

STEPS TO A POPULATION BASED METHOD

An Evidence-based approach for the AOD sector



Process	Example
<p>Step 1. Query Formulating the query is an essential first step.</p> <p>>> Careful thought to the precise nature of the enquiry is vital. Some preliminary database searching may be necessary to clarify the query. To aid in clarity it is highly recommended that the query be written down.</p> <p>>> By forming an answerable question and identifying the key issues making up the query, conducting the search will be simplified.</p> <p>>> Brainstorming different parts of the query ensures awareness of all aspects.</p> <p>>> Be as specific as possible, focusing on what is really needed. This will eliminate time wasting and keep the enquiry on track.</p>	<p>Initial Query: What can I do to discourage under-age binge drinking in my town?</p> <p>Brainstorming: Who is doing the drinking? (Consider male, female, age group) Binge drinking – what is it? (Example: more than 5 drinks in a 24 hour period) Possible solutions to discourage this behaviour? Programmes, promotions, initiatives.</p> <p>Result: What health promotion programs have been initiated in a rural setting that have been successful in discouraging youths 13-18 years from excessive drinking.</p> <p>Consider limiting to items published in the past 5 years, internationally.</p>

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Step 2. Search <ul style="list-style-type: none">>> From your query and brainstorming, decide the most relevant key words to search and consider alternate terms.>> Decide which databases to search (see accompanying booklet Research Tools for some suggestions).>> Conduct the search. ADCA's National Resource Centre (NRC) librarians can help with this if you require assistance.>> Searching different databases using different terms can be complex and time consuming.>> Keep notes on the usefulness of search terms and databases, and any tips for future use.>> If you are interrupted or only have limited time to do your searching, make sure that progress is recorded so that you can restart the process at another time without unnecessarily repetition.	Search terms: alcohol drinking OR binge drinking OR excessive drinking AND programmes/programs OR initiatives OR health promotion OR education OR prevention AND rural OR country OR remote OR regional Limits: age group, published in last 5 years.

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<p>Step 3. Select</p> <p>Retrieved items can be skimmed to ensure they meet the original criteria.</p> <p>Professional expertise and judgement will help determine the usefulness and practicality of any suggested form of action. The AOD Evidence Checklist (part of the Research Tools booklet) can provide assistance in deciding on the quality of items.</p> <p>Peripheral items can also be retained but it is recommended that one query be completed at a time.</p> <p>More than one piece of evidence will be required to support change in practice.</p> <p>If you are having difficulties with the process so far, ask a librarian for assistance.</p>	<p>Be selective</p> <p>After identifying suitable items from a database, the full text may need to be accessed from another source. This can be time consuming and costly so careful initial choices need to be made.</p> <p>Peripheral information could include: what parent's attitudes to binge drinking are or how prevalent binge drinking is in rural areas. Whilst interesting, these items will not answer the original query (diverse results may give rise to other questions and further searches for the future).</p> <p>If journal articles have been retrieved, ascertain what type of article you have (eg case study, cohort study, randomised controlled trial) and measure these against the EBM hierarchy of evidence (see 'Levels of Evidence' in Research tools booklet). If the item is not an article or study, or is a lower level of evidence establish authenticity through other methods (see 'Levels of Evidence' in Research Tools booklet).</p>

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Step 4. Consult Consultation with others will augment retrieved evidence and personal expertise, by adding elements of alternative experience and diversity.	Who to Consult Selected items can be used as supporting evidence towards eventual implementation. In addition to personal expertise, call on the expertise of others such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">>> team members;>> researchers;>> management;>> health promotion professionals;>> subject specialists;>> experts in culturally diversity; and>> authors of papers. <p>If your program is targeting a particular population group, for example young rural people, it is a good idea to include them in your consultation as their uptake could be crucial to your success. Consultation can be achieved directly (via focus groups or interviews) or indirectly (via representative organisations such as user groups or peak bodies).</p> <p>If you have a program you would like to try, consider consulting with others in your team, interested parties, others who have participated in similar projects, or end users. This will lead to a more informed result.</p>

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<p>Step 5. Formulate an implementation plan</p> <p>A project plan, grant application or action plan may be the next step. Documentation needs to be appropriate, sufficiently detailed and include relevant supporting documentation. Obtain necessary permissions to go ahead and consider your role as an agent of change within your organisation.</p>	<p>Research</p> <p>Read other similar plans to help you formulate a professional, acceptable plan.</p> <p>Read plans related to the project, those written for the organisation and also similar documents produced by your own organisation to ensure that documentation is appropriate.</p>
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<p>Step 6. Implement</p> <p>Successful implementation will be easier to achieve with a solid foundation of preparation already completed.</p>	<p>Implementation tips</p> <p>Thorough prior research and a clear implementation process, should ensure implementation proceeds as planned. It is essential for evaluation and for future project planning that detailed notes on all aspects of the project be kept during the implementation process.</p>

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Step 7. Evaluate Evaluate the research process and consider what could have been done more effectively, how long the process took and what might need to be done differently. Identify areas where training may be needed. As part of the project, evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention and contribute to the evidence-base.	Evaluation Consider the process of finding AOD evidence to answer your query. Assistance in forming the question, searching databases and obtaining full text articles can be obtained from ADCA's NRC librarians. Consider adding details of a research project to the RADAR database (Register of Australian Drug and Alcohol Research) or write a journal article to inform other Australian AOD workers, highlight an area of need and contribute to the evidence-base.



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