

Title: Free and open access online systematic review curriculum for broad audiences
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Background: Systematic reviews are relevant to a range of audiences that typically do not have prior evidence synthesis training. These include patients, payers, advocacy groups, policy makers, librarians, journalists, and legislative staff. However, there is a dearth of free, open-access materials to help these audiences fully understand and use evidence syntheses.

Objectives: To create and evaluate a free and open-access online curriculum designed to teach basic skills in the process of evidence synthesis to people without prior training.

Methods: We assembled an interdisciplinary team comprising experts in health communication and online education. They worked with systematic review experts to transform existing educational materials into an online curriculum for audiences without formal research training. We will disseminate the curriculum to a range of these audiences for feedback and subsequent revision.

Results: The curriculum includes 8 modules covering: 1) a general introduction, 2) setting up a research team and identifying relevant stakeholders, 3) developing a research question, 4) searching for and screening studies, 5) extracting study data, 6) evaluating risk of bias, 7) analyzing data, and 8) reporting findings. To aid learning, we also created short animations about basic systematic review concepts. We will report data on website traffic, such as unique page views, pages viewed per session, and course completion rates.

Conclusions: Using an interdisciplinary approach, we have developed an online curriculum that is accessible to audiences without prior evidence synthesis training. The format allows the curriculum to be adapted for multiple audiences and easily updated to keep pace with evolving knowledge and theory. After completing this curriculum, interested people should be able to pursue systematic review projects with the help and support of evidence synthesis experts. Other audiences will have a greater understanding of how to use and interpret systematic review findings.

Patient or healthcare consumer involvement: We will test course materials with a wide range of audiences including healthcare consumers, researchers, clinicians, and policy makers.

Attachments:

URL and screen shot of animation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-FQSSnaAtOU>



URL and screen shot of homepage:

<http://evsynthacademy.org/>



Screen shot of Introduction to Evidence Synthesis course

Previous module:
+ SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS

- ◀ USING SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS
- OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS
- OBESITY + C-SECTIONS
- RAS TREATMENTS

Next module:
IS THIS RIGHT FOR ME ▶

Maternal Obesity and Cesarean Sections

Here's another example of a systematic review in action: a study examining the link between maternal obesity and cesarean sections.



There's a fair amount of scientific evidence indicating that pregnant women who are overweight or obese have a higher risk of getting a cesarean section. But there's inconsistent data on the actual magnitude of this risk. Researchers who work at CESH conducted a meta-analysis with researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta to determine how much more likely it was for overweight or obese women to give birth by cesarean section compared to women who were not overweight.