

Advanced Search Techniques in Terkko



Katri Larmo

Terkko - Meilahti Campus Library
University of Helsinki, Finland
Contact: katri.larmo@helsinki.fi

A fully booked classroom of Finnish Health Information Professionals gathered in Terkko Medical Campus Library (terkko.helsinki.fi) in November to learn more about Advanced Search Techniques for Systematic Reviews, Health Technology Assessment and Guideline Development. The training was organized by Bibliothecarii Medicinae Fenniae BMF (bmf.fi/Briefly+in+English).

We were very lucky to have two international experienced expert trainers Carol Lefebvre (Lefebvre Associates Ltd) and Julie Clanville (York Health Economics Consortium) to give us hands-on-training. The course was one of the all-time favorites of BMF seminars: it was fully booked in just a couple of days. The participants were from all over Finland, from different organizations: in addition to Terkko's information specialists, colleagues from University of Turku, Finnish Medical Society Duodecim, National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finnish Office for Health Technology Assessment, UKK Institute (Centre for Health Promotion Research), Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Social Insurance Institution of Finland, Diaconia and Metropolia Universities of Applied Science joined the training.

Carol and Julie gave us plenty of in depth information and new ideas e.g. on identifying search terms, structuring searches, finding retractions, errata and comments, peer review of search strategies and testing strategy performance. We were also inspired to build research into our routine information retrieval activity. The whole day course was built in a nice way, so that we had time to for questions and discussion. As a result of the wide participant group, questions and discussions were very fruitful and covered many aspects of the search process.



Fig. 1. *Course participants*

Just to mention some of the tools and ideas that I personally found especially useful and interesting:

- 1) Checklists for peer review of search strategies: e.g. Evidence Based Checklist for the Peer Review of Electronic Search Strategies: <http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/EBLIP/article/view/7402>
- 2) PubReMiner and other tools for identifying search terms: <http://hgserver2.amc.nl/cgi-bin/miner/miner2.cgi>

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3) Keeping in mind that there is plenty of research on search strategies that can be found e.g. in the Cochrane Methodology Register

4) Many useful information sources to help developing searches, e.g. Summarized Research in Information Retrieval for HTA (SuRe Info): htai.org/vortal/?q=sure-info; Also see article about SuRe Info in Journal of EAHIL: eahil.eu/journal/journal_2013_vol9_n2.pdf

The intense and rewarding course day was finalized at our course dinner at the Finnish classic restaurant Elite (elite.fi/en) – favored by artists as well as the inhabitants of the neighbouring blocs since 1932.

Thank you to our excellent trainers Carol and Julie and all the active course participants!



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- to keep health librarians and information officers professionally informed
- to encourage mobility and continuing education
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