PHC SEARCH FILTER: QUICK START GUIDE

Topic

The PHC Search Filter is designed to include all results using the PHC Search Filter 'core' component and therefore will return ALL citations about the 'primary health care' concept (over 220,000!).

A 'Topic' is a collection of search terms for a PHC topic or concept. Selecting a Topic allows you to refine the results according to the defined search terms for that topic.

Tips for success

- You can combine a 'Topic' with keywords to further refine the results.

Keyword

In PubMed, enter one or more keywords you are interested in and these will be added to your search, further refining the results.

You can use common language terms, e.g., **heart attack**, **ADHD** and **immunisation** but avoid conflicting with the 'core' of the PHC Search Filter by not using the following search keywords (a warning will be displayed):

Community health ; **Community mental health services** ; **Community nurse** ; **Community pharmacy** ; **Family medicine** ; **Family physicians** ; **Family practice** ; **General practice** ; **General practitioners** ; **GP** ; **Health promotion** ; **Health visit** ; **Home based** ; **Home care** ; **Home health** ; **Prevention program** ; **Preventive care** ; **Preventive health** ; **Preventive health services** ; **Preventive service** ; **Primary care** ; **Primary health care**

Note that adding keywords is likely to reduce the number of results returned.

Tips for success

- You can combine 'Topic' with keywords to further refine your results.

- There is some great mapping in PubMed. Check the advanced search page "Query translation" and see how PubMed has interpreted the search.

Free Full Text

The PHC Search Filter is designed to include citations of articles which **may** or **may not** require a subscription to access the full-text version of the article.

By selecting the **Free Full Text** option, only results containing 'free full text' articles will be shown (i.e., citations which don't require a subscription to access the full article).

Note that this is likely to reduce the number of results.

RCTs/Systematic Reviews

By selecting the **RCTs and/or Systematic Reviews** option, the results will be filtered to those which include systematic reviews and other randomised controlled trials (RCTs) only.

By default, this option is un-checked which will return results with 'all types of evidence'.

Note that this is likely to reduce the number of results.

Australia

By default, the filter will include citations which may or may not mention Australia or any of its States/Territories. By selecting the **Australia** option, the filter will limit the results to those which mention Australia or any of its States/Territories. **Note that this is likely to reduce the number of results.**

PHC SEARCH FILTER: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The literature and evidence core developed by and relevant to primary health care is growing. It is published and stored in different repositories and is described and indexed in different ways. PHCRIS and the Flinders Filters agreed to collaborate to develop a systematic approach to the retrieval of primary health care literature including the development of the PHC Search Filter.

What is the PHC Search Filter?

- A search strategy
- A quick and efficient way for the primary health care community to retrieve relevant citations from a large bibliographic database

Who should use the PHC Search Filter?

The search filter is freely accessible and can be used by anyone in the primary health care community.

It will be particularly valuable to researchers, policy makers, PHC providers or anyone needing access to the most up-to-date primary health care literature quickly and easily.

Development of the PHC Search Filter

The development of the PHC Search Filter was a collaborative effort between PHCRIS and Flinders Filters with the assistance of the Expert Advisory Group. It combines textwords and subject headings (e.g., MeSH) and has a validated and known level of performance. The development of the search filter was based on published methodologies and comprised several major phases including:

- Scoping of the concepts and agreement on a 'gold standard' (from 5 options presented to the Expert Advisory Group, APHCRI systematic reviews were chosen for the 'gold standard').
- Development of the PHC Search Filter in Ovid Medline including constructing the gold standard, term identification and testing, filter testing and validation.
- Translating for use in PubMed (as Ovid Medline and PubMed have different search syntax).
- Developing topic searches for use in the PHCRIS website utilising the PHC Search Filter.
- Testing of searching outside of Ovid Medline (specifically Informit and the open web).

For more information on the development of the filter please contact PHCRIS or the Flinders Filters team.

PHC SEARCH FILTER:
HOW IT WORKS

How the PHC Search Filter works

- The PHC Search Filter initiates a search on the PubMed database via a hyperlink containing the relevant search term.
    - The first part of this hyperlink is:
      http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez?cmd=search&db=pubmed&term=
- The PHC Search Filter contains a combination of MeSH terms and textwords.
    - The PubMed database consists of two components: Medline citations indexed with the National Library of Medicine's MeSH terms; and other citations not yet indexed with MeSH terms due to their stage of processing (e.g., in process), or those not selected for MeSH indexing. Searching PubMed requires an awareness of these two categories of citations within the database.
    - To retrieve references not yet indexed with MeSH terms, the PHC Search Filter also includes textwords.
    - Relevant but as yet non-indexed PHC citations missed by the textword search translation should eventually be retrieved by MeSH terms once they have been assigned.
- The search is limited to English language (i.e., only finds citations where the article itself is written in English).
- Optional selections can also be made to refine or limit the search results as follows:
    - Strongest evidence - systematic reviews or randomised controlled trials. An excerpt of this part of the search query is:
        - **AND (systematic[sb] OR ((clinical[tiab] AND trial[tiab]) OR clinical trial[pt] OR random*[tiab] OR random allocation[mh] OR therapeutic use/sh))**
    - Also including free full text only, high level evidence only, and Australia only.

PHC Search Filter 'core'

- The 'core' of the PHC Search Filter contains MeSH terms and textwords appropriate to the primary health care concept.
    - The syntax* to retrieve PHC citations in the indexed subset of PubMed is as follows:
        - Primary care[tw] OR General practi*[tw] OR Primary health care[tw] OR Community mental health services[mh:noexp] OR Family practice[mh:noexp] OR Home care services[mh:noexp] OR Family physicians[mh:noexp] OR Community health services[mh:noexp] OR Community health nursing[mh:noexp] OR Community pharmacy services[mh:noexp] OR Community health workers[mh:noexp] OR Preventive health services[mh:noexp]

- o The syntax* to retrieve PHC citations in the non-indexed subset of PubMed is as follows:
  - Primary care[tiab] OR General practi*[tiab] OR Primary health*[tiab] OR Community mental health*[tiab] OR Family practice[tiab] OR Family medicine[tiab] OR GP[tiab] OR Family physician*[tiab] OR Home care[tiab] OR Home based[tiab] OR Home health*[tiab] OR Community health*[tiab] OR Community nurs*[tiab] OR health visit*[tiab] OR Community pharmac*[tiab] OR Preventive care[tiab] OR Prevention program*[tiab] OR Preventive service*[tiab] OR Preventive health[tiab] OR Health promotion[tiab]

- o When put together with the search component designed for retrieving indexed content, the full and final PubMed PHC Search Filter becomes:
  - ((Primary care[tw] OR General practi*[tw] OR Primary health care[tw] OR Community mental health services[mh:noexp] OR Family practice[mh:noexp] OR Home care services[mh:noexp] OR Family physicians[mh:noexp] OR Community health services[mh:noexp] OR Community health nursing[mh:noexp] OR Community pharmacy services[mh:noexp] OR Community health workers[mh:noexp] OR Preventive health services[mh:noexp]) AND Medline[sb])
  OR
  ((Primary care[tiab] OR General practi*[tiab] OR Primary health*[tiab] OR Community mental health*[tiab] OR Family practice[tiab] OR Family medicine[tiab] OR GP[tiab] OR Family physician*[tiab] OR Home care[tiab] OR Home based[tiab] OR Home health*[tiab] OR Community health*[tiab] OR Community nurs*[tiab] OR health visit*[tiab] OR Community pharmac*[tiab] OR Preventive care[tiab] OR Prevention program*[tiab] OR Preventive service*[tiab] OR Preventive health[tiab] OR Health promotion[tiab]) NOT Medline[sb])

PHC Search Filter 'Topic Search'

Along with the expertise to produce the 'core' of the PHC Search Filter, PHCRIS and the Flinders Filters teams have added extra value by producing 'Topic Searches'. A 'Topic Search' is a collection of search terms for a particular concept or topic which, when selected, will refine the results returned by the PHC Search Filter to that particular concept or topic.

- A PHC Search Filter 'topic search' contains MeSH terms and textwords appropriate to a particular topic.

- The MeSH terms and textwords for a particular PHC Search Filter 'topic search' have been prepared by an expert and careful selection is made following a set of guidelines.

- PHC Search Filter 'topic search' is usually combined with the PHC Search Filter 'core'. This enables the searcher to find citations about a particular 'topic' within the 'primary health care' concept.

*Note: The [tw] tag is for textwords, it forces a search on title, abstract and MeSH term fields. The [mh:noexp] tag forces a search on the MeSH term field, turning off PubMed's autoexplode function in the meantime.

PHC SEARCH FILTER:
FEATURES, BENEFITS AND LIMITATIONS

Features and benefits

- **Quick & easy access to primary health care literature** using **real-time searches** of the current **PubMed** database
  - An effective and efficient way to retrieve primary health care related citations from a large bibliographic database.
  - A search strategy that helps both inexperienced and experienced searchers save time by using a core of 12 Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) and 19 phrases.
  - Searches PubMed's unindexed and not-yet-indexed citations, ensuring access to the latest literature.
  - PubMed is a free resource available on the internet.

- *Topic Searches* - a collection of pre-designed search terms for a PHC topic/concept
  - Additional to the core of the PHC Search Filter, searchers can choose from 12 topic searches appropriate to their area of interest in primary health care.
  - A topic search is combined with the core of the PHC Search Filter to refine the results around a particular PHC topic/concept.

- **Refine** your search: RCTs and/or Systematic Reviews, Free Full Text, Australia only

- **Developed objectively, tested and validated**
  - The development of the search filter is based on published methodologies.
  - The search filter has been validated and has a known level of performance.
    - A validated OvidSP Medline Primary Health Care search filter, capable of retrieving 79% of literature of known relevance to primary health care (the OvidSP Medline translation is available)
    - A validated PubMed translation of this filter that has an equivalent level of performance in PubMed
  - A search strategy has been optimised for precision to ensure quick access to relevant citations. A precise search is a balance between retrieving relevant citations and keeping out irrelevant citations.

Limitations

- The PHC Search Filter is not designed to be comprehensive in what it retrieves, but to retrieve with a high level of specificity so as not to overwhelm the searcher. Typically only a handful of MeSH terms/textwords are used to represent topics.

- Some combinations of search options could produce few (or zero) results; however, results may change over time as publications emerge.

- The PHC Search Filter is subject to the quality of titles, abstracts and MeSH in the PubMed database.

- PubMed does not index all the world's literature.

- The search filter is set to restrict results to English language citations.

Note for searchers

- Although quick to get started, optimal search construction is an iterative, time consuming process.

- Building your own search is subject to some knowledge of the search process for best results.

- There is no such thing as a perfect search - even experienced searchers can develop poor searches.

- Selecting one of or a combination of 'Free Full Text', 'RCTs and/or Systematic Reviews' and 'Australia' options will significantly restrict retrieval.