

Literature Searching for Qualitative⁺ Research

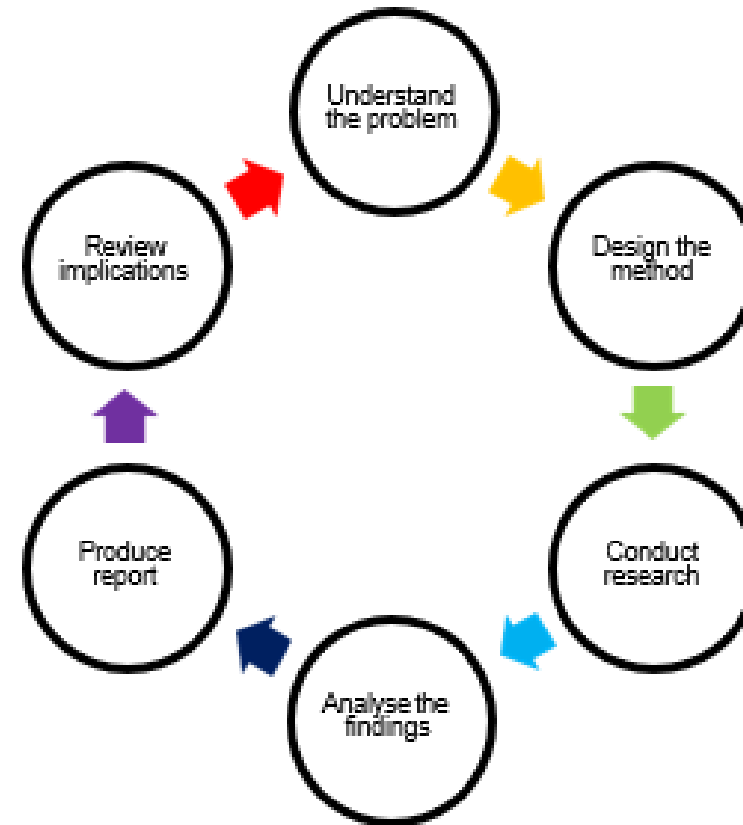


Unit 3



What we will cover in unit 3

- Additional search terms to try
- The challenges of searching for qualitative studies
- Using methodologic filters to find qualitative studies



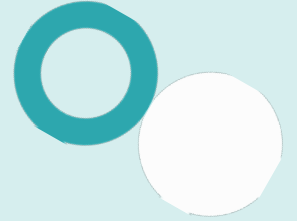
Qualitative Research Terminology

There are generic search terms: e.g. “qualitative” that we’ve looked at in units 1 and 2, but there are further, more focused terms that might be useful. So, you could try any of the following terms as part of your search strategy. To help prompt you to think of terms, we’ve grouped them under the ‘ESCAPADE’ structure, which gives potential search terms in the following categories:

- **E**xploratory methods
- **S**oftware
- **C**itations
- **A**pplication
- **P**henomenon
- **A**pproaches
- **D**ata
- **E**xperiences

ESCAPADE!

- **E** - Exploratory Methods: Focus group, Grounded theory, Action Research, Content analysis, Thematic analysis
- **S** - Software: NUDIST or NVivo
- **C** - Citations: Glaser & Strauss (or other key qualitative research theorists)
- **A** - Application: Ethnology, Psychology
- **P** - Phenomenon: Perceptions, Attitudes, User Views, Standpoint, Viewpoint
- **A** - Approaches: Ethnographic
- **D** - Data: Stories, Narratives, Themes, Findings
- **E** - Experiences: Encounters, Experiences

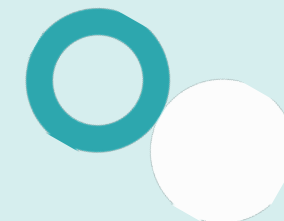


CHALLENGES FOR SEARCHING



Challenges for searching

- Qualitative research constitutes a small but growing part of the two million+ articles published every year in biomedical research literature
- Inconsistent use of subject headings by indexers can hinder your searching
- Qualitative studies using non-indicative titles and/or poorly worded abstracts are also difficult to find
- Variations in subject headings between databases necessitate using more than one database and different search filters
- Qualitative studies in MEDLINE use fewer subject headings to describe the research methods used than CINAHL, where professions commonly use qualitative methodologies
- Searching MEDLINE plus CINAHL may improve the yield for relevant qualitative studies and may be sufficient for a 'scoping search' where an overview of the literature is all that is required



Advanced Methods for Identifying Qualitative Research: METHODOLOGICAL FILTERS



What is a methodological filter?

- “ A hedge or filter is a standardised search strategy that is designed to be used in conjunction with a subject search to retrieve valid studies from the (primary) medical literature”
- In other words, they are pre-written search strategies design to retrieve qualitative research studies
- Filters work in one of two ways:
 - by identifying particular publication types or study designs most likely to use qualitative methods
 - by isolating subject or free-text terms most likely to be associated with high-quality qualitative studies

How do they work?

Filters come from 3 different sources:-

- Subject heading: these filters search for subject headings that are often applied to qualitative research studies
- Keyword: these filters search for key words that often appear, usually in the titles or abstracts, of qualitative studies
- Publication type: these filters look for studies which have a publication type that is associated with qualitative research

How do I use a methodological filter?

- **Step One:**
 - Carry out a search for your subject area as usual using subject heading terms and/or free text
- **Step Two:**
 - Apply an appropriate methodological filter to retrieve qualitative studies only

Some one-liners...

A one-line filter is a single additional search term added to your subject search. Some examples are:

- **Subject Heading**
 - Qualitative Research/ [finds papers in Medline from 2003 onwards]
- **Keyword**
 - “Findings” (likely to appear in the abstract of qualitative studies)
- **Publication Type**
 - Research [CINAHL only] (this publication type is used in CINAHL to differentiate between research studies and articles such as editorials, reviews, etc.)

Methodologic Filter 1

1. qualitative*
2. findings
3. interview*
4. interviews/
5. 1 OR 2 OR 3 OR 4

This filter searches for papers which feature the word stem 'qualitative' OR the word 'findings' or the word stem 'interview' or the subject heading 'interviews'.

From Grant MJ. "How does your searching grow? A survey of search preferences and the use of optimal search strategies in the identification of qualitative research." Health Info Libr J . 2004 Mar; 21(1):21-32.

Methodologic Filters 2

Medline Filter for qualitative research

- High sensitivity
 - interview.tw. OR px.fs. OR exp health services administration
- High specificity
 - qualitative.tw. OR themes.tw.
- Balancing sensitivity and specificity
 - interview:.mp. OR experience:.mp. OR qualitative.tw.
 - a **sensitive** filter aims to find as many qualitative studies as possible, but may find quite a few non-qualitative ones,
 - a **specific** filter aims to find ONLY qualitative studies, but may miss some,
 - a **balanced** or '**optimized**' filter aims to balance out sensitivity and specificity and produce a set of results which are mostly qualitative and from which very little has been missed
- Methodologic Filter 2 Developed by HIRU
http://hiru.mcmaster.ca/hiru/HIRU_Hedges_MEDLINE_Strategies.aspx#Qualitative

Methodologic Filters 3

Clinical Queries

If all this is sounding complex, try 'Clinical Queries'

- Clinical Queries are ready-made search filters which you can add to your subject search with a few simple clicks of your mouse. There is a clinical query for 'qualitative studies'. You can choose whether to use a 'sensitive', 'specific' or 'optimized' filter
- Clinical Queries are based on the work of R Brian Haynes et al and use tested, reliable filters
- Available on PubMed, OVID Medline and NHS Knowledge and Library Hub

I'm looking for qualitative research about husbands' attitudes to breast cancer
Over the next few slides, we'll go through a search step by step in the Medline database.
Here I've done a preliminary search for Breast cancer (subject heading Breast Neoplasms and husbands (subject heading Spouses))

Select Database | Saved Searches | **Search** | Recover Searches | Alerts | My Account

Home » Database select » Search and Limits

Search history

☐ Select All	Save all	Save selected lines	Delete selected	Remove duplicates	?	Collapse history ▲
Line	Database	Search Term	View Results			
☐ 1	MEDLINE	exp BREAST NEOPLASMS/	209252	▼ Apply Limits		
☐ 2	MEDLINE	SPOUSES/	6472	▼ Apply Limits		
☐ 3	MEDLINE	husband*.ti,ab	12045	▼ Apply Limits		
☐ 4	MEDLINE	2 OR 3	17424	▼ Apply Limits		
☐ 5	MEDLINE	1 AND 4	236	▼ Apply Limits		
Combine selected ☒ AND ☐ OR To combine two line numbers using NOT, enter the line numbers in the search box below: for example 1 NOT 2						

Now I want to add the clinical query for qualitative studies to my search
So I've used the limits tab and the clinical query tab to find the menu of clinical query options

Search history

☐ Select All	Save all	Save selected lines	Delete selected	Remove duplicates	?	Collapse history ▲
Line	Database	Search Term	View Results			
☐ 1	MEDLINE	exp BREAST NEOPLASMS/	209252	▼ Apply Limits		
☐ 2	MEDLINE	SPOUSES/	6472	▼ Apply Limits		
☐ 3	MEDLINE	husband*.ti,ab	12045	▼ Apply Limits		
☐ 4	MEDLINE	2 OR 3	17424	▼ Apply Limits		
☐ 5	MEDLINE	1 AND 4	236	▼ Apply Limits		
Combine selected ☒ AND ☐ OR To combine two line numbers using NOT, enter the line numbers in the search box below: for example 1 NOT 2						

You are currently searching Medline ? [» Re-run all line numbers](#) or [» Re-run selected line numbers](#)

Search

Limits

Clear all limits

?

Date

Article Type

Clinical Query

Human or Animal

Gender

Age Groups

Language

Other

Clinical Queries

☐ Qualitative (maximizes specificity)

☐ Qualitative (best balance of sensitivity and specificity)

☐ Costs (maximizes sensitivity)

Here in the search box I've entered the line number I want to add the Clinical Query to, and selected the Clinical Query 'Qualitative' (best balance of sensitivity and specificity)

The screenshot displays the NHS Evidence search interface. The browser address bar shows the URL: `web.p.ebscohost.com/ehost/resultsadvanced?vid=2&sid=4314752e-6400-482a-b746-567966d237ae%40redis&bquery=(+husband*+or+spouses*)+AND*(+breast+neoplasms+OR+breast+cancer*)+AND*(+qualitative+or+interview*+or+findings...`. The search filters are set to: Clinical Queries: Therapy - Best Balance; Publication Type: All; Sex: All; Special Interest: All; Geographic Subset: All. The search results are displayed in a list format, showing the following items:

- 4. "I'm not Alone; He will be There for Me" (Includes abstract) Alkhalifi, Sarah; Padela, Regular mammogram screenings are effective. Subjects: Support, Psychosocial; Spouse. Academic Journal. Request this item.
- 5. Experiences of Women With Breast Cancer (Includes abstract) Diaz-Heredia, Luz Patricia. 4851. To describe the experiences of female patients. Subjects: Breast Neoplasms Psychosocial. Academic Journal. Request this item.
- 6. Meta-integration of qualitative research (Includes abstract) GAO Wenjuan; ZHANG Qian; HAN Jing. 4851. To describe the experiences of female patients. Subjects: Spouses; Intimacy; Interpersonal. Academic Journal. Request this item.
- 7. 乳腺癌术后乳房重建者夫妻疾病沟通 (Includes abstract) 梅兴燕; 张肖; 杨淑红; 武甜甜; 吕美荣. 4851. To describe the experiences of female patients. Subjects: Breast Neoplasms Psychosocial. Academic Journal. Request this item.

The search results are displayed in a list format, showing the following items:

I've also limited the search to English language papers from 2000-

Search history

☐ Select All	Save all	Save selected lines	Delete selected	Remove duplicates	?	Collapse history ▲
Line	Database	Search Term	View Results			
☐ 1	MEDLINE	exp BREAST NEOPLASMS/	209252	▼ Apply Limits	×	
☐ 2	MEDLINE	SPOUSES/	6472	▼ Apply Limits	×	
☐ 3	MEDLINE	husband*.ti,ab	12045	▼ Apply Limits	×	
☐ 4	MEDLINE	2 OR 3	17424	▼ Apply Limits	×	
☐ 5	MEDLINE	1 AND 4	236	▼ Apply Limits	×	
☐ 6	MEDLINE	5 [Limit to: (Clinical Queries Qualitative best balance of sensitivity and specificity)]	108	▼ Apply Limits	×	
☐ 7	MEDLINE	6 [Limit to: English Language and Publication Year 2000-Current and (Clinical Queries Qualitative best balance of sensitivity and specificity)]	80	▼ Apply Limits	×	
Combine selected ☒ AND ☐ OR To combine two line numbers using NOT, enter the line numbers in the search box below: for example 1 NOT 2						

And the results look pretty good...

My Workspace for staff

Mail - christine keen

Improving or refreshing

Slide 1

NHS Knowledge and Lib

Knowledge and Library

Result List: (husband* or

typing onto a screen sho

web.p.ebscohost.com/ehost/resultsadvanced?vid=2&sid=43f4752e-6400-482a-b746-567966d237ae%40redis&bquery=(+husband*+or+spouses+)+AND+(+breast+neoplasms+OR+breast+cancer+)+AND+(+qualitative+or+interview*+or+findings...

James Lind Alliance... Alcohol-related brai... Appraiser guidance BBC - Home Be Part of Research Cochrane Handboo... Critical Appraisal of... leic. uni. ESS Epistemonikos: Data... PB Finding Information... Google Grant Finder - Tools... All Bookmarks

Search modes - Proximity

Refine Results

Current Search

Proximity:
(husband* or spouses) A
ND (breast neoplasms O
R breast cancer)...

Expanders
Apply equivalent
subjects

Limiters
Publication Date:
20100101-20241231

Limit To

Source Types

All Results
Academic Journals (166)
Dissertations (3)
Magazines (1)
Show More

Subject: Major Heading

Publication

Publisher

Language

Age

Gender

Geography

Search Results: 1 - 50 of 170

Date Newest Page Options Share

1. "Sexual sacrifice": a qualitative exploration of husbands' experience of living with survivors of breast cancer—sexual dysfunction in Malaysia.



Wahid, Mohd Najman Abd; Muhammad, Rosediani; Mohamad, Noraini; Draman, Nani Supportive Care in Cancer, Aug2024; 32(8): 1-14. 14p. (Journal Article) ISSN: 0941-4355

Request this item

Academic Journal

2. The role expectations of young women as wives after breast cancer treatment: A qualitative study.



(includes abstract) Gao, Wenjuan; Zhang, Qian; Wang, Dan; Li, Xiaoxu; Zhang, Linping; Xu, Mengjiao; Han, Jing International Journal of Nursing Sciences, Jul2024; 11(3): 366-373. 8p. (Journal Article - research) ISSN: 2096-6296

Through the reflection of young breast cancer women on their selves and identities, we explored expectations of the wife role that they need to fulfill to return to their families, aimed to provi...

Subjects: Spouses Psychosocial Factors; Role; Breast Neoplasms Therapy; Adult: 19-44 years; Male; Female

Academic Journal

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Access Item

3. Experiences of Breast Cancer Women About Partner's Unsupportive Behaviors: A Phenomenological Study.



(includes abstract) Qoullifam, Akram Reza; Rasoulilian, Elham; Hassankhani, Hadi; Rahmani, Azad; Biabani, Fateme; Valizade, Abolfazl Journal of Evidence-based Care, Apr2024; 14(1): 60-69. 10p. (Journal Article - research, tables/charts) ISSN: 2008-2487

Background: Failure to fulfill the physical and psychological needs of breast cancer patients and their partners can result in anxiety, depression, and marital problems. Aim: The present study wa...

Subjects: Life Experiences Evaluation; Women Psychosocial Factors; Spouses Psychosocial Factors; Cancer Patients Psychosocial Factors; Breast Neoplasms; Adult: 19-44 years; Middle Aged: 45-64 years; Aged: 65+ years; Aged, 80 & over; Male; Female

Academic Journal

Access Item

Request this item

4. "I'm not Alone: He will be There for Me": A Mixed Method Approach Exploring the Impact of Spousal Support on Mammogram Utilization and Health Beliefs



NIHR

Research
Support Service

Methodologic Filter 4

Don't forget the Medline subject heading Qualitative Research

- It was introduced in 2003, so coverage is limited to papers from that point onwards
- But you can try combining it with one of the previous filters by using the “OR” operator- try searching for the word ‘qualitative’ in the title or abstract, in addition to this subject heading

User Views

The filters below are designed to retrieve studies about user views or user involvement/participation: Note: 'adj' stands for 'adjacent' so 'Strategy One' searches for papers where the word stem 'user' appears next to the word stem 'view'

Strategy One

Exp Attitude/ OR
Attitude* OR
(user* adj view*) OR
opinion*

Strategy Two

- Client* OR Consumer* OR
Patient* OR User*
- AND**
- Empower* OR involve* OR
participa* OR represent*

Research from Flemming & Briggs

- Findings showed that a simple search strategy (using just 3 search terms) was as effective as a complex one (using 48 search terms) in locating qualitative research on patients' experiences of living with a leg ulcer
- So, it may be feasible to restrict searches with a clear nursing focus to the CINAHL database
- Replication of these findings with other nursing topics is required in order to be certain though

Flemming K, Briggs M. Electronic searching to locate qualitative research: evaluation of three strategies. J Adv Nurs. 2007 Jan;57(1):95-100.

Brief Activity 2: Searching for qualitative studies!

Now its time to start planning and conducting your own literature search, using the SPICE, ProPheT or CLIP- based question that you developed for unit 1. Once you have conducted your subject search, try using a filter or a clinical query to retrieve qualitative studies -

Good luck!

Some light reading...

- Evans DJ. Database searches for qualitative research. J Med Libr Assoc 2002;90:290-293.
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12113512/>
- Finding qualitative research: an evaluation of search strategies by Rachel L Shaw, Andrew Booth, Alex J Sutton, Tina Miller, Jonathan A Smith, Bridget Young, David R Jones and Mary Dixon-Woods <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2288/4/5>

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- Barroso J, Gallup CJ, Sandelowski M, Meynell J, Pearce PF, Collins LJ: The challenge of searching for and retrieving qualitative studies. Western Journal of Nursing Research 2003, 25: 153-178.
- Booth A (2001) Cochrane or Cock-eyed: how should we conduct systematic reviews of qualitative research? Qualitative Evidence Based Practice Conference, Coventry, 14-16 May 2001, Coventry University.
- Booth A. Brimful of Starlight: towards standards for reporting literature searches. J Med Libr Assoc . 2006 Oct;94(4):421-9, e205.

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- Grayson, L & Gomersall, A. A difficult business: finding the evidence for social science reviews. London: Evidence Network. ESRC UK Centre for Evidence Based Policy and Practice, 2003. 23pp (Working Paper 19)
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/260386917_A_Difficult_Business_Finding_the_Evidence_for_Social_Science_Reviews

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http://hiru.mcmaster.ca/hiru/HIRU_Hedges_MEDLINE_Strategie.aspx#Qualitative
- Marks S. Qualitative studies. In: McKibbin A, Eady A and Marks S. PDQ evidence-based principles and practice . Hamilton, Canada: BC Decker Inc., 1999
- McKibbin KA, Wilczynski NL, Haynes RB . Developing optimal search strategies for retrieving qualitative studies in PsycINFO. Eval Health Prof . 2006 Dec;29(4):440-54

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www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd/intertasc/index.htm
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- Subirana M, Sola I, Garcia JM et al (2005). A nursing qualitative systematic review required MEDLINE and CINAHL for study identification. J Clin Epidemiol . 2005 Jan;58(1):20-5
- Walters LA, Wilczynski NL, Haynes RB; Hedges Team. Developing optimal search strategies for retrieving clinically relevant qualitative studies in EMBASE. Qual Health Res. 2006 Jan;16(1):162-8

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- Wilczynski NL, Marks S, Haynes RB. Search strategies for identifying qualitative studies in CINAHL. Qual Health Res . 2007 May;17(5):705-10
- Wong SSL, Wilczynski NL, Haynes RB. Developing optimal search strategies for detecting clinically relevant qualitative studies in Medline. Medinfo 2004;311-314