has 6 sets of Australian palliative care literature: Conference Abstracts, Theses, Non-Indexed Journal Articles, National Program projects, Research Studies and Other Grey (e.g., Government reports).

Step 5

STEP 6: Find out more about searching

Sometimes when looking for highly specific or unusual information, resources may not be available on CareSearch. The Finding Evidence section however, has details on databases and bibliographic resources and a guide to searching effectively.

Step 6

Summary of Six Steps

1. Clinical
2. CareSearch Review Collection
3. PubMed Topic Search
4. Create your own PubMed Topic search
5. Grey Literature
6. Find out more about searching

Each step will take you to different levels of research evidence, from the highest (systematic reviews) to the lowest (grey literature).

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