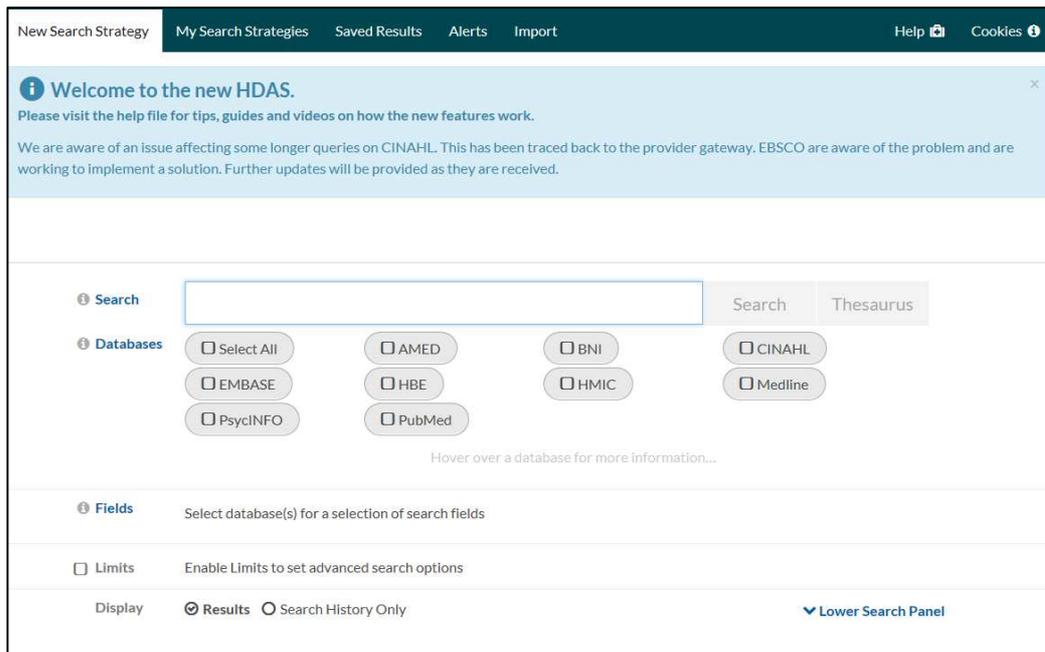


Searching For Healthcare Information

Accessing the Databases

Go to <https://www.evidence.nhs.uk/> and select 'Journals and Databases'.

Click on 'Healthcare Databases Advanced Search (HDAS)'. You will then need to login with your OpenAthens username and password.



Hover your cursor over the individual databases for more details about that particular database.

You can select more than one database but this will restrict you to a basic keyword search only.

For an advanced search, select one database at a time.

How to Search

Firstly you need to formulate a clear question. This should generate search terms. There are models which may help you do this such as PICO:

P = Population, (e.g. patient group, problem, condition, disease gender, age etc.) - what's the problem about? Who's affected?

I = Intervention (e.g. treatment, exposure, diagnostic test, drug, procedure) – what is being done?

C = Comparison (not always applicable) – what's the alternative, comparing your intervention with another treatment or test.

O = Outcome (e.g. reduced mortality, improved quality of life, length of stay, cost effectiveness, complications) - what effect will it have?

You may want to include a separate search for a setting if this is relevant, e.g. critical care, hospital, primary care etc. If you want a particular study type. e.g. RCT, this can be added as a limit at the end of your search. (see Applying Limits below).

A question such as 'Does the flu vaccine help reduce absenteeism in healthcare workers? Could be broken down as follows:

P	I	C	O
Health personnel Healthcare workers Healthcare staff Nurses Doctors Hospital staff etc.	Flu vaccine Influenza vaccination Influenza immunization etc.		Absence Sick leave Absenteeism etc.

AND and OR

The process is to list synonymous / similar terms under each column heading. These are then combined using **OR**

Once this has been done, combine each column using **AND**.

It is not necessary to fill each column. Your question may not even be suitable for the PICO model.

The main thing to remember is you MUST break your question down into different concepts.

Carrying out a Search.

Sample Question: *Is there a relationship between passive smoking and lung cancer in males?*

We will break down this question into two main concepts:

1. Passive smoking
2. Lung cancer.

We will then limit the results to Males

Begin with one of the concepts and carry out a keyword search for the term. Then continue searching the same concept, thinking of synonymous terms, potential alternative spellings (e.g. American), singular and plurals.

The search for passive smoking may include the following keywords:

- passiv* smok*
- second hand smok*
- secondhand smok*
- Involuntary smok*
- tobacco pollution
- etc.

Note: the * is used as a wildcard to truncate a word. Thus, smok* will retrieve the words smoke, smokes, smoked, smoking.

So far our search on CINAHL looks like this:

Current search strategy:

	Database(s)	Search Term		
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	CINAHL	(passive smok*).ti,ab	View Results (639) Edit
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	CINAHL	(second hand smok*).ti,ab	View Results (271) Edit
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	CINAHL	(secondhand smok*).ti,ab	View Results (861) Edit
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	CINAHL	(Involuntary smok*).ti,ab	View Results (27) Edit
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	CINAHL	(tobacco pollution).ti,ab	Viewing (26) Edit

All AND OR

Search

Databases

Select All AMED BNI CINAHL Medline

EMBASE HBE HMIC

PsycINFO PubMed

Hover over a database for more information...

Fields [More Fields](#)

Following this keyword search, we now need to search for the subject term for passive smoking. We will use the thesaurus mapping facility. We find the thesaurus term as follows:

Search

Databases

Select All AMED BNI CINAHL Medline

EMBASE HBE HMIC

PsycINFO PubMed

Hover over a database for more information...

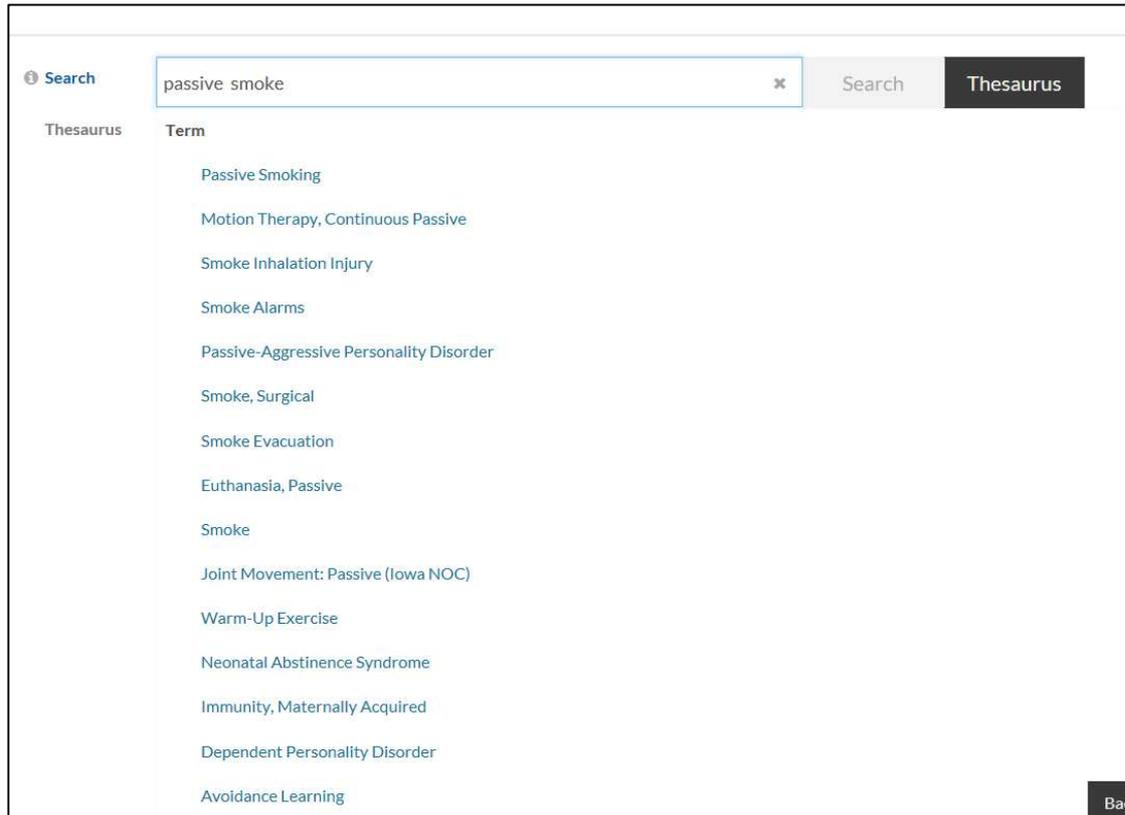
Fields [More Fields](#)

Limits Enable Limits to set advanced search options

Display Results Search History Only [Raise Search Panel](#)

Enter your term and click on the Thesaurus tab.

This leads us to the following page:



What is thesaurus mapping?

When new articles are added to the databases they are indexed. This indexing is done with its own set of headings which describe the article. This special vocabulary is applied to help you retrieve the type of references you want by eliminating chance. The thesaurus mapping tool allows you to match your search term to the indexed vocabulary of a particular database.

Scope note

This tells you more about the term and other related terms.

Clicking the Select Box

This retrieves ALL articles with that subject term. i.e. where the subject has been classified as being either a major or minor component in the article.

Clicking the Major Box

This retrieves ONLY those articles where that the term has been classified as being a major component in the article.

Subheadings – these are specific characteristics of a main thesaurus term which will enable you to focus your search even further.

Clicking the Explode box

If you select Explode, this will broaden your search by searching for your thesaurus term plus any related narrower terms listed below.

The full thesaurus entry for Passive Smoking looks like this:

The screenshot shows a search interface with the query 'passive smoke' and a 'Thesaurus' tab selected. The interface displays a table of related terms with columns for 'Select', 'Explode', 'Major', 'Term', 'Broad', 'Narrow', 'Sibling', 'Used For', 'Related', 'Subheadings', and 'Notes'. The 'Passive Smoking' term is highlighted, and its 'Explode' checkbox is checked. Below it, a section titled 'Sibling Terms' lists other related terms like 'Environmental Monitoring', 'Inhalation Exposure', 'Maternal Exposure', 'Occupational Exposure', and 'Paternal Exposure'. Arrows point to the 'Explode' checkbox for 'Passive Smoking' and the 'Inhalation Exposure' term.

Thesaurus	Select	Explode	Major	Term	Broad	Narrow	Sibling	Used For	Related	Subheadings	Notes
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Exposure						Subheadings	Scope
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Passive Smoking	1		5			Subheadings	Scope
Sibling Terms											
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Monitoring						Subheadings	Scope
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inhalation Exposure						Subheadings	Scope
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maternal Exposure						Subheadings	Scope
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Occupational Exposure						Subheadings	Scope
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paternal Exposure						Subheadings	Scope

Our search now looks like this with all the terms now combined using **OR**.

The screenshot shows a search strategy interface. At the top, there is a 'Current search strategy' section with a text input field 'Name this strategy' and a 'Save Strategy' button. Below this is a table listing search terms across various databases (all set to CINAHL). The terms are: 1. (passive smok*).ti,ab; 2. (second hand smok*).ti,ab; 3. (secondhand smok*).ti,ab; 4. (Involuntary smok*).ti,ab; 5. (tobacco pollution).ti,ab; 6. exp "PASSIVE SMOKING*"/; 7. (1 OR 2 OR 3 OR 4 OR 5 OR 6). The 7th row is highlighted in green, and an arrow points to it. Below the table, there are buttons for 'Rerun Searches', 'Refresh Search', 'Copy', and a dropdown menu for logical operators with 'AND', 'OR', and 'Combine' options. The 'OR' operator is selected. At the bottom, there is a search interface with a text input field 'Select databases and search, or query thesaurus' and a 'Search' button. Below this, there are buttons for selecting databases: 'Select All', 'AMED', 'BNI', 'EMBASE', 'HBE', 'HMIC', 'PsycINFO', 'PubMed', and 'CINAHL' (which is selected).

Database(s)	Search Term	View Results	Edit
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 CINAHL	(passive smok*).ti,ab	View Results (639)	Edit
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 CINAHL	(second hand smok*).ti,ab	View Results (271)	Edit
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 CINAHL	(secondhand smok*).ti,ab	View Results (861)	Edit
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4 CINAHL	(Involuntary smok*).ti,ab	View Results (27)	Edit
<input type="checkbox"/> 5 CINAHL	(tobacco pollution).ti,ab	Viewing (26)	Edit
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6 CINAHL	exp "PASSIVE SMOKING*"/	View Results (3,117)	Edit
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 7 CINAHL	(1 OR 2 OR 3 OR 4 OR 5 OR 6)	View Results (3,628)	Edit

We now need to search lung cancer following the same process. i.e. keywords and thesaurus terms.

Current search strategy:

	Database(s)	Search Term			
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(passive smok*).ti,ab	View Results (639)	Edit	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(second hand smok*).ti,ab	View Results (271)	Edit	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(secondhand smok*).ti,ab	View Results (861)	Edit	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(Involuntary smok*).ti,ab	View Results (27)	Edit	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(tobacco pollution).ti,ab	View Results (26)	Edit	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	exp "PASSIVE SMOKING"/	View Results (3,117)	Edit	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(1 OR 2 OR 3 OR 4 OR 5 OR 6)	View Results (3,628)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(lung* AND (cancer* OR neoplasm* OR carcinoma*).ti,ab	View Results (13,240)	Edit	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	exp "LUNG NEOPLASMS"/	View Results (13,452)	Edit	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(8 OR 9)	Viewing (18,190)		

All
 AND OR

This gives us 18,190 results for lung cancer. Again, this relates to everything on CINAHL relating to lung cancer that may or may not be related to passive smoking.

We finally bring the two concepts together using **AND**. Our results are now 227. We will now limit these results to Males.

<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(passive smok*).ti,ab	View Results (639)	Edit	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(second hand smok*).ti,ab	View Results (271)	Edit	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(secondhand smok*).ti,ab	View Results (861)	Edit	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(Involuntary smok*).ti,ab	View Results (27)	Edit	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(tobacco pollution).ti,ab	View Results (26)	Edit	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	exp "PASSIVE SMOKING"/	View Results (3,117)	Edit	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(1 OR 2 OR 3 OR 4 OR 5 OR 6)	View Results (3,628)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(lung* AND (cancer* OR neoplasm* OR carcinoma*).ti,ab	View Results (13,240)	Edit	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	exp "LUNG NEOPLASMS"/	View Results (13,452)	Edit	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(8 OR 9)	View Results (18,190)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CINAHL	(7 AND 10)	Viewing (227)		

All
 AND OR

Applying Limits

To apply limits to your search put the number of the line you wish to limit (in our case line 11) and then tick the Limits box and choose the limits you want (in our case Males). Then click the Adding box. Our results total is now 75.

The screenshot displays a search results table with 12 rows. Row 11 is highlighted in green and contains the search expression '(7 AND 10)' with 'View Results (227)'. Row 12 is also highlighted in green and contains '11 [Gender Male]' with 'Viewing (75)'. Below the table is a control bar with buttons for 'Rerun Searches', 'Refresh Search', 'Copy', 'AND', 'OR', 'Combine', 'Delete Selected', and 'Export Options'. Below the control bar is a search input field containing '11' and a dropdown menu with 'Adding' and 'Thesaurus' options. Below the search input is a 'Databases' section with buttons for 'Select All', 'AMED', 'BNI', 'CINAHL', 'EMBASE', 'HBE', 'HMIC', 'PsycINFO', 'PubMed', and 'Medline'. Below the databases is a 'Fields' section with the text 'Fields are not available for existing search rows'. Below the fields is a 'Limits' section with a checked 'Limits' checkbox and dropdown menus for 'Article Type', 'Dates', 'Gender', 'Age Group', 'Language', and 'Other'. The 'Gender' dropdown is open, showing 'Female' and 'Male' options. Arrows point from the text above to the search input, the 'Limits' checkbox, the 'Gender' dropdown, the 'Male' option, and the 'Viewing (75)' result.

You can also filter for Clinical Query, as explained before. To do this click on *Other* to choose the queries you require.

The Clinical Query Limit

Clinical queries are pre-tested search strategies (or filters) which are made up of search terms that identify the methodology of a study. They are used as an effective way to retrieve particular types of studies that answer questions relating to therapy, diagnosis, prognosis, aetiology/etiology etc.

Selecting the appropriate filter, will:

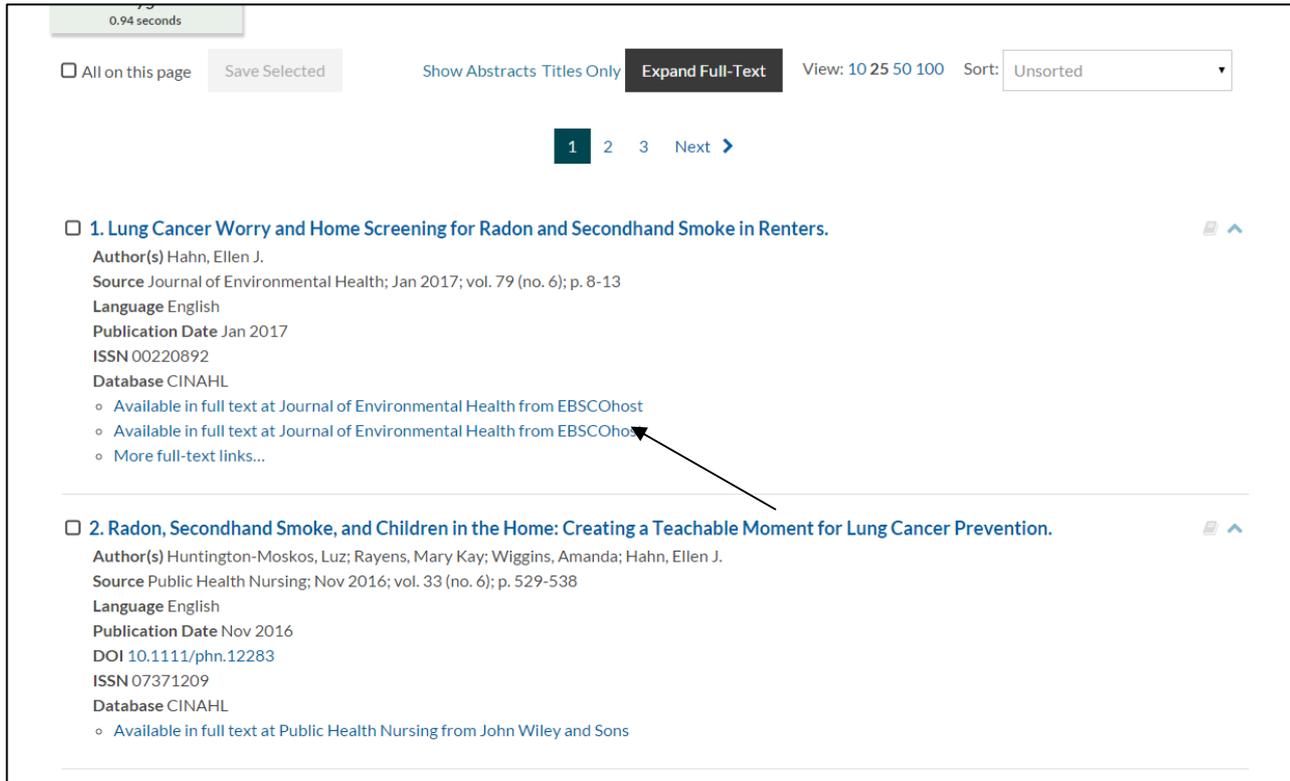
- increase the relevancy of your search
- introduce a level of consistency to your searching making it more systematic
- save you time in when conducting your search
- provide you with a particularly useful way of limiting a broad search

Clinical queries are available in Embase and CINAHL.

Filters may have: High sensitivity (broad) - giving most results
High specificity (narrow) - giving least results
Optimized – giving medium results

The Search Results

The results are displayed as follows:



0.94 seconds

All on this page Save Selected Show Abstracts Titles Only **Expand Full-Text** View: 10 25 50 100 Sort: Unsorted

1 2 3 Next >

1. Lung Cancer Worry and Home Screening for Radon and Secondhand Smoke in Renters.  

Author(s) Hahn, Ellen J.
Source Journal of Environmental Health; Jan 2017; vol. 79 (no. 6); p. 8-13
Language English
Publication Date Jan 2017
ISSN 00220892
Database CINAHL

- Available in full text at Journal of Environmental Health from EBSCOhost
- Available in full text at Journal of Environmental Health from EBSCOhost
- More full-text links...

2. Radon, Secondhand Smoke, and Children in the Home: Creating a Teachable Moment for Lung Cancer Prevention.  

Author(s) Huntington-Moskos, Luz; Rayens, Mary Kay; Wiggins, Amanda; Hahn, Ellen J.
Source Public Health Nursing; Nov 2016; vol. 33 (no. 6); p. 529-538
Language English
Publication Date Nov 2016
DOI [10.1111/phn.12283](https://doi.org/10.1111/phn.12283)
ISSN 07371209
Database CINAHL

- Available in full text at Public Health Nursing from John Wiley and Sons

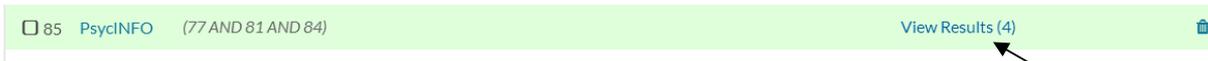
Some results have direct links to the full-text.

If you require the full-text for a reference without such a link you have the following options:

1. Check the UHSM Library ejournals catalogue via the library homepage:
<http://www.academylibrary.org.uk/>
2. See if you can get access via your university collection if you are a student
3. Request it as a document supply.
http://www.uhsmacademylibrary.org.uk/inter_library_loans/illcharges.asp

Saving your results

To save the final search results in a dataset simply click on 'view results'. Then either select the results you want to save, or 'select all' if you want to save all of them, and then click on 'save all'.



85 PsycINFO (77 AND 81 AND 84) View Results (4) 

Database(s) Search Term

85 PsycINFO (77 AND 81 AND 84) Viewing (4)

relationship*).ti,ab OR ("therapeutic alliance*).ti,ab) AND (*"PALLIATIVE CARE"/ OR ((palliative OR terminal) AND care).ti,ab OR (end of life care).ti,ab)"

PsycINFO
4/4
0.38 seconds

All on this page **Add 4 to Saved** [Show Abstracts Titles Only](#) [Expand Full-Text](#) View: 10 25 50 100 Sort: Unsorted

1

1. Supportive and palliative care needs of families of children who die from cancer: An Australian study

Author(s) Monterosso, Leanne; Kristjanson, Linda J.
Source Palliative Medicine; Jan 2008; vol. 22 (no. 1); p. 59-69
Publication Date Jan 2008
DOI 10.1177/0269216307084608
ISSN 0269-2163
Database PsycINFO
Show Abstract

- Available in full text at Palliative Medicine from SAGE Premier Health Sciences
- Available in full text at Palliative Medicine from ProQuest (Hospital Premium Collection) - NHS Version

2. Pediatric Palliative Care Moving Forward: Empathy, Competence, Quality, and the Need for Systematic Change

Author(s) Kane, Javier R.
Source Journal of Palliative Medicine; Aug 2006; vol. 9 (no. 4); p. 847-849
Publication Date Aug 2006
DOI 10.1089/jpm.2006.9.847
ISSN 1096-6218
Database PsycINFO
Show Abstract

Back to top

To view your saved results click on the Saved Results link at the top of the page.

NICE Healthcare Databases
Advanced Search nhsoschaff001

New Search Strategy My Search Strategies **Saved Results** Alerts Import Help Cookies

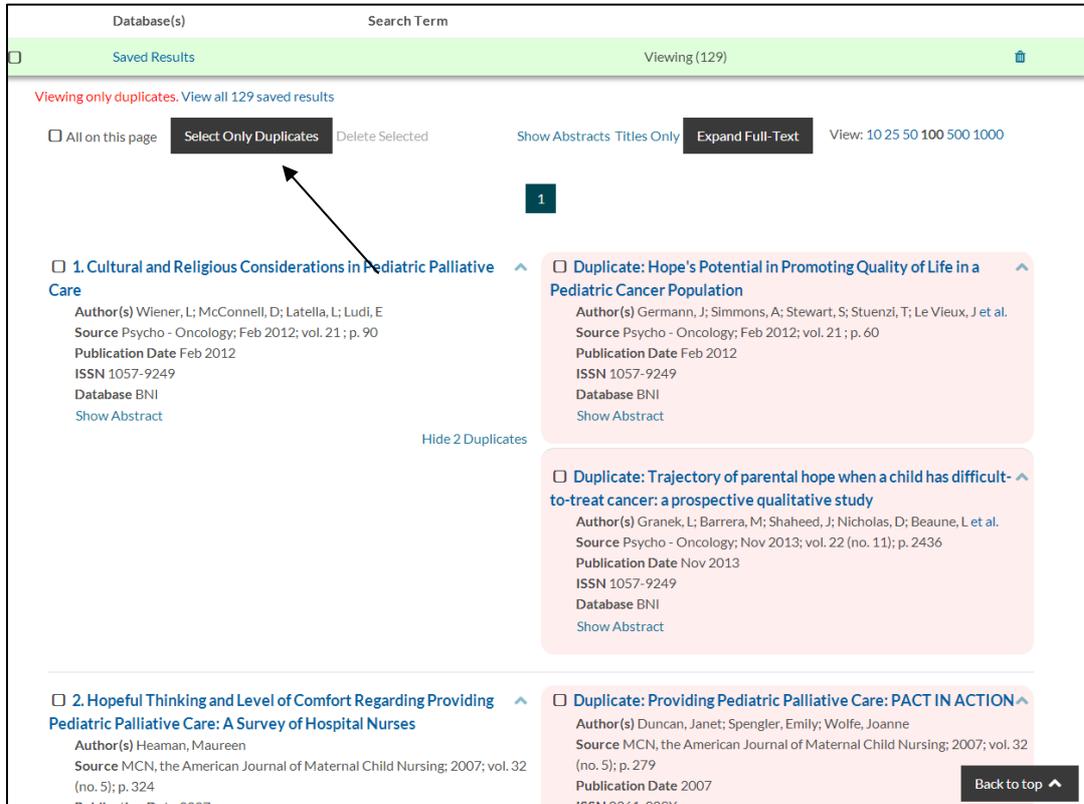
Provided in Partnership by HEE and NICE

NICE

NHS
Health Education England

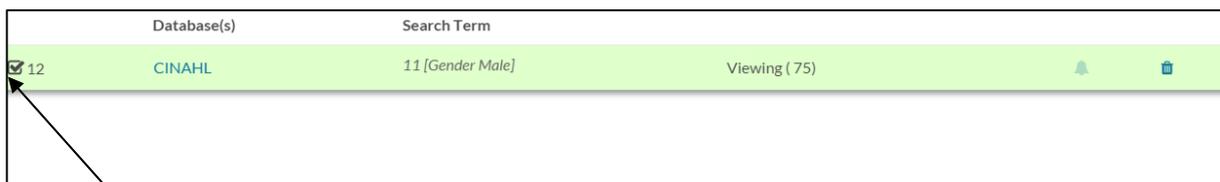
Removing duplicates

To remove duplicates go into Saved Results and click on the Results saved link. At the top of the page there will be a link showing how many duplicates there are. Click on that link, click on Select Only Duplicates and then click on Delete Selected.

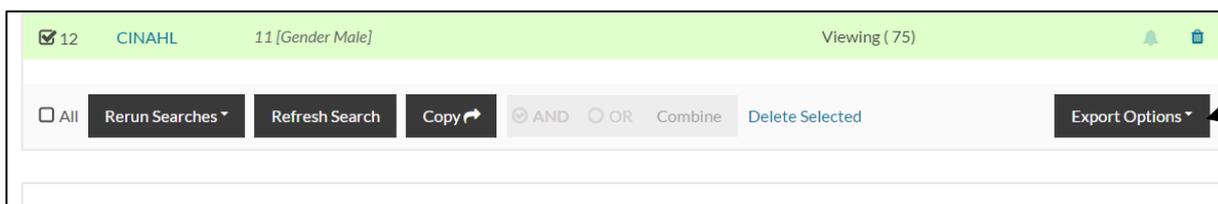


Exporting results

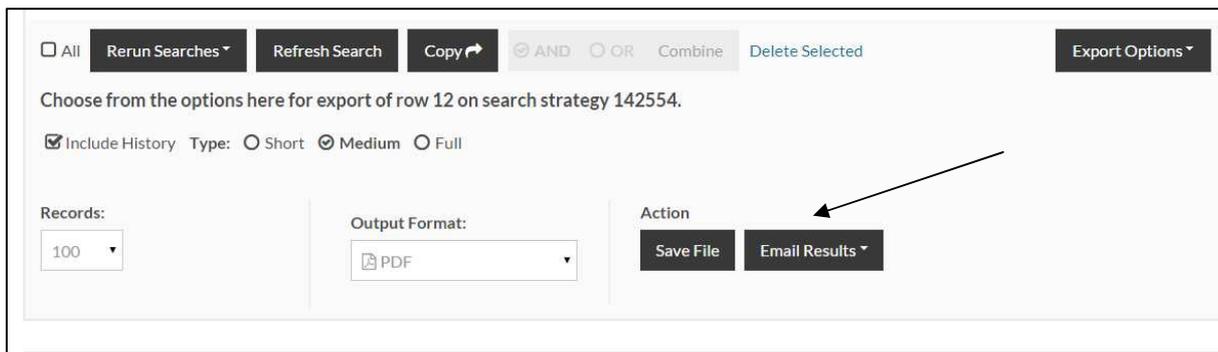
To export your results tick the line corresponding to the results you want to export.



Then scroll up until you see the Export Options tab:

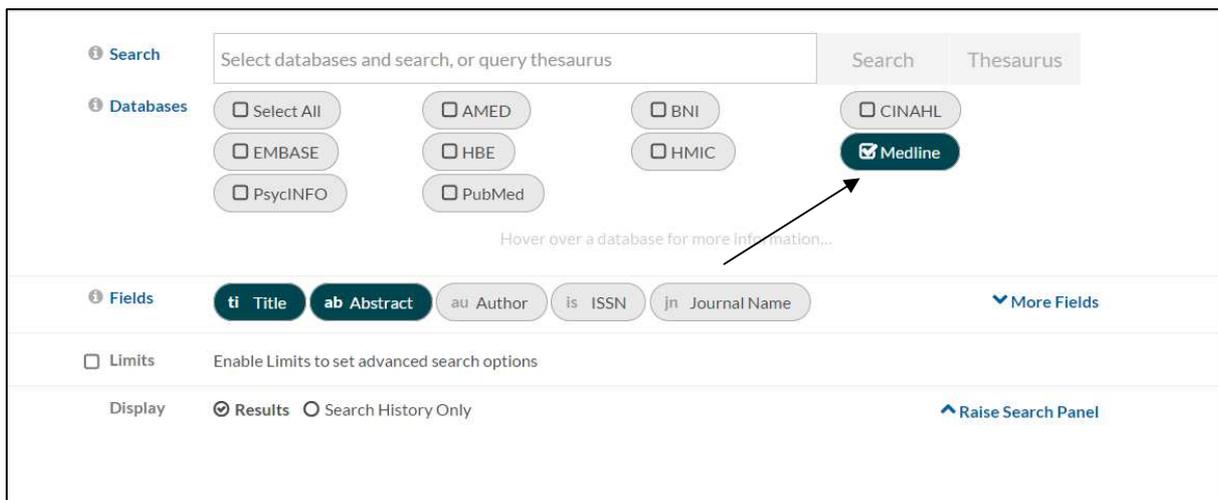


Select the options you want (include search history, format, output etc.) and select either save file or email results.



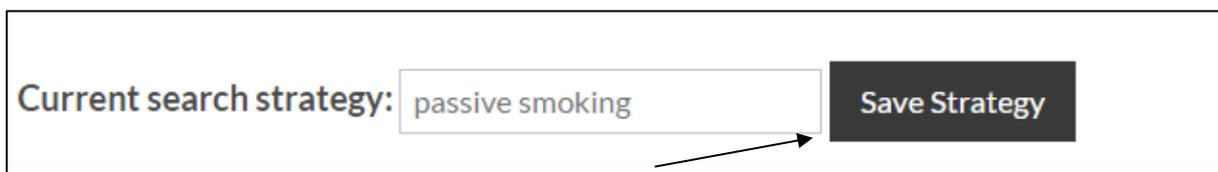
Changing Databases

Once you have finished your search you have the option of searching again using a different database. Make certain the search box is empty and the Limits box is unticked and simply choose a different database.

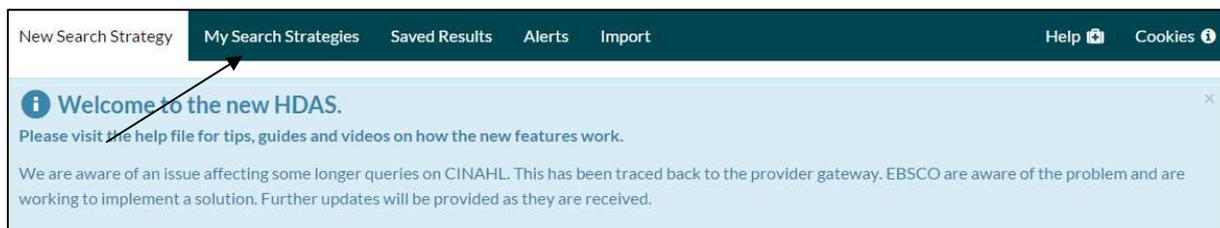


Saving your search

At the top of the page you will see Current search strategy:

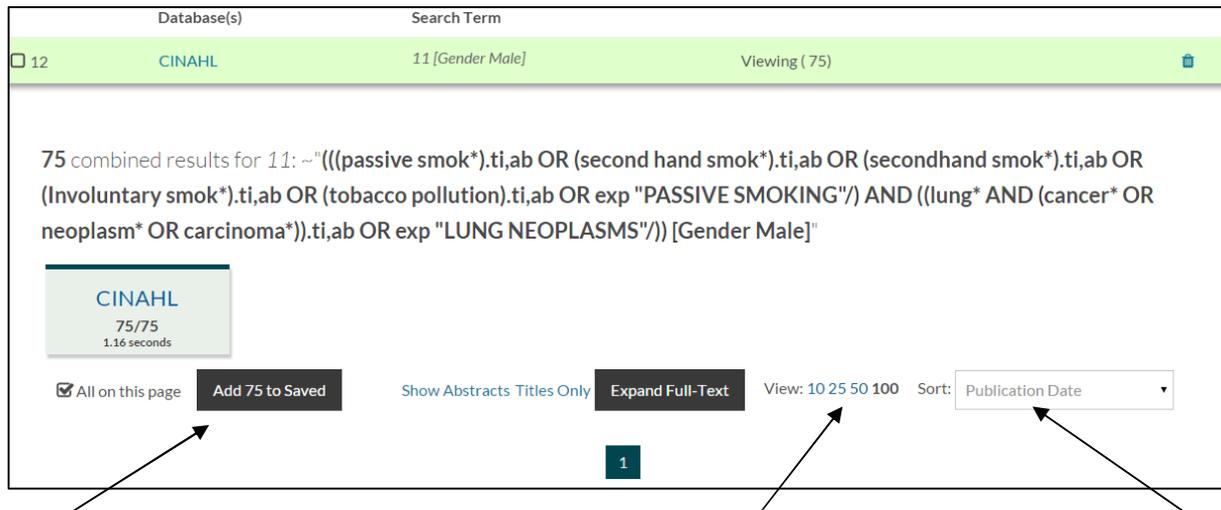


Simply choose a name for your search and click Save Strategy. Your search is now saved. To retrieve your search go to the menu at the very top of the page and select My Search Strategies and select the search you want to run.



Saving your results

To save your results click on the line corresponding to the results you want to save. Choose the number of results you want to view (10 25 50 or 100), how you'd like the results to be sorted (publication date, relevance, etc.) and click the 'Add ___ to Saved tab' (the number will vary to the number of results you are saving, in this case 75).



Common syntax:

There is a common way of searching across all Healthcare using the same wildcards and operators. Here is a brief overview.

TRUNCATION	SYMBOL
A way to search for alternative endings of words. You need to think of the root of your word and apply the wildcard *. Unlimited truncation e.g. manag* finds manage, manages, managing, managed, management etc. Be careful however e.g. nurs* finds nurse, nurses, nursing, nurse-led but also nursery.	*
Limited truncation: number (<i>n</i>) specifies the maximum characters after wordstem e.g. Child*4 finds child, children Doesn't find Childhood, childless	* <i>n</i>
The optional wild card character ? (question mark) can be used within or at the end of a search term to substitute for one or no characters. This wild card is useful for retrieving documents with British and American word variants. Example colo?r retrieves results that contain the words color or colour . You can use multiple wild cards in a single query word.	?

BOOLEAN OPERATORS	
Finds records containing BOTH terms. e.g. heart and exercise	AND
Finds records containing either term e.g. smoking or tobacco	OR
Use brackets to include more than one type of operator e.g. (diet or nutrition) and diabetes	()
Excludes terms – use with care e.g. Alopecia not (cancer or chemotherapy)	NOT
Will default to AND	No command

PROXIMITY CONNECTORS	
<p>Finds records where the terms appear within <i>n</i> words of each other in either direction. e.g. hyperactiv* adj7 child* finds e.g ‘child/children who are diagnosed as being hyperactive....’ note: hyperactiv* will also pick up the term ‘hyperactivity’ which should further improve the results.</p>	ADJn

PHRASES	
<p>Use adj between words or quotation marks to find a phrase. e.g. “play therapy” finds play therapy only. It will not find play-based therapy, play and music therapy</p>	“.....”

HYPHENATED WORDS	
<p>There is no need to include hyphens (-) in search terms such as hand washing or side effects, as the results will be the same. Keep in mind that terms such as hand washing and well being may also be written as handwashing or wellbeing.</p>	-

Refining a search

What to do if you don't find what you are looking for? Searching for literature can occasionally lead to unsatisfactory results. There are generally two types of problems that may be encountered:

- Too many irrelevant articles in the search result
- Too few relevant articles generated by the search.

Ideally when carrying out a literature search the results should find all of the articles which are relevant to the question, while excluding any article which is not relevant.

Too Many Irrelevant Articles

If the search results contain a large amount of irrelevant articles try:

- Using the thesaurus
- Using the NOT command to exclude a concept which is not wanted. (Use only if results have a strong bias towards a topic that you do not want at all as you may remove some useful information.)
- Searching for phrases using “ ”. For example if you search for **Mental Health** without quotation marks, the results generated include irrelevant hits where the words mental and health appear in any order, anywhere in the title or abstract.
- Think of more precise keywords that can be used/added to the search.
- Using the Limits, such as limit to geographical location, age group etc.
- Limiting the date of publication range.
- Searching by **Title**, or **title and abstract**, rather than **all fields**.
- Using the combine search option to fine tune your search.
- Select **Major** instead of **Select**.

Not Enough Useful Articles

If the search results do not contain enough useful articles try:

- Alternative spelling – Use the American and European spellings of a word. For example gynaecology or gynecology
- Different synonyms – try using alternative words or phrases to describe your search topic/concept. For example, try 'bandage' as an alternative to 'dressing' as a search term.
- Searching an alternative database. i.e. switch from Medline to EMBASE Widening your search – your search may be restricted by too many different concepts. Try removing one of the search terms or limits.
- Using the OR command, e.g. wound care OR 'wound management'
- Truncation – Use the * command to give suffix variations. For example, bandag* will find bandage, bandages, and bandaging
- Searching 'in any field' or 'in title and abstract' rather than just in title.

Note: If you are searching for results in a new area of research there may be few published articles.

Olivia Schaff - Clinical Librarian

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