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# A comparative evaluation of the PDQ-Evidence database: a crossover randomised trial

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| **Submission date**<br>25/03/2015 | **Recruitment status**<br>No longer recruiting | ☐ Prospectively registered |
| | | ☐ Protocol |
| **Registration date**<br>17/04/2015 | **Overall study status**<br>Completed | ☐ Statistical analysis plan |
| | | ☒ Results |
| **Last Edited**<br>19/03/2018 | **Condition category**<br>Other | ☐ Individual participant data |

## Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
Policy makers in health care need quick and easy access to reliable health systems evidence in order to make well-informed decisions. However, searching for health systems evidence can be challenging. To try to meet this challenge, PDQ-Evidence was launched in 2012. PDQ-Evidence is a freely available database with thousands of records to publications about health systems, including systematic reviews on how to organise, finance, and govern health systems. Its aim is to become the only database needed to search when looking for health systems evidence. This study tests if PDQ-Evidence is as 'Pretty Darn Quick' as it claims to be. It compares how quick and easy PDQ-Evidence is to search, and how well it performs when searching for systematic reviews compared to other databases that also provide access to systematic reviews about health systems evidence.

Who can participate?
Healthcare policy makers, health managers, health researchers and health professionals.

What does the study involve?
Participants complete an online questionnaire, including training and work experience, current position, first language, and prior experience with searching for health systems evidence. Participants try to find systematic reviews that addresses both a pre-defined and an own-defined health systems question, using PDQ-Evidence and two additional self-selected databases. Half of the participants receive a questionnaire where they search PDQ-Evidence before they search the two additional databases. The other half receives a questionnaire where they search PDQ-Evidence after they search the two additional databases. Participants use maximum 10 minutes per question to search for systematic reviews in each database. To report the evidence found that addresses the questions, participants report the title, author and year of maximum three relevant systematic reviews. They also report how much time they spend finding the reviews, and the perceived ease of use of each database they search. Finally, they give feedback on what they like, dislike, and find challenging about PDQ-Evidence, and suggest how PDQ-Evidence can be improved.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
Participants get to know PDQ-Evidence, and to influence further development and

improvements of the database. They are indirectly benefiting health care policy makers in need of easy and quick access to reliable health systems evidence. There is no risk associated with participating in this study, perhaps apart from the confiscated time it takes to answer the questionnaire.

Where is the study run from?
Norwegian Institute of Public Health, Oslo (Norway)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
November 2013 to June 2017

Who is funding the study?
1. Norwegian Institute of Public Health, Oslo (Norway)
2. European Commission Seventh Framework Programme (Belgium)

Who is the main contact?
Dr Andrew David Oxman

## Contact information

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Public

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# Additional identifiers

### EudraCT/CTIS number

### IRAS number

### ClinicalTrials.gov number

### Secondary identifying numbers
N/A

# Study information

### Scientific Title
A comparative evaluation of the PDQ-Evidence database: a crossover randomised controlled trial

### Study objectives
When searching for systematic reviews about health systems, PDQ-Evidence is more comprehensive, easier and quicker to use compared to the Cochrane Library, EVIPNet, Google Scholar, Health Systems Evidence, PubMed, or Trip database.

### Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

### Ethics approval(s)
Regional Committee for Medical and Health Research Ethics, section South-East B, Oslo, Norway, 20/05/2014, ref: IRB 0000 1870

### Study design
Single-centre crossover randomised controlled trial

### Primary study design
Interventional

### Secondary study design
Randomised cross over trial

### Study setting(s)
Internet/virtual

### Study type(s)
Other

### Participant information sheet
No participant information sheet available

### Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Access to systematic reviews about health systems

### Interventions
Searching for systematic reviews about health systems using PDQ-Evidence and two of the following databases/search engines: Cochrane Library, EVIPNet, Google Scholar, Health Systems Evidence, PubMed, Trip database. Participants were randomised to either search PDQ-Evidence first or last.

### Intervention Type
Other

### Primary outcome measure
1. Was a systematic review that addresses the question found (Yes/No)? For the comparison databases (the two databases selected by the participants) this outcome will be defined as: “Was a systematic review that addresses the question found in either of the two databases?”
2. Time taken to find a systematic review that addresses the question

Method: self reporting
Time: measured once

### Secondary outcome measures
1. Number of relevant systematic reviews found
2. Assessments of the databases with four response options:
2.1. Ease of use (from very difficult to very easy)
2.2. Time spent on searching (from much too much time to very little time)

Method: self reporting
Time: measured once

### Overall study start date
01/11/2013

### Completion date
30/06/2017

## Eligibility

### Key inclusion criteria
1. Healthcare policy makers
2. Health managers
3. Health researchers
4. Health professionals

### Participant type(s)
Health professional

### Age group
Adult

### Sex
Both

### Target number of participants
94

### Key exclusion criteria
1. Not healthcare policy makers
2. Not health managers
3. Not health researchers
4. Not health professionals

### Date of first enrolment
03/11/2014

### Date of final enrolment
17/02/2015

## Locations

### Countries of recruitment
Argentina

Bangladesh

Brazil

Cameroon

Canada

Chile

China

India

Iran

Italy

Japan

Kenya

Lebanon

Malawi

Nigeria

Norway

Pakistan

Senegal

South Africa

Spain

Sweden

Switzerland

Uganda

United Kingdom

United States of America

**Study participating centre**
**Norwegian Institute of Public Health**
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## Sponsor information

**Organisation**
Norwegian Institute of Public Health

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**Sponsor type**
Government

**Website**
www.fhi.no/

**ROR**
https://ror.org/046nvst19

# Funder(s)

### Funder type
Government

### Funder Name
Norwegian Institute of Public Health

### Funder Name
Seventh Framework Programme

### Alternative Name(s)
EC Seventh Framework Programme, European Commission Seventh Framework Programme, EU Seventh Framework Programme, European Union Seventh Framework Programme, FP7

### Funding Body Type
Government organisation

### Funding Body Subtype
National government

### Location

# Results and Publications

### Publication and dissemination plan
Planned publication in a peer reviewed journal by the end of 2017.

### Intention to publish date
31/12/2017

### Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are/will be available upon request from: marit.johansen@fhi.no

### IPD sharing plan summary
Available on request

### Study outputs

| Output type | Details | Date created | Date added | Peer reviewed? | Patient-facing? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Results article | results | 15/03/2018 | | Yes | No |