

Finding and using research evidence

A guide for citizens



Definitions for word/phrases used within the modules (in alphabetical order)

Actionable message – a simple re-wording of the findings from research evidence that provides clear direction for what a person should consider doing next based on the results; sometimes the message is ‘more research is needed’ which means the evidence is unable to point to a specific action

Health system – how people, places, programs and policies are arranged to deliver health care services to those in the population who need them

High-quality evidence – research evidence that was produced using research methods considered to be the ‘gold standard’ and that provide accurate, trustworthy and unbiased findings at the time they are published

One-stop shop – an online resource where all of the best research evidence in a particular area (for example, how to strengthen health systems) is made available in a format that makes it easy for a person to find and use it (for example, the quality of the evidence)

Research evidence – findings based on specific scientific methods/observations; a single study and a systematic review of studies while different, both produce research evidence

Single study – a publication of research evidence which describes how a specific research question was answered or investigated; typically limited to studying one group of people and one place and time

Syntheses of single studies – another name for a systematic review

Systematic review – a type of study that identifies, selects and assesses the quality of all of the single studies that focus on the same research question and then combines the results of the single studies to provide a more complete answer to the question; often produces more trustworthy research evidence on the question

Trustworthy health information – information based on high quality evidence from a legitimate, reputable source that you may use to make decisions about your health care and/or treatment(s) with confidence

User-friendly evidence summary – a simple and easy to read summary of research evidence (usually a systematic review) that is designed for people who are not experienced researchers

Web resource – items like articles, blogs and videos found on websites that are designed to inform people



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Last updated on 29 May 2018

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