PICO and Search Strategy Worksheet

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   ☐ Systematic review   ☒ Randomized control trial
   ☐ Cohort study    ☐ Case control study  ☐ Case series or case report
   ☐ Editorials, letters, opinions  ☐ Electronic textbooks  ☐ 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
☐ Language
☐ Publication year

☐ Sex/gender
☐ Geography
☐ Ethnicity

9. Select databases to search.

☐ SuperSearch
☐ PubMed
☐ ScienceDirect

☐ Google Scholar
☐ 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?