

A systematic review examining the characteristics of users of NHS patient medicines helpline services, and the types of enquiries they make

Supplementary Information 2. Grey literature search strategy

Godin et al. recommend applying a systematic approach when searching for grey literature

[1]. Following their recommendations, four grey literature sources were searched:

1) *Grey literature databases*. OpenGrey and ProQuest database for dissertations and theses were searched using the following search terms: 'medicines information', 'medicines helpline', 'drug information', and 'drug helpline'.

2) *Google and Google Scholar*. The Google search involved evaluating the relevance of all available hits when searching for the exact terms 'patient medicines helpline', 'medicines information centre', 'drug information helpline', 'drug information center', and 'drug information service'. The Google Scholar search involved evaluating the relevance of all available hits when searching for the exact terms 'patient medicines helpline', 'medicines information centre', 'drug information helpline', 'drug information center', and 'drug information service', and then repeating the searches when limiting the terms to appearing in the title only. Limiting the search to 'title only' was recommended by Haddaway et al. [2], who conducted an evaluation using Google Scholar to search for grey literature in seven published systematic reviews.

3) *Targeted websites/sources*. Proceedings from the following UK conferences were searched: UK Medicines Information Practice Development Seminar (1995-2017), Royal Pharmaceutical Society Conference (formerly called British Pharmaceutical Conference; 1992-2017), Health Services Research and Pharmacy Practice Conference (1995-2018), and International Social Pharmacy Workshop (2004-2018).

4) *Consultation with experts*. The main author of all included studies that were published within the last ten years were contacted, requesting details of any similar research already completed or being carried out, providing that a report of the findings was drafted.

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References

1. Godin K, Stapleton J, Kirkpatrick SI, Hanning RM, Leatherdale ST. Applying systematic review search methods to the grey literature: A case study examining guidelines for school-based breakfast programs in Canada. *Systematic Reviews*. 2015;4.
2. Haddaway NR, Collins AM, Coughlin D, Kirk S. The role of google scholar in evidence reviews and its applicability to grey literature searching. *PLoS One*. 2015;10.