

Exploring the Evidence Pyramid

Janet G. Schnall, MS, AHIP
Information Management Librarian
University of Washington Health Sciences Library
schnall@uw.edu
libguides.hsl.washington.edu/schnall

Key

\$=Fee required (or contact your local hospital or clinic library)

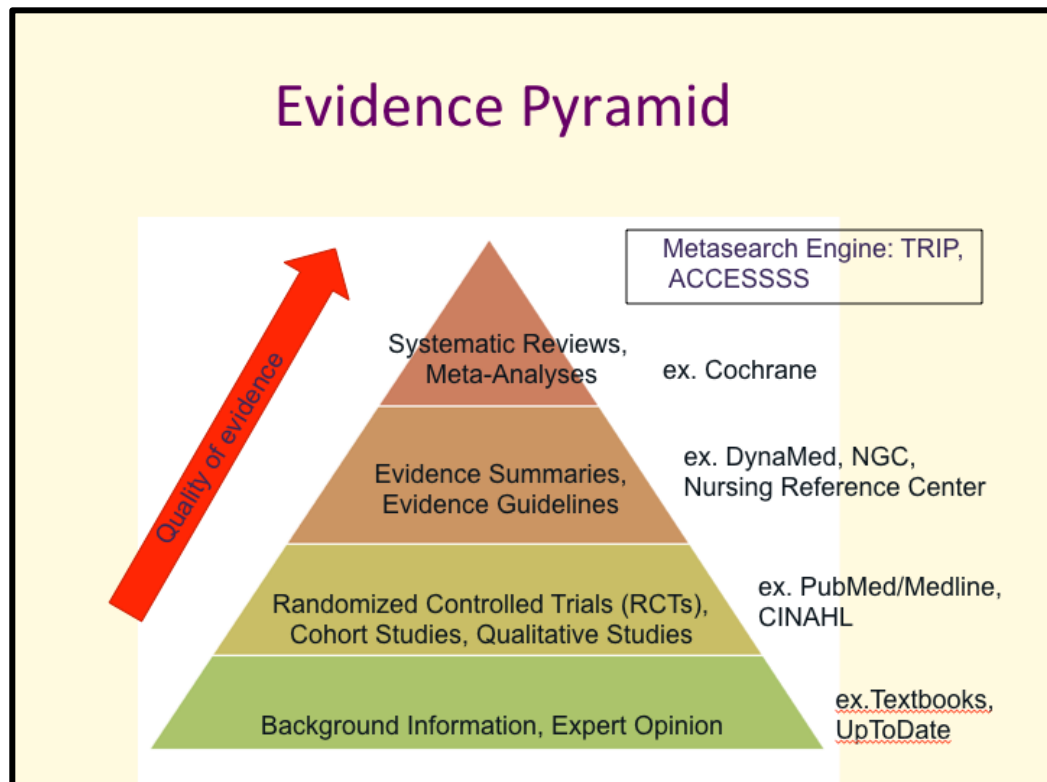
M=Mobile (includes mobile applications and interfaces optimized for mobile access)

O=Online

H=HEAL-WA (Online access to evidence-based health information resources for Washington State nurses and other health professionals; registration required) healwa.org/

1. What is the Evidence Pyramid?

- a. Guideline to the hierarchy of evidence available.
- b. Guide for efficiently finding the best available research evidence.
- c. Each level of the pyramid draws on research evidence from the lower layers.
- d. Best to begin searching for evidence at the top of the pyramid.
 - i. More synthesized evidence is found at the higher levels
 - ii. However, fewer studies are available at the top of the pyramid.
- e. If you don't find the best level of evidence to answer the question, move down the pyramid to other types of studies.



2. Find Background Information/Expert Opinion

- a. eBooks \$HMO
- b. UpToDate uptodate.com \$MO
Clinical information resource that offers current, referenced expert answers to medical questions. Summarizes key findings; provides specific recommendations.

3. Search a Database to Find Research Journal Articles

- a. PubMed pubmed.gov HMO
 - i. Limit to Article Types, e.g., *Randomized Controlled Trial, Clinical Trial*, etc. OR use the Clinical Queries section
 - ii. For Qualitative Research, use appropriate Medical Subject Heading (MeSH) terms in your search, such as *Qualitative Research, Focus Groups, Interviews as Topic, and more*
- b. CINAHL (Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature) ebscohost.com/biomedical-libraries/the-cinahl-database \$HMO
Indexes the literature of nursing, biomedicine, alternative/complementary medicine, consumer health and 17 allied health disciplines.
 - i. Limit to *Research Article* or *Research* under Publication Type
 - ii. For Qualitative Research, use appropriate CINAHL Subject Headings, e.g., *Qualitative Studies, Focus Groups, Narratives, Interviews*, etc.
- c. Find Full-Text eJournals
 - i. Use full-text links in PubMed/MEDLINE and CINAHL.
 - ii. Check with your hospital or clinic library.
 - iii. Use HEAL-WA at healwa.org. See #8 below.
 - iv. UW Affiliates: use the Proxy to access full-text journals from off-campus www.lib.washington.edu/help/connect.html
- d. Email Alerting Services
 - i. MyNCBI for PubMed libguides.hsl.washington.edu/myncbi
 - ii. EBSCO Alerts for CINAHL and PsycInfo

4. Search Clinical Practice Guidelines

- a. National Guideline Clearinghouse guideline.gov HMO
From the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Evidence-based clinical practice guidelines.
- b. Nursing Reference Center ebscohost.com/nursing/products/nursing-reference-center \$HMO
See entry under Evidence Summaries 5.b
- c. PubMed pubmed.gov HMO
 - i. Limit to *Practice Guideline* under Article Types
- d. CINAHL ebscohost.com/biomedical-libraries/the-cinahl-database \$HMO
 - i. Limit to *Practice Guidelines* under Publication Type
- e. Association and Society guidelines

5. Search Evidence Summaries

- a. DynaMed ebscohost.com/dynamed \$HMO
Evidence-based summaries for over 3,500 topics that answer clinical questions.

Updated daily; monitors content of 500+ medical journals and systematic evidence review databases. Includes drug and disease information.

- b. **Nursing Reference Center** ebscohost.com/nursing/products/nursing-reference-center \$HMO
Provides nurses with evidence-based resources for point-of-care access including Quick Lessons with disease/condition overviews, Evidence-Based Care Sheets with summaries of diseases/conditions and the best treatment options, patient education handouts, drug information, nursing skills, CE, etc.
- c. **Natural Standard** naturalstandard.com \$HMO
Provides evidence-based information for complementary and alternative medicine, including herbs/dietary supplements, alternative practices modalities, comparative effective charts [Note: Natural Medicines will merge with Natural Standard in 2014].

6. Use a Meta-Search Engine

- a. **TRIP** tripdatabase.com HO
Simultaneously searches evidence-based sources of systematic reviews, practice guidelines, critically-appraised topics and more.
- b. **ACCESSSS** plus.mcmaster.ca/accessss/ O
Simultaneously searches evidence-driven medical publications and high quality clinical literature. Registration required.

7. Search for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses Resources

- a. **Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews** cochrane.org/ \$HMO
Systematic reviews of primary research in human health care and health policy that investigate the effects of interventions for prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation. Internationally recognized as the highest standard in evidence-based health care.
- b. **PubMed** pubmed.gov HMO
 - i. Select *Meta-Analysis* or *Systematic Reviews* under Article Types filter, OR
 - ii. Use the Clinical Queries section: Systematic Reviews
- c. **CINAHL** ebscohost.com/biomedical-libraries/the-cinahl-database \$HMO
 - i. Use Publication Type: Systematic Review or Meta Analysis
 - ii. Search for Meta Analysis as a Subject Heading

8. Find Resources on HEAL-WA healwa.org

- a. Online access to evidence-based health information resources for licensed Washington state nurses and other health professionals.
- b. Web portal to over 5,000 health-related journals, eBooks, databases and other eResources.
- c. eResources on this handout marked with an **H** are available on the HEAL-WA website.

Handout: <http://media.hsl.washington.edu/media/schnall/SNRC2014handout.pdf>
PowerPoint presentation: <http://media.hsl.washington.edu/media/schnall/SNRC2014pp.pdf>