Using Healthcare Databases: Advanced Guide   April 2015

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You will need an **NHS OpenAthens** Username and Password to search the databases within this resource:-The databases included are:

Allied and Complementary Medicine (AMED) 1985 -

The Allied and Complementary Medicine Database (AMED) is a bibliographic database produced by the Health Care Information Service of the British Library. It covers a selection of journals in complementary medicine, palliative care, and several professions allied to medicine.

British Nursing Index (BNI) 1992-

The British Nursing Index (BNI) is a bibliographic database indexing articles from the most popular English language nursing journals published primarily in the UK. BNI covers all aspects of nursing, midwifery and community healthcare.

Cumulative Index of Nursing & Allied Health (CINAHL) 1981 -

CINAHL is an authoritative source of information for nurses, allied health professionals, and others interested in health care. It covers all aspects of nursing and allied health disciplines.

EMBASE 1974 -

The Excerpta Medica database (EMBASE) is a major biomedical and pharmaceutical database indexing over 3,500 international journals. EMBASE is one of the most widely used biomedical and pharmaceutical databases because of its currency and in-depth indexing. Frequent updates allow access to the latest medical and pharmacological trends. Approximately 375,000 records are added yearly.

HEALTH BUSINESS ELITE 1922 -

This database provides a range of journal content detailing all aspects of health care administration and other non-clinical aspects of health care institution management. Topics covered include hospital management, hospital administration, marketing, human resources, computer technology, facilities management and insurance.

HMIC 1979-

The Health Management Information Consortium (HMIC) database is a compilation of data from two sources, the Department of Health's Library and Information Services and King's Fund Information and Library Service. DH Data contains in excess of 174,000 records relating to health and social care management information. The majority of records are from 1983 onwards, although coverage of departmental materials dates back to 1919. Over a quarter of the records have abstracts.

Medline 1946 -

MEDLINE™ is the United States National Library of Medicine's (NLM™) premier bibliographic database providing information from the a number of fields namely Medicine Veterinary medicine; Nursing; Allied Health; Dentistry and Pre-clinical sciences. The MEDLINE database is the electronic counterpart of Index Medicus™, Index to Dental Literature, and the International Nursing Index. MEDLINE is the primary source of global information from international literature on biomedicine.

PsycINFO 1806-

Subjects covered relate to psychology and allied fields. These include drug and behavioural therapy, treatment of disease, drug addiction, developmental psychology, and educational psychology among other areas. The major emphasis of the database is on original research, while case studies, literature reviews, surveys and discussions are also covered.

Select the database(s) you want to search

Select / Unselect all

The Healthcare Databases search is more effective if you search one database at a time, so that you can use thesaurus subject headings, limits and field codes.

Search »

☐ **AMED**
Allied and Complementary Medicine
1985 to present
Allied health professions, complementary medicine
About

☐ **BNI**
British Nursing Index
1992 to present
Nursing, midwifery, health visitors
About

☐ **CINAHL**
Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature
1981 to present
Nursing, allied health professions
About

☐ **EMBASE**
Excerpta Medica Database
1980 to present
Drugs and pharmacology, other aspects of human medicine
About

☐ **Health Business Elite**
1922 to present
Healthcare administration, institution management
About

☐ **HMIC**
Health Management Information Consortium
1979 to present
Records from King's Fund and Department of Health
About

☐ **Medline**
1946 to present
General medical database
About

☐ **PsycINFO**
1806 to present
Psychology and allied fields
About

About Evidence Services

Clinical Knowledge Summaries
Journals and Databases
Evidence Search
Evidence Uncertainties (UK DUETs)

How to use journals and databases
How to use HDAS
How to search journals

Subscribe to our evidence awareness bulletins and access Evidence Updates

When to use these resources

You can search the healthcare databases available to:

- find specific information on a topic or combination of topics
- answer a clinical query
- find work by a particular author
- search or browse a particular journal

The databases contain references, often with informative summaries or abstracts, of articles in journals, guidelines, manuscripts, dissertations and book chapters. The databases cover every aspect of healthcare – from buildings and equipment through public health and social care to medicine, nursing and everything in between.

Where a **full text** copy of a document is available a link will be displayed with the reference. The link will lead to the article where you may read it online or download the article **free of charge**.

A search topic will determine how to search and which databases to use. You may find a basic search across a variety of databases will give you enough results for your needs. However, a systematic search to support evidence based practice, will require an Advanced Search. It is advisable that you search each database separately and search more than one database.

1. Advanced Searching – in a single database

Selecting a single database allows you to build a flexible and systematic search which can then be repeated in other databases. Most importantly, you can use the database's own indexing thesaurus to construct a comprehensive search, tailored to your needs. Additional Limits are also available when databases are searched separately.

- Go to Health Information for London Online (HILO) www.hilo.nhs.uk
- Click '**Healthcare databases'**.
- Enter your NHS OpenAthens username and password in the **LOGIN** box
- On the next screen, select a single database and click search. To help you decide which database is most appropriate for your subject, more detail about each database is provided using the **About** link
- In the print screen Medline is selected.

There are over 1000 free online journals available full text. These have been purchased for you by NHS England or your local NHS Library service. Your NHS OpenAthens username and password gives you direct access to these journals at http://www.library.nhs.uk/booksandjournals/journals as well as links from the healthcare databases. Links to free open access collections like PubMed Central archives may also be included

1.1. Planning your search

Before you begin, it is a good idea to plan your search. The seven steps recommended below will help you to construct a systematic literature search.

1. Clearly focus your topic and identify your keywords
2. Identify alternative or similar terminology and spellings
3. Select a database
4. Perform the search
5. Combine terms
6. Identify and apply limits
7. Assess results

Step 1: Focus your topic and identify your keywords

- Think carefully about the question you want answered
- You will not obtain good results by entering whole sentences or questions
- You need to break questions down into search topics reflecting any different concepts
- One useful tool to help focus your question is the PICO model. You may not need all four elements of PICO to construct your search; at least two will give useful results.

> **Query example**: Is physical activity/ exercise effective in reducing sick leave for people suffering from low back pain?

P – Patient / Population / Problem	*Consider the characteristics of your patient/s and the problem you are addressing, e.g. low back pain*
I - Intervention / exposure	*e.g. physical activity*
C - Comparison	*You may want to compare one intervention with another, or with no intervention*
O - Outcome	*The effect/s you would expect your intervention to have, e.g. reduced sick leave*

Step 2: Identify alternative keywords

- For each identified concept, think of any alternative or similar words and terminology to be incorporated into the search.
- You may also find additional terms whilst searching.
- Below are some alternatives for our query example:

P - low back pain	
I - physical activity	exercise
C -	
O - sick leave	absence / absenteeism

Step 3: Select databases

- Choose databases which cover the topics you need. You will need to search more than one to be thorough, e.g. both AMED and CINAHL cover Allied health medicine; Embase and Medline both cover Medicine.

Step 4: Perform the search

Search for each concept separately.

In order to ensure you have picked up all references related to your topic, you need to carry out both: a **free-text search** and a **thesaurus / subject heading search** for **each concept**.

Free-text searching

- Type in your term to search it in 'title and abstract' field (default setting). Note that you can select different field to search such as 'Author'.
- Your search will pick up term exactly as you enter it, in whatever context it occurs.
- You retrieve more results, some of which may not be relevant.
- You can do phrase searching by entering phrases in inverted commas such as "low back pain"
- Notice that the title and abstract field needs to be unchecked if you use another field

Thesaurus / subject heading searching (see also Glossary, Section 2.3.)

- Searching for subject headings applied to each reference would tell us what the reference is about.
- Subject headings are chosen from a set list (thesaurus) which varies in different databases.
- Subject heading search tends to give more relevant references.
- There is a time lag in indexing references, so relying on a subject heading search alone will miss out the most recent publications.
- There may not be a subject heading specific to your query – in this case you will need to rely completely on your free-text search

Step 5: Combining your terms

- To find results which include *all* your terms, use **AND** to combine them.

- The **AND** command is used to combine different concepts, e.g. antibiotics AND glue ear.
- To find results which include *any one* of your terms, use **OR** to combine your results.
- The **OR** command is used to combine alternative terms for one concept, e.g. glue ear OR otitis media.

Step 6: Identifying and Applying Limits

- You can focus your search results in a number of ways by using different types of **limits**, e.g. publication date, language, age groups etc.
- Note that limits vary between databases – always check which options are available in your chosen database. Please note that all limits apart from date are temporarily unavailable in Medline and PsycINFO.
- Construct and build your search then use appropriate limits if necessary to focus your search. (See section 1.3.)

Step 7: Assess Results

- When you have completed the search, check your results for relevance and revise your search terms if necessary.
- For help in doing this and expanding or narrowing the number of hits, check the trouble shooting hints in Section 3.
- For clinical decision making, it is important to critically appraise the research papers found

1.2. Free Text Searching

Although on its own free text searching produces some relevant results, a higher level of specificity will be achieved if it is done along with subject heading searching.

Screenshot below shows the 'free text searching' for the sick leave aspects of the low back pain question.
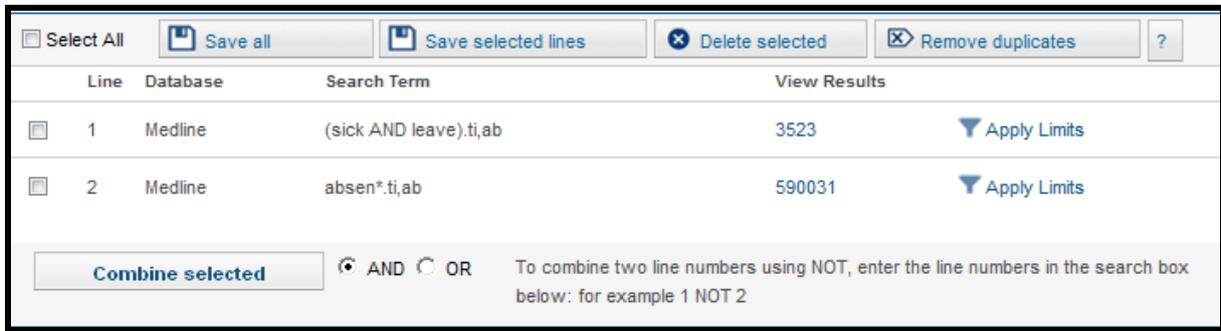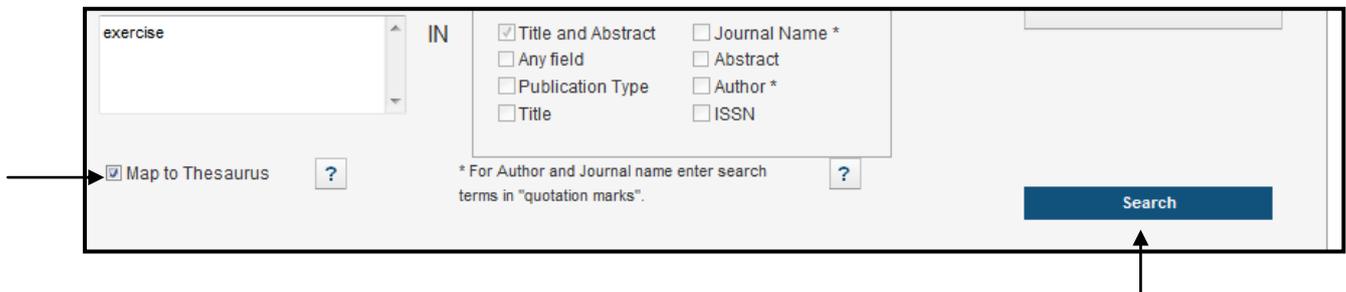
1.3. Thesaurus Searching

1.3.1. Thesaurus mapping

This is recommended for systematic focussed searches. This tool allows you to match your search term to the indexed vocabulary of a particular database. (see Glossary Section 2.3. for more information)

- Enter your search term and tick the **Map to Thesaurus** box then click on **SEARCH**.

- Terms which match the concepts of your keyword search will then be displayed. Below is the thesaurus mapping for 'exercise'.
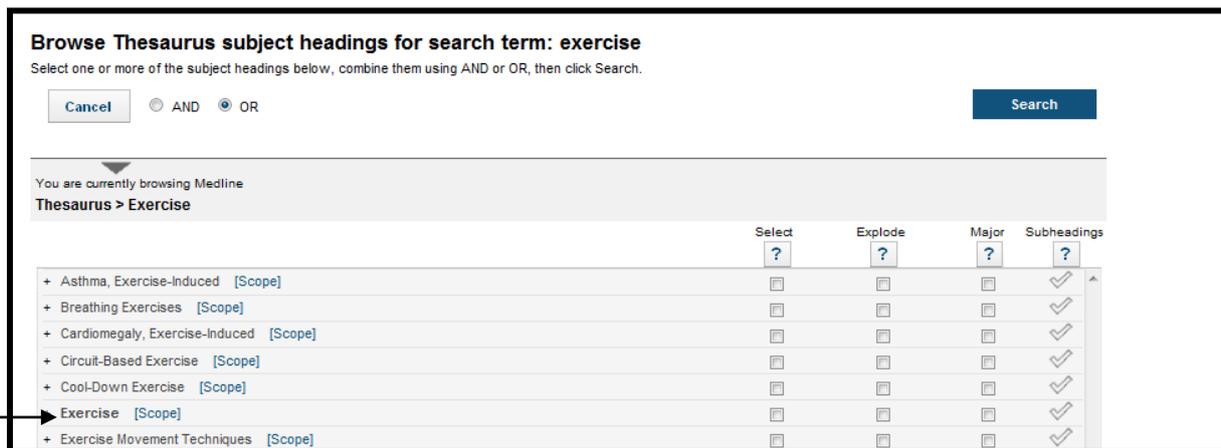
- It is possible to select more than one term and combine with the radio buttons **AND / OR**. However, to keep a search flexible it is better to carry out separate searches for separate index terms, and combine them later.

- To see your term within the thesaurus structure, click on the hyperlinked thesaurus term or click on the + next to it, as here for 'exercise – this may help find related, narrower or broader terms that might be useful.

**1.3**

1.3.3. Exploded Thesaurus headings

- If you select **Exploded**, this will broaden your search by searching for your thesaurus term plus any narrower terms listed (indented) below it.
- If the main heading has no narrower index terms, there is no need to explode.

1.3.4. Major

- These are used to retrieve articles where your chosen thesaurus term is a major focus of the article. This will result in a focussed search but may exclude some articles of interest.

1.3.5. Subheadings

- Subheadings allow you to focus your search even further by specifying one or more particular aspects of your chosen descriptor.
- To view the Subheadings attached to a thesaurus term, tick the box in the subheading column. Subheadings for **'Low Back Pain'** are shown below.
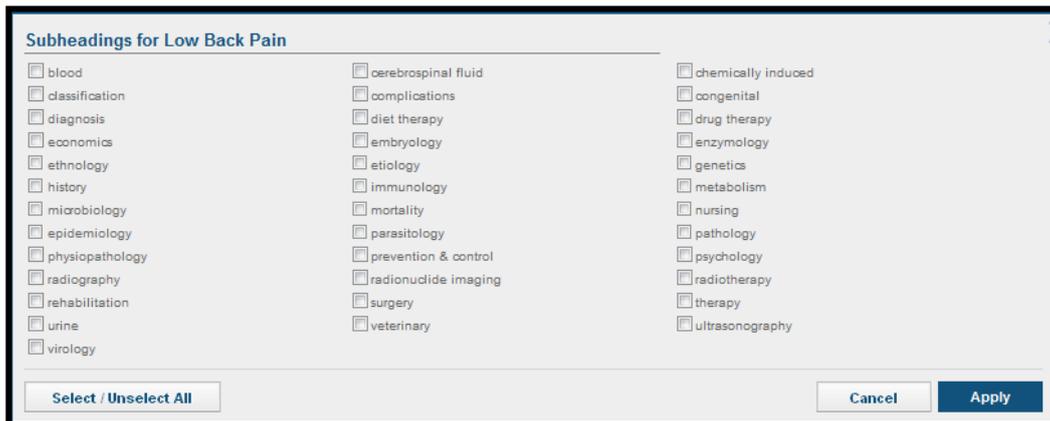
- You can choose one or more subheadings.
- You can choose to search for an exploded and major descriptor with a particular subheading/s.
- Click **Apply** to continue.

Screenshot below shows the 'free text' and 'subject heading' searches combined for the 'Low Back Pain' question.

	Line	Database	Search Term	View Results	
☐	1	Medline	LOW BACK PAIN/	14635	▼ Apply Limits
☐	2	Medline	(LOW AND BACK AND PAIN).ti,ab	20428	▼ Apply Limits
☐	3	Medline	exp EXERCISE/	128636	▼ Apply Limits
☐	4	Medline	(physical AND activit*).ti,ab	103793	▼ Apply Limits
☐	5	Medline	exercise*.ti,ab	204356	▼ Apply Limits
☐	6	Medline	SICK LEAVE/	4080	▼ Apply Limits
☐	7	Medline	ABSENTEEISM/	7404	▼ Apply Limits
☐	8	Medline	(sick AND leave).ti,ab	3523	▼ Apply Limits
☐	9	Medline	absen*.ti,ab	590031	▼ Apply Limits
☐	10	Medline	(1 or 2) and (3 or 4 or 5) and (6 or 7 or 8 or 9)	269	▼ Apply Limits

1.4. Limits

To apply relevant limits to your search results, click the **apply limits** link which appears in the search history screen next to each line of the view results column. (In the above example Search line no. 10) Then select limits from the options displayed.

The choice of Limits differs in individual databases.

- You can apply more than one limit. Just click on the relevant tab e.g. **language** to see the options available for each and tick the required box.
- You can select a range of options within one type of limit, just tick the relevant boxes
- Finally click on search.

In the example shown below, the results in **Search No 10** have been limited to **the last 5 years.**

	Line	Database	Search Term	View Results	
☐	1	Medline	LOW BACK PAIN/	14635	▼Apply Limits
☐	2	Medline	(LOW AND BACK AND PAIN).ti,ab	20428	▼Apply Limits
☐	3	Medline	exp EXERCISE/	128636	▼Apply Limits
☐	4	Medline	(physical AND activit*).ti,ab	103793	▼Apply Limits
☐	5	Medline	exercise*.ti,ab	204356	▼Apply Limits
☐	6	Medline	SICK LEAVE/	4080	▼Apply Limits
☐	7	Medline	ABSENTEEISM/	7404	▼Apply Limits
☐	8	Medline	(sick AND leave).ti,ab	3523	▼Apply Limits
☐	9	Medline	absen*.ti,ab	590031	▼Apply Limits
☐	10	Medline	(1 or 2) and (3 or 4 or 5) and (6 or 7 or 8 or 9)	269	▼Apply Limits
☐	11	Medline	10 [Limit to: Publication Year 2010-2015]	85	▼Apply Limits

Limits Explained

Article, Journal and Publication Type	This limit provides a range of options. For example different types of clinical trials.
Clinical Query (Embase and PsycINFO)	Limits to the following: Therapy, Diagnosis, Prognosis, Reviews, Clinical Prediction Guides, Qualitative studies, Etiology, Costs and Economics. Each can be sensitive, specific or optimized. For more detail see http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK3827/#pubmedhelp.Clinical_Queries_Filters
Human or Animal	Restricts your search to records relating to **Human** or **Animal** subjects. **Note:** the limit **Human** includes *records that relate to both humans and animals.*
Gender	Use this limit to restrict your search to records relating to **Male** or **Female** subjects.
Age Groups	The **Age Groups** limit allows you to refine the age demographic of your results.
Language	Use the extensive **Language** limit to return records in a particular language e.g. *English*, *Polish, Hindi*.
Other	Select from a range of additional limits, including: **CheckTags** (e.g. *female*s, *humans*, *pregnancy*), **Subject Subsets** (e.g. *AIDS*, *History of Medicine*, *Toxicology*).

1.5. Managing your results

- Your search steps and the number of resulting documents are listed in the Search History table above the document citations.
- Click on the number of hits in the right-hand column (view results) to view a set of results.
- To see the abstract or summary of a particular paper, if one is available, just click the title of the reference.
- To see all abstracts, check the **Display Abstracts** tick box just above the results.
- When **Full text** is available, a link will appear at the bottom of each reference. If your local library has the journal in print, a link to the library details will appear.
- Clicking the **Full text** link provided will take you to the publisher's website where you can print or save the full text article **free of charge**.
- You may have to prompt the download on the publisher's web page by following an **OpenAthens** or **Login via OpenAthens** link.
- To return to your results, click **Search Results** on the top left of the screen.
- Click **Page** number at the bottom of the screen to move through your results pages.
- You can change the number of results shown per page by selecting a preference from the **Items per page** drop-down menu just above your results.
- You can use the Clipboard to save results temporarily. The Clipboard enables you to select individual results from different results sets and databases, and store them temporarily before saving or emailing them.
- The clipboard icon appears at the bottom of the page under **Actions** as shown below.
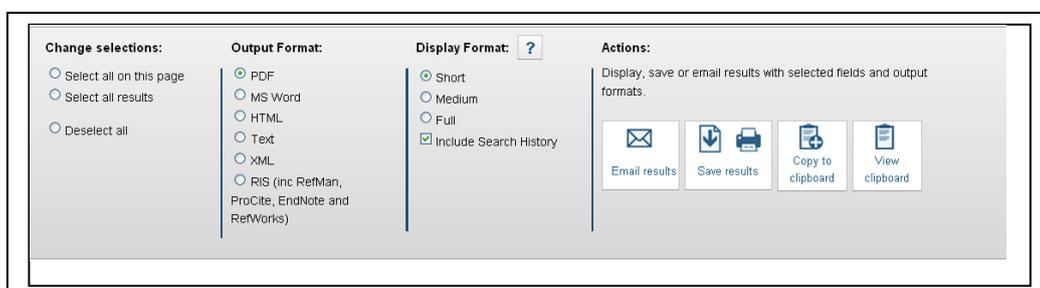
- Select results to save temporarily and click **Copy to Clipboard**. A message appears telling you how many results you have added to the clipboard. If any of your selection were already on the clipboard, they will not be added again.

1.5.1. Display and Output Formats

Choose how you want your results to be displayed (**display format**):

- Short: Citation only
- Medium: Citation plus abstract (default)
- Long: Citation plus abstract plus subject headings
- Choose your **output format** from the available options. The default is **PDF**.

Actions

- To save or display and print selected results, click **Save results**
- To email selected results, click **Email results**
- To return to the search screen, click **Search and Limits** from the links at the top of the page.

1.6. Changing databases

To continue with an advanced, thorough search, you will need to search in more than one database. Choose another database by clicking on **Search another** (below the search history box) and choosing from the drop down menu as shown below. You then chose to rerun all line numbers or re-run selected line numbers. Alternatively click on the link **Select Database** which appears in the breadcrumb trail above the search history.
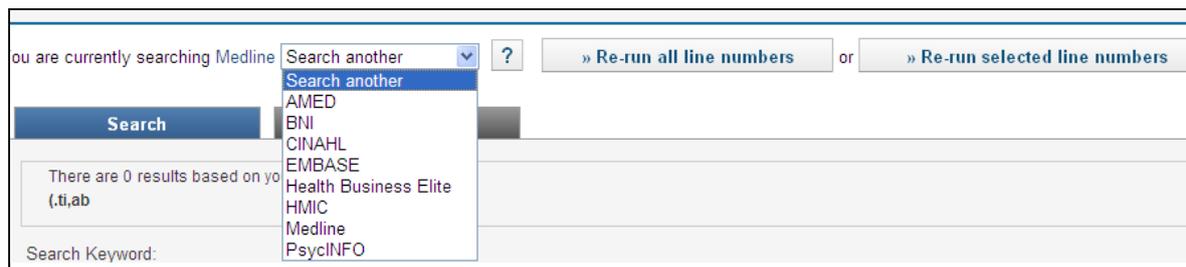
Select your chosen database and click **Search.** Here EMBASE is chosen.

You will see two options below the **Search history box** i.e. **Re-run all line numbers** OR **Re-run selected line numbers** as shown below.

Click **Re-run all line numbers** to see the search history of your second chosen database as shown below.

☐	12	EMBASE	LOW BACK PAIN/	37146	▼ Apply Limits	⊗
☐	13	EMBASE	(Low AND back AND pain).ti,ab	27217	▼ Apply Limits	⊗
☐	14	EMBASE	exp EXERCISE/	219906	▼ Apply Limits	⊗
☐	15	EMBASE	exercise*.ti,ab	253891	▼ Apply Limits	⊗
☐	16	EMBASE	(physical AND activit*).ti,ab	140700	▼ Apply Limits	⊗
☐	17	EMBASE	SICK LEAVE/	3225	▼ Apply Limits	⊗
☐	18	EMBASE	ABSENTEEISM/	13109	▼ Apply Limits	⊗
☐	19	EMBASE	(sick AND leave).ti,ab	4302	▼ Apply Limits	⊗
☐	20	EMBASE	absen*.ti,ab	682702	▼ Apply Limits	⊗
☐	21	EMBASE	(1 or 2) and (3 or 15 or 5) and (6 or 18 or 19 or 9)	394	▼ Apply Limits	⊗
☐	22	EMBASE	21 [Limit to: Publication Year 2010-2015]	170	▼ Apply Limits	⊗

Note that although the combined sets in the second database e.g. set number 21 in EMBASE above is showing set numbers from Medline, the total given is correct for EMBASE.

1.7. De-duplication

To de-duplicate your results across multiple databases, select the checkboxes next to the searches you wish to de-duplicate and click on **Remove Duplicates** above the Search History panel, as shown below. In our example line 8 (from Medline) and line 22 (from EMBASE) are to be selected.

NOTE: You can only de-duplicate results sets totalling **500 or less**. Also note that de-duplication should be your final search step, as you cannot continue to work with a de-duplicated set.
A warning dialog box will be displayed as shown. Click OK.

A new row is added to your search history.

☐	17	EMBASE	SICK LEAVE/	3225	▼ Apply Limits	✖
☐	18	EMBASE	ABSENTEEISM/	13109	▼ Apply Limits	✖
☐	19	EMBASE	(sick AND leave).ti,ab	4302	▼ Apply Limits	✖
☐	20	EMBASE	absen*.ti,ab	682702	▼ Apply Limits	✖
☐	21	EMBASE	(1 or 2) and (3 or 15 or 5) and (6 or 18 or 19 or 9)	394	▼ Apply Limits	✖
☐	22	EMBASE	21 [Limit to: Publication Year 2010-2015]	170	▼ Apply Limits	✖
☐	23	Medline,EMBASE	Duplicate filtered: [10 [Limit to: Publication Year 2010-2015]], [21 [Limit to: Publication Year 2010-2015]]	255 ← 249 Unique results ← 6 Duplicate results ←		✖

You can choose to examine the original combined set (255), the **unique results** (249) or the **duplicate results** (6). You can also de-duplicate steps within a single database.

1.8. Saving your search strategy

- You can save all the search steps in your search strategy, or only a selection of them.
- Make sure that you leave all required parts of the search i.e. do not omit Search number 1 if you later combined 1 AND 2.
- To save the whole search strategy, click **Save all** on top of the page.
- On the following screen give your search a meaningful name and click **Save.**

- To retrieve and re-run a saved search, select **Saved Searches** from the bar on top of the page. A list of your saved searches will then be displayed. Select the one you wish to re-run and Click **Run Search.** This is shown below.

1.9. Creating Alerts

- In the alert form enter an email address that you would like your alert to be delivered to. Choose a document type and frequency of delivery from the drop down menus.

1.10. Author Searching

You can construct a search to retrieve articles by particular authors or those that have been published in particular journals.

Type the author's name in the following way: "williams r*" or "williams rk" and change the tick box field to Author (**untick Title and Abstract** field) If you do not know the author's initial, you need to type "Williams*". **The quotation marks must be used.**

1.11. Journal Searching

To search by **Journal**, change the tick-box field to **Journal name** and key in the Journal title. You will need to include quotation marks if the title has more than one word. Please be aware that sometimes journals use the initials rather that the full name . For example BMJ is has been used in recent years for British Medical Journal.

You can combine Author and Journal Name search lines with topic searches if this would be appropriate for the information you wish to retrieve i.e. for citation searches.

2. More Search Tips

2.1. Using Tags or fields
The following shortcuts can be used when entering terms. Enter your search term with the appropriate tag (field) for your search (see below). Note that some of the tags below are not applicable to all databases. To see all additional tags to what are listed on the search page, click **'More fields'** as shown below.

- Where the tag is applied to more than one word enclose them in brackets followed by the tag i.e. (term term).tag or ("phrase").tag

.ti	Title	Use this tag to search all record titles for the search term. e.g. typing **diabetes.ti** would return all records with *diabetes* in the title.
.af	Any field	Use this tag to search all record fields for the search term.
.ab	Abstract	Use this tag to search all record abstracts for the search term. e.g. using **diabetes.ab** would return all records with diabetes in the abstract.
.an	Accession number	The unique ID number given to a record when entered into the MEDLINE database.
.au	Author	Use this tag to search all record author fields for the search term. e.g. using ("Winston R*").au would return all records with author surname *Winston* and initials or Christian name starting R.

.ti,ab	**Title & Abstract**	Use this tag to search both the Title and Abstract fields for the search term. e.g. a search on (**gestational diabetes).ti,ab** will search both Title and Abstract fields within records.
.jn	**Journal name**	Use this tag to search for a specific journal title, e.g. **("british journal of midwifery").jn** You will need brackets and quotes for titles with more than one term.
.kw	**Keywords**	Searching using the Keywords tag searches words or phrases in multiple record fields.
.pg	**Pagination**	A search using the Pagination tag searches for specific page numbers within each record.
.pt	**Publication type**	The Publication Type tag describes the *type* of material the record represents (e.g., Review, Clinical Trial, Retracted Publication, Letter).

2.2. Common syntax

There is a common way of searching across all Healthcare databases in HDAS simple search using the same wildcards and operators. Here is a brief overview.

Wildcards	Symbol
Normal wildcard / Unlimited truncation: Can represent 0 or many characters after the word stem	* e.g. pregnan*
Limited truncation: number (n) specifies the maximum characters after word stem	*n e.g. depress*4
Operators	
Words in any position in any order	**Default** no operator needed- AND is assumed
Any one or more of the combined words	OR
Word or expression preceding the operator but not the one following it	NOT
Words within the specified number of words (n) of each other, in any order where n>1	ADJn e.g. ADJ3

2.3. Glossary

Subject heading / descriptor / controlled vocabulary / thesaurus	When new articles are added to the databases, they are indexed using terms from the thesaurus, a set list of subject headings or descriptors. Identifying the preferred descriptors for your topic will increase the level of precision of your search results.
Syntax	Certain common search functions used by all healthcare databases
Record / reference / citation / bibliographic	Healthcare databases only contain a brief overview of each journal article. Usually enough information to trace the original source. A Journal article would normally include details of Journal name, publication year, volume, page numbers, authors.
Truncation	A way to search for alternative endings of words. You need to think of the root of your word and apply the wildcard *. This can sometimes get unhelpful results e.g. nurs* will find nurse, nurses, nursing, nurse-led but also nursery.

3. Troubleshooting

This section suggest some solutions if you don't find what you are looking for.

Searching for literature can occasionally lead to unsatisfactory results. There are generally two types of problem that may be encountered:

- Too many irrelevant articles in the search result
- Too few relevant articles generated by the search

Ideally when carrying out a literature search the results should find all of the articles which are relevant to the question, while excluding any article which is not relevant.

3.1. Too Many Irrelevant Articles

If the search results contain a large amount of irrelevant articles try:

- Using the thesaurus (see section 1.3.)
- Using the **NOT** command to exclude a concept which is not wanted. Use only if results have a strong bias towards a topic that you do not want at all as you may remove some useful information.
- Searching for phrases using " ", e.g. if you search for **Mental Health** without quotation marks, the results generated include irrelevant hits where the words mental and health appear in any order, anywhere in the title or abstract.
- Thinking of more precise keywords that can be used/added to the search.
- Using the Limits, such as limit to geographical location, age group.
- Limiting the date of publication range.
- Searching by **Title** or **Title and abstract**, rather than **All fields**.
- Using the **combine search** option to fine tune your search.

3.2. Not Enough Useful Articles

If the search results do not contain enough useful articles try:

- Alternative spelling – use the American and European spellings of a word e.g. **gynaecology OR gynecology**
- Different synonyms – try using alternative words or phrases to describe your search topic/concept, e.g. try 'bandage' as an alternative to 'dressing' as a search term.
- Searching an alternative database. e.g. switch from Medline to Embase
- Widening your search – your search may be restricted by too many different concepts. Try removing one of the search terms or limits.
- Using the OR command, e.g. 'wound care' OR 'wound management'
- Truncation – Use the * command to give suffix variations, e.g. 'bandag*' will find bandage, bandages, and bandaging
- Searching in **any field** or in **title and abstract** rather than just in **title**.

Note: If you are searching for results in a new area of research there may be few published articles.