

Tips and Tricks for a Successful Literature Review as Part of Medical Career Development

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Abstract

The literature review is a direct consequence of the increased volume of scientific information, becoming a necessity not only for the medical field. Such material, properly done, is of great use to any professional who wishes to keep abreast of the latest knowledge and concepts. The proposed goal is to help and guide resident doctors, doctoral students, and young researchers in understanding the concepts that are the basis of conducting a literature review and acquiring the generally accepted methodology for conducting it. The selection of information sources, accessing databases, the concept of peer-review, indexing and the impact factor are clearly presented as elements that cannot be neglected in the valorisation of scientific information sources. The structure of a literature review must consider the generally accepted format for such an article, with each chapter having its own importance. Depending on the quality and heterogeneity of the results obtained after analysing the collected data, the review can be structured narratively or systematically, the homogeneity of the results allowing the application of statistical study methods (meta-analysis). Although it seems difficult, conducting a literature review is easier and faster than developing an original study based on experimental or clinical scientific research. The literature review can be carried out in comfortable conditions, online, regardless of location and is a welcome support in the development of the professional and scientific career.

Key words: literature review, databases, systematic review, meta-analysis, professional development