PICO and Search Strategy Worksheet

Use the PICO method to create a research question and related sub-questions.

1. Describe the problem you want to investigate.
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

2. Explain what you want to learn from your research.
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

3. Explain why your research question is worth asking.
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

4. Define parts of your question using PICO.

   P: Patient/Problem ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

   I: Intervention _________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

   C: Comparison _________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

   O: Outcome _____________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

5. Draft your research question.
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________
6. Mark types of studies and publications to use in your research.

- Meta-analysis
- Cohort study
- Editorials, letters, opinions
- Systematic review
- Case control study
- Electronic textbooks
- Randomized control trial
- Case series or case report
- Clinical practice guidelines

7. List main topics and tools you can use to search.

Continue adding to this list as you read articles and learn how experts refer to your topic.

_____________________________  ________________________  _______________________

_____________________________  ________________________  _______________________

8. Select limits that may pertain to your search.

- Age
- Sex/gender
- Language
- Geography
- Publication year
- Ethnicity

9. Select databases to search.

- SuperSearch
- PubMed
- Google Scholar
- ScienceDirect
- Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition
- National Guideline Clearinghouse

**Question Types**

**Therapy**

**Formula**

In _________, how does _________ compared to _________ affect _________?

**Example**

In sexually active females under 17, how does an “advance prescription” compared to an instructional “wallet card” on obtaining emergency contraception affect their likelihood of using of emergency contraception?

**Etiology**

**Formula**

Are _________ who have _________ at more or less risk for/of _________ compared to _________ with/without _________?

**Example**

Are family caregivers of terminal cancer patients who attend a multidisciplinary discharge planning conference at more or less risk of burnout compared to caregivers who do not attend a discharge conference?
Diagnosis or Diagnostic Test

Formula
In __________, are (is) __________ more accurate in diagnosing __________ compared to __________?

Example
In pregnant women, is a paper and pencil three-question “self-assessment” survey accurate than a nurse practitioner “private interview” with the patient in identifying those at high risk for domestic partner violence during pregnancy?

Prevention

Formula
For __________, does the use of __________ reduce the risk of __________ compared to __________?

Examples
For adult patients in the ICU, do basinless baths reduce the risk of acquisition of MRSA compared to basin baths?
For first-time mothers, does daily support via phone call with a certified lactation consultant reduce the risk of early discontinuation of breastfeeding compared to weekly breastfeeding support group meetings lead by a certified lactation consultant?

Prognosis

Formula
Does __________ influence __________ in patients who have __________?

Example
Do daily “huddles” with nursing staff and the clinic nurse manager in an urban family practice site affect patient satisfaction?

Meaning

Formula
How do __________ with __________ perceive __________?

Example
How do first year surgical residents perceive acute care nurse practitioners?