

STEP 1: DEVELOPING A CLINICAL QUESTION

Once a topic has been selected for development of a BEST, identify or refine the clinical question.

Key components of the clinical question define the criteria for a more precise electronic literature search (*the PICO model*).

In addition to the Patients/Population, Interventions, Comparisons, and Outcomes (*PICO*), the type of question and the type of study are also helpful in defining the strategy for the evidence search.

Components of a clinical question include the following:

P Patient / Population

Identify the condition-specific group (*Population*) for which outcome improvement is desired.

Some examples of population characteristics may include but are not limited to:

- Age
- Gender
- Disease / Condition
- Care Setting

Among school-aged children with candy cravings who are studying,

I Intervention

Identify specific *Intervention* that may affect the desired outcome.

Intervention may be a clinical intervention or a process change.

do peanut M&Ms

C Comparison

Identify the current clinical practice (*may be no treatment*).

- Describe current practice, if known by team, based on collective experience
- Conduct an electronic survey of current practice, if not fully aware of current practices
- Conduct chart reviews to determine current practice, if other methods are not sufficient

compared to plain chocolate M&Ms

O Outcome

Identify clinical or functional outcomes or results that are desired. *Outcome* is measurable.

improve homework completion and/or grades?

Once all components have been identified, the clinical question can be written:

Among school-aged children with candy cravings who are studying, do peanut M&Ms compared to plain chocolate M&Ms improve homework completion and/or grades?

Other versions of the PICO include PICO(TT) or PICO(TS):

PICOTT:

Population, Interventions, Comparators, Outcomes, Timing, Type of study

PICOTS:

Population, Interventions, Comparators, Outcomes, Timing, Setting

STEP 1 COMPLETED ITEMS – BEST TEMPLATE, USER CHECKLIST

- Clinical Question (*PICO*)

WE HAVE THE CLINICAL QUESTION, NOW WHAT?

Once the clinical question is developed, the team asks whether the question is important and merits development of a recommendation and possible BEST.

The following table may be helpful guidance for the team in this decision:

Status of the Evidence Base and Our Knowledge and Use of it in Practice	Team Action
A. If the evidence is pretty good and we all know what it is and our practice is consistent or standardized...	Let's not spend our limited time on this question; we're doing a pretty good job with this.
B. If at least some of us are aware of some good evidence, but our division doesn't really have it down yet in terms of dissemination to all providers, change in practice, and standardization of care...	It could be helpful to systematically search, appraise and summarize the evidence, so that we could distill it down into a specific and unambiguous recommendation that we could codify into practice.
C. If there is probably little to no evidence, but there is credible expert consensus (external and/or internal), and we could probably agree on a recommendation in order to standardize care...	It could be helpful to approve a consensus recommendation in order to standardize care.
D. If there is a large body of evidence, but it's not clear how much of it is good evidence and/or whether the results are consistent, and/or there is no good synthesis of this large body of evidence to easily get answers...	If there is interest in the topic... It could be helpful to systematically search, appraise and summarize the evidence, so that we could distill it down into a specific and unambiguous recommendation that we could codify into practice.
	If there is <i>no</i> interest in the topic... Let's not spend our limited time with this question at this point in the process.
E. If there is no evidence and there's a lack of consensus...	Let's not spend our limited time on this question at this point in the process.

Proceed to Step 2: Conducting the Literature Search

Refer to the EBDM website for additional information related to this step and other EBDM resources:

CCHMC employees: <http://groups/ce/NewEBC/EBCMain.htm>

Users not employed by CCHMC: <http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/evidence>