USING A TOOL TO TEACH
SEARCH STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

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TWO EMBEDDED LIBRARIANS...

**Pharmacy**
- PharmD students in 1st semester of study
- Goal: introduce complex search strategy development to answer drug information question
- Work is done in academic teams

**Public Health**
- PhD and DrPH students in 2nd semester of study
- Goal: Complete literature review for a research class. Students have completed advanced search skills training in the previous semester.
- Work is done individually
...SAME PROBLEMS

- Simple searches
- Vague searches
- Multiple searches for the same concept
- Poorly-developed searches
- Haphazard article selection
Pharmacy

1. Formulate your question (PICO)
2. Background research
3. Identify concepts
4. Identify synonyms and controlled vocabulary
5. Assemble search
6. Create database-specific search strategies
7. Search method narrative
8. PRISMA chart
9. Librarian feedback
10. Final reviewed strategies

Public Health

BREAKING DOWN THE SEARCH PROCESS
Librarian as reviewer rather than designer
RESULTS

- More robust search strategies
- Greater understanding of controlled vocabulary
- Improved knowledge of search process
- More student engagement
LEARNINGS

• Get IRB approval first!
• Delineate differences between PICO and search concepts
• Identify keywords first before getting into controlled vocabulary
• Form should be flexible to meet research needs of patron

FORM-SPECIFIC LEARNINGS

• Use plain-text content controls to allow tabbing from field to field
• Make sure Developer is turned off and “Restrict Editing” is turned on
Both forms have a Creative Commons license, allowing you to alter and use form as you like if it is for non-commercial use and is attributed.

To adjust the form to your own needs:

1. Download the form desired below.
2. Add/turn on the Developer toolbar in Microsoft Word.
3. Click on Restrict Editing and then “Stop Protection”.
4. Click on the “Design Mode” button and start editing.
5. Don’t forget to reverse steps 3 & 4 when you are ready to distribute the form!
