

Critically Appraised Topic Worksheet



The College of
Family Physicians
of Canada

Le Collège des
médecins de famille
du Canada



Pearls For Residents

CRITICAL APPRAISAL WORKSHEET 1

AN ARTICLE ON THERAPY

This worksheet should be submitted along with the completed Submission Form to your supervisor. It is based on the articles on therapy from the JAMA series on Users' Guides to the Medical Literature. Reading these articles should be helpful to you in working through this worksheet as it pertains to your key article(s). Feel free to make photocopies. You can also print off additional copies from the CFPC Web Site (www.cfpc.ca/membership/submitting.htm).

Author(s): _____

Short title: _____

Journal/Year/Volume/ Pages: _____

A. ARE THE STUDY RESULTS VALID?	
1. Was the assignment of patients to treatment groups truly randomized?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Can't tell
2. Were all patients who entered the study accounted for appropriately at the end? i) Is the number randomized the same as in results? (Try a best case/ worst case scenario.) ii) Were patients analysed in the groups they were allocated to at the start of the study?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Can't tell
3. Were patients, physicians, and those doing the assessments "blind" to treatment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Can't tell
4. Was similarity between groups documented? i) Is there a table of baseline characteristics? ii) Were differences controlled for in the analysis?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Can't tell
5. Aside from the intervention, were the groups treated in the same way?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Can't tell

Critically Appraised Topic Worksheet is a crucial tool in the field of evidence-based practice, particularly in healthcare and clinical research. It serves as a structured format that allows practitioners and researchers to systematically evaluate and synthesize evidence regarding specific clinical questions or topics. This article will explore the importance of critically appraised topics, the structure of a worksheet, and how to effectively use it in practice.

Understanding Critically Appraised Topics (CATs)

Critically Appraised Topics are summaries that distill evidence from primary research studies into a concise format that can be easily interpreted and

applied in clinical settings. They are designed to answer specific clinical questions or address particular health issues, providing healthcare professionals with a clear understanding of the available evidence.

The Importance of CATs

1. **Evidence-Based Practice:** CATs promote the use of the best available evidence to make informed clinical decisions. By summarizing and appraising research, they help bridge the gap between research and practice.
2. **Time Efficiency:** Healthcare professionals often face time constraints. CATs provide quick access to relevant research findings, allowing practitioners to make decisions without wading through extensive literature.
3. **Standardization:** A structured approach to appraising evidence ensures consistency across evaluations, which enhances the reliability of conclusions drawn from the research.
4. **Improved Patient Outcomes:** By utilizing CATs, healthcare providers can integrate the latest evidence into their practice, ultimately leading to better patient care and improved health outcomes.

Components of a Critically Appraised Topic Worksheet

A Critically Appraised Topic Worksheet typically includes several key components, each aimed at guiding the user through the appraisal process. Below are the essential elements of a CAT worksheet:

1. Clinical Question

A well-formulated clinical question is the cornerstone of a CAT. It should be specific, focused, and relevant to patient care. The PICO format (Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome) is often used to structure the question.

- **Population:** Who is the patient or population of interest?
- **Intervention:** What intervention or exposure are you considering?
- **Comparison:** Is there an alternative intervention or exposure to compare?
- **Outcome:** What are the expected outcomes or results you want to measure?

2. Search Strategy

This section outlines the methods used to locate relevant literature. It includes:

- **Databases Searched:** List the databases (e.g., PubMed, Cochrane Library) that were utilized.
- **Search Terms:** Include keywords and phrases used during the search.
- **Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria:** Describe the criteria used to determine which studies were relevant for inclusion in the appraisal.

3. Summary of Evidence

In this section, the user provides a concise summary of the studies reviewed, including:

- Study Design: Identify whether the studies were randomized controlled trials, cohort studies, case-control studies, etc.
- Population Characteristics: Briefly describe the population studied in the included research.
- Interventions and Comparisons: Summarize the interventions applied and comparisons made.
- Outcomes Measured: Highlight the primary outcomes that were assessed in the studies.

4. Critical Appraisal

This section involves evaluating the validity and reliability of the studies included in the summary. Key aspects to consider include:

- Bias: Assess potential biases in study design, sample selection, and data collection.
- Validity: Determine the internal and external validity of the studies.
- Results: Summarize the key findings and their significance, including confidence intervals and statistical significance.

5. Implications for Practice

Here, the user reflects on how the findings apply to clinical practice. This may include:

- Recommendations: Provide clear recommendations based on the evidence.
- Limitations: Discuss any limitations of the studies that may impact the applicability of the findings.
- Future Research: Identify areas where further research is needed to strengthen the evidence base.

How to Use a Critically Appraised Topic Worksheet

The effective use of a CAT worksheet can significantly enhance clinical decision-making. Here are steps to guide practitioners through the process:

1. Formulate a Specific Clinical Question

Start by identifying a clinical problem or uncertainty in practice. Utilize the PICO format to structure your question clearly, ensuring it addresses the relevant aspects of patient care.

2. Conduct a Comprehensive Literature Search

Use various databases to find studies that address your clinical question. Be systematic in your search, and document your search strategy thoroughly, including all terms and filters used.

3. Summarize the Evidence

Once you have gathered relevant studies, summarize their findings in a clear and concise manner. Highlight essential details that will aid in your appraisal and future applications.

4. Critically Appraise the Evidence

Evaluate the quality of the studies critically. Consider the methodological strengths and weaknesses, potential biases, and the relevance of the findings to your practice.

5. Draw Conclusions and Make Recommendations

Based on your appraisal, draw conclusions regarding the applicability of the evidence. Make recommendations for practice, and consider how the findings can be integrated into patient care.

6. Share Findings with Colleagues

Discuss your findings with peers and colleagues. Sharing insights can foster collaboration and promote a culture of evidence-based practice within your organization.

Challenges and Limitations

While CATs and the associated worksheets are invaluable tools, there are challenges and limitations to consider:

1. **Quality of Evidence:** Not all studies are of high quality, and the presence of bias or confounding variables can undermine findings.
2. **Interpretation Variability:** Different practitioners may interpret findings differently based on their experiences and biases.
3. **Time Constraints:** Although CATs save time, the initial process of gathering and appraising evidence can be time-consuming.
4. **Access to Literature:** Some practitioners may face barriers to accessing certain research articles due to subscription requirements or institutional limitations.

Conclusion

The Critically Appraised Topic Worksheet is a powerful tool that enhances the practice of evidence-based medicine. By systematically evaluating and synthesizing research, healthcare professionals can make informed decisions that improve patient care. Despite challenges, the structured approach provided by CATs encourages critical thinking and fosters a culture of continuous learning and application of the best available evidence in clinical settings. Embracing the use of CATs not only benefits individual practitioners but ultimately enhances the quality of care provided to patients.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a critically appraised topic (CAT) worksheet?

A critically appraised topic worksheet is a structured tool used in evidence-based practice to summarize and critically evaluate the best available evidence on a specific clinical question or topic.

How do you create a CAT worksheet?

To create a CAT worksheet, first identify a clinical question, then search for relevant literature, critically appraise the evidence, and finally summarize the findings in a clear and concise manner.

What are the key components of a CAT worksheet?

The key components of a CAT worksheet typically include the clinical question, search strategy, summary of evidence, critical appraisal of studies, and implications for practice.

Why are CAT worksheets important in healthcare?

CAT worksheets are important because they facilitate the application of research evidence to clinical practice, improve decision-making, and enhance patient outcomes by ensuring that care is based on the best available evidence.

Who can use CAT worksheets?

CAT worksheets can be used by healthcare professionals, including nurses, physicians, and allied health workers, as well as students and educators in health-related fields.

What types of questions are suitable for a CAT worksheet?

Questions suitable for a CAT worksheet are often focused on clinical interventions, diagnostic tests, prognostic factors, or patient outcomes that require evidence-based answers.

How often should CAT worksheets be updated?

CAT worksheets should be updated regularly, ideally whenever new evidence is published that may change the recommendations or practices related to the topic in question.

What is the difference between a CAT and a systematic review?

The main difference is that a CAT is a concise summary of evidence focused on a specific clinical question, while a systematic review is a comprehensive analysis of all available studies on a broader topic.

Where can I find templates for CAT worksheets?

Templates for CAT worksheets can often be found in academic libraries, online educational resources, or through institutions that promote evidence-based practice in healthcare.

Find other PDF article:

<https://soc.up.edu.ph/30-read/pdf?docid=BjQ57-6010&title=how-to-make-pottery-at-home.pdf>

Critically Appraised Topic Worksheet

I just scanned a document from my printer. Where do I find them, ...

When I scan a document on my printer, where do I find it?

My copilot says I reached the "daily limit" after one (1) image.

Apr 30, 2025 · However, today it only allowed one image. And after I got the message that the daily limit has been reached, ALL of my images every generated are replaced with a "Daily ...

Excel - COUNTIF with Dates in relation to =TODAY()

Excel - COUNTIF with Dates in relation to =TODAY () I am putting together a weekly sales tracker for my sales team. I have a sales log on one sheet where all of the job information is put in ...

Finding out where the Windows 10 lock screen photos are from ...

Jul 16, 2024 · But today (4/30/25) when I have hit the lock screen, I'm only getting the beautiful landscape photograph with a small menu for news and weather across the bottom and NO ...

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Translate Today. See 4 authoritative translations of Today in Spanish with example sentences, phrases and audio pronunciations.

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Translate millions of words and phrases for free on SpanishDictionary.com, the world's largest Spanish-English dictionary and translation website.

How can I display files restored from recycle bin today

Mar 8, 2024 · I have restored MANY files today from the recycle bin to their respective folders. Can I list all of the files I restored today? Thank you!

How do you say "today" in spanish? in Spanish | English to ...

Translate How do you say "today" in spanish?. See authoritative translations of How do you say "today" in spanish? in Spanish with example sentences and audio pronunciations.

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QRCode Monkey - The free QR Code Generator to create custom QR Codes ...

QRCode Monkey is one of the most popular free online qr code generators with millions of already created QR codes.

Online QR Code Generator

Online QR Code Barcode Generator is a free, online, real-time to generate QR Code Barcode. Now you begin to create a QR Code or Barcode! Free Online Barcode Generator to make your ...

Free Online QR Code Generator (Creator)

Generate high-quality QR codes for your business or personal use with our free online QR code generator. Create custom codes with unique designs and easily share them with your audience.

Free Generator QR Online | Make QR code

Free generator QR code will help you to make QR online and without registration. Customize the design, add a logo, enter the required information and create a QR code!

Free QR Code Generator - Create QR codes with ease - Canva

Explore new ways to reach your customers with Canva's free QR code generator. Create your QR code for free and improve marketing materials, feedback loops, and even business cards. ...

Free Online QR Code Generator | Quick QR Code

2 days ago · Instantly generate high-quality QR codes with your own logo, colors, and design. Download in PNG, SVG, or PDF. No registration required - 100% free online QR code generator.

QR Online.io | Free QR Code Generator

Create custom QR codes supporting multiple content formats for all your needs. Free online QR code generator with customizable colors, logo embedding and high-quality output.

Online QR Generator | Create Free QR Codes

Access advanced functionalities with our dynamic QR code generator. Customize colors, layout, and logo on various QR code types and easily scan them on any device. Create high ...

Discover how to effectively utilize a critically appraised topic worksheet to enhance your research skills and decision-making. Learn more for valuable insights!

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