

Evidence-Based Information Group: year report 2023

Jane Falconer (a), Thomas Vandendriessche (b), Shona Kirtley (c), Krizia Tuand (d), Maria Björklund (e), Marshall Dozier (f), Andra Fry (g), Mark Mueller (h), Nele S. Pauwels (i)

(a) Library, Archive & Open Research Services, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, London, UK, jane.falconer@lshtm.ac.uk

(b) KU Leuven Libraries - 2Bergen, Leuven, Belgium

(c) UK EQUATOR Centre, Centre for Statistics in Medicine, Nuffield Department of Orthopaedics, Rheumatology & Musculoskeletal Sciences, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK

(d) KU Leuven Libraries - 2Bergen - Learning Centre Désiré Collen, Leuven, Belgium

(e) Library & ICT, Faculty of Medicine, Lund University, Lund, Sweden

(f) Library, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, UK

(g) LSE Library, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK

(h) Clinical Librarian, Saskatchewan Health Authority, Canada

(i) Knowledge Centre for Health Ghent, Ghent University, Ghent University Hospital, Ghent, Belgium

Introduction

2023 has been another busy year for the Evidence-Based Information Special Interest group (EBI-SIG). We had our annual meeting at the 2023 EAHIL Conference in Trondheim where we presented results from many of our projects. In addition, we also ran our second journal club meeting.

SIG meeting, 22 June 2023 at the 2023 EAHIL Conference, Trondheim (held online via Zoom)

Approximately 25 SIG members attended our annual SIG meeting. After an update from the SIG committee, each project team provided an update on their project, inviting questions from attendees.

Meeting minutes and copies of the project presentations are available in the SIG GoogleDrive folder (<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1uxWrkLU0fqDkYPPiRReeFUaj8luzGBzL>).

Updates from SIG projects

Project 1: Mapping journal requirements for systematic reviews

This study aims to evaluate and propose enhancements to the guidance outlined in the author instructions of biomedical and health journals concerning the conduct and reporting of systematic reviews. The project plan has been made available on the Open Science Framework Registries (1) and the scientific report is currently undergoing peer review for publication in a scientific journal. Once the results are published, it will be intriguing to observe how the findings are disseminated and the potential impact of the recommendations on the conduct and reporting practices of systematic reviews in the field of biomedical and health research.

Project 2: Reference database on articles about systematic search methods

This project team runs our journal clubs. Our second journal club was run in April 2023 (see below) and a third is planned in December 2023. We also published a paper in the JEAHIL June 2023 issue discussing how invitation of authors and users can bring useful perspectives to journal clubs and our profession (2).

NEWS FROM EAHIL SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Project 3: Peer-reviewing search strategies post-submission

This project focusses on the peer-review process of search strategies upon submission to a journal. More specifically it wants to provide hands-on support to our network of professionals, by focussing on building/expanding a community of practice, developing strategies to get library professionals involved in this journal peer-review process and providing training material on this topic.

Since this is a big endeavour we started out with writing a project outline, which will help us to tackle each pillar of this project in a structured way.

One of the first steps within this project is to look out for supporting material, tools and information that already exists and to promote this within our network. That's why we started with a call via an e-mail to the EBI-SIG. Should you still have any tips on useful existing training material or communication channels that are also focussing on post-submission peer-review of search strategies, you can still contact our project member Shona Kirtley for this. If you have a lot of experience with post-submission peer-review and would like to share tips, or even be open to participate in a webinar/discussion panel, we would be very happy for you to contact us.

Project 4: Library of search-strategy resources

This project has a main goal of creating a central hub of free resources for individuals involved in searching for and developing healthcare-related search strategies. In June 2023, we proudly launched the current version of the Library of Search Strategy Resources (LSSR) (3). Over the past year, the website has evolved from a simple list of links to a more user-friendly platform with an appealing design and the addition of images. In this first phase, the main focus was on creating a Collections section, organised by themes to make it easier for users to access. Users can now enjoy these features:

- browsing: explore our collections to quickly find search strategies organised by theme;
- searching: use the search feature to discover relevant resources using specific keywords.

Since the site's initial launch in 2022, it has welcomed 4,200 visitors from 70 countries. Since the relaunch in June 2023, it has so far received 2,700 visitors from 61 countries.

Future work will focus on revamping the tools and guidance sections, as well as introducing new sections dedicated to educational resources and a glossary.

The resource has been presented at the 2023 EAHIL Conference in Trondheim, as well as other events.

Project 7: Tools in R for health libraries

Project 7 ran a workshop at EAHIL 2023 in Trondheim where the interim results were presented. We have found that traditional bibliographic databases are not the best places to search for details of R-tools, grey literature sources should be used instead. 62 R-tools have been found so far, the majority covering aspects of searching, connecting to specific databases or reference management. Future work will continue searching for R-tools in other databases with the aim of recommending search strategies to the wider community. The team will also identify gaps in coverage which can be shared with developers of R-tools.

Journal club, April 2023

Our second journal club was held on Zoom and was facilitated by Maria Björklund (Lund University, Sweden). We discussed a paper on grey literature by Landerdahl Stridsbert et al. (4) The lead author Sara Landerdahl-Stridsberg and her researcher colleague Matt Richardson were invited to the journal club which was much appreciated and led to interesting discussions on the role and contribution of information specialists from different professional perspectives.

Future events and activities

Webinar on PRESS (Peer Review of Electronic Search Strategies) Guidance, led by Robin Featherstone and colleagues from CADTH. This will be held on Zoom on 4 December, 16:00-17:00 European time.

Journal club, led by Maria Björklund with special guest Irma Klerings. We will be discussing Irma's paper on rapid reviews search methodology. (5) This will be held on Zoom on 12 December, 15:00-16:00 European time.

A new project is planned, utilizing the outcomes from project 1. This will be titled 'Improving Journal Requirements for Systematic Reviews' and will focus on implementing the research conducted in project 1.

Conclusion

2023 has been a fruitful year for the SIG. As well as our usual meetings, our projects are producing outputs. We would like to extend a large thank you to all of our project volunteers who have contributed their time and expertise to our projects. The SIG organisers are currently assessing potential topics for new projects, to be launched as current projects achieve their objectives and are wound-up.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the EBI SIG project volunteers for their work on the SIG projects this year. A list of all project teams is available on the SIG website <https://eahil.eu/sig-2/evidence-based-information-group/>.

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