## Discussion points for ‘Peer Review of Search Strategies’ session

### Translation of the research question

* Does the search strategy match the research question/PICO?
* Are the search concepts clear?
* Are the search concepts too narrow or too broad?
* Boolean and proximity operators (these vary based on search service)
* Are Boolean operators used correctly?
* Is the use of nesting with brackets appropriate and effective for the search?
* Could precision be improved by using proximity operators (eg, adjacent, near, within) or phrase searching instead of AND? Is the width of proximity operators suitable (eg, might adj5 pick up more variants than adj2)?

### Subject headings (database specific)

* Are the subject headings relevant, or too broad or too narrow?
* Are subject headings exploded where necessary and vice versa?
* Are both subject headings and terms in free text (see the following) used for each concept?

### Text word searching (free text)

* Does the search include all spelling variants in free text (eg, UK vs. US spelling)?
* Does the search include all acronyms, synonyms or antonyms (eg, opposites)?
* Does the search capture relevant truncation (ie, is truncation at the correct place) or too broad or too narrow?
* Are the keywords specific enough or too broad? Are too many or too few keywords used?
* Have the appropriate fields been searched; for example, is the choice of the text word fields (.tw.) or all fields (.af.) appropriate? Are there any other fields to be included or excluded (database specific)?

### Spelling, syntax, and line numbers

* Are there any spelling errors?

### Limits

* Are all limits used appropriately and are they relevant given the research question?
* Are the limits too broad or too narrow? Can any limits be added or taken away?

Adapted from McGowan, J., Sampson, M., Salzwedel, D.M., Cogo, E., Foerster, V. & Lefebvre, C. 2016, "PRESS Peer Review of Electronic Search Strategies: 2015 Guideline Statement", *Journal of clinical epidemiology,* vol. 75, pp. 40-46. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclinepi.2016.01.021>