

What can the new CRD database interface do for you?

Kath Wright, CRD, University of York, Heslington, York YO10 5DD
(kew5@york.ac.uk)

The CRD databases are a key resource for health professionals, policy makers and researchers around the world. They provide free access to quality assessed evidence to inform health and social care policy, practice and research. The three CRD databases are:

Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects (DARE)

- Over 8,000 critical abstracts of quality assessed systematic reviews
- Over 3,800 bibliographic records of systematic reviews
- Summaries of all Cochrane reviews and protocols

NHS Economic Evaluation Database (NHS EED)

- Over 8,000 critical abstracts of economic evaluations
- Bibliographic records of over 2,000 economic evaluations for abstraction on demand

Health Technology Assessment (HTA) database

- Over 7,000 bibliographic records of published health technology assessments
- Over 1,000 records of health technology assessments in progress

The CRD databases can be accessed free of charge at www.crd.york.ac.uk/crdweb

and are also available via other ways:

- Cochrane Library
- Trip Database
- NHS Evidence
- OVID
- SUMSearch

Value added content

CRD carry out extensive searches of the world's literature to identify systematic reviews and economic evaluations of the effectiveness and cost effectiveness of health and social care interventions.

Searches are carried out to identify systematic reviews to populate DARE. Potential reviews are assessed to ensure that they are reviews of interventions with health or health related outcomes and they meet basic quality standards.

From the search results for NHS EED, all full economic evaluations are identified and prioritised for abstracting according to relevance to the NHS and their methodological rigour.

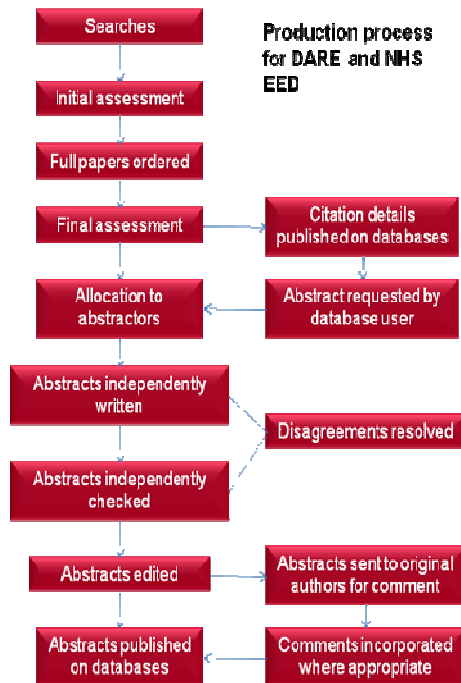
Once identified and assessed, short records consisting of bibliographic details of eligible studies are immediately loaded onto the DARE and NHS EED databases (Figure 1). The NHS EED record includes details of whether an abstract will be prepared automatically or prepared when requested by a user. A similar process will soon be put in place for DARE.

Experienced health researchers and economists then independently critically appraise the review or economic evaluation and write a structured abstract. This includes

- A brief summary of the topic, research findings and CRD’s assessment of reliability
- Key information about the systematic review or economic evaluation
- A detailed commentary on the reliability of the systematic review or economic evaluation

All the records on the CRD databases contain

- Bibliographic reference for the research
- An explanation of the record status
- Subject index terms (from MeSH)
- Links to the PubMed record and to the original research where available
- A unique identifying accession number
- The date the record was entered on the database, or last updated



The **HTA Database** contains bibliographic records of health technology assessments from around the world. Much of the information contained in the HTA database is not readily available from other sources. For example, the reports included are generally not published as journal articles and are only available as full reports from the commissioning organisation and therefore not included in other databases.

The database provides a free, single search facility of records from the 52 members of the International Network of Agencies for Health Technology Assessment (INAHTA) and nearly 20 other HTA organisations around the world.

The HTA database contains:

- information about ongoing assessments
- information about completed assessments with links to the resulting publication

The new public interface

The new interface is the latest development in the evolution of CRD's databases. Our aim is to ensure the databases best meet user needs, keep pace with advances in research and exploit new technologies. An analysis of user feedback and surveys, and database usage statistics, have informed the latest changes.

Search options: The range of search options offered in the new public interface start with a Quick search where anything from single words to complex strings can be entered. For anyone wishing an alternative approach there is a Guided search: where a topic, and in some instances a subtopic can be selected. Searching can be across all databases or specific to one database e.g. the HTA database, and limited further to record type and/or year of publication of the research. To help decide how far to refine a search, a running total of hits that would be found with the options selected is shown next to the 'Go' button.

The advanced search enables users to combine search terms in all fields, or in the Title, Author, Journal, or Funder fields. For experienced searchers, MeSH terms can be used either in the Advanced search, or by directly using the MeSH browser.

Search results: The results of all searches are presented as a list of titles with live links to the database record, with a preview option. Records can be exported in a variety of formats suitable for importing into bibliographic software. In search history searches can be viewed, manipulated, edited and saved. An integrated PubMed search is also available.

Search strategies: Users can export and import search strategies and edit search strategies offline and then re-run them. For those registered, a private area is provided to save strategies: these can be set to run automatically and the results sent by e-mail to the user at their selected frequency.

Records: Presentation of individual records has been simplified and additional functionality added in the form of quick link buttons in a new right hand column, which gives ease of access. Options within a record include the ability to print, create a PDF, and request notification when an abstract to be written is ready, or an ongoing project has a report published. Records can be bookmarked or shared via email or Web 2.0 applications. Quick links to the full published report and, where available, the PubMed record are listed in records. Cross links between DARE and/or NHS EED abstracts and entries in the HTA database are being added. HTA database records will also contain links to INAHTA briefs and INAHTA checklists where available.

Conclusions

CRD's databases provide an important knowledge base and are used widely to underpin evidence informed healthcare decisions in the UK and internationally. The new innovations will improve accessibility, and ensure that the databases continue to provide timely, quality appraised evidence to best meet the needs of users.

**Access the CRD databases free of charge at
www.crd.york.ac.uk/crdweb**