



**Finding Evidence-Based Practices:  
A Compilation of On-Line, Searchable Databases and  
Descriptions of How to Use Reviews**

**SITES FOCUSED ON EVIDENCE-BASED MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTIONS**

**The Evaluation Center@HSRI**

<http://www.tecathsri.org/ebpmetabase/search.asp>

*Description:*

Evidence-based Practices Metabase (EbPMetabase) Version 1.0 is a searchable electronic database containing information about reviews (narrative reviews, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses) that synthesize the evidence on psychosocial interventions for adults with severe mental illness. Its purpose is to provide users with continuously updated knowledge about the evidence base for the interventions included. EbPMetabase is founded on our belief that it is rarely the case that a single study can be viewed as providing a definitive test of an intervention. Instead, the cumulative evidence from multiple studies is necessary (Howard, Maxwell, & Fleming, 2000). EbPMetabase can be searched by outcome and disorder so that providers or consumers interested in finding an intervention to meet their specified needs can do so. Currently, EbPMetabase only contains information from abstracts. However, in the future, The Evaluation Center@HSRI plans to expand the database by adding information from full text articles.

**Implementing Evidence-Based Practice Project**

[www.mentalhealthpractices.org/](http://www.mentalhealthpractices.org/)

*Description:*

The site is funded by grants from two U.S. based organizations: the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association (SAMHSA) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The site houses information on six evidence-based practices: illness management and recovery, medication management approaches in psychiatry, assertive community treatment, family psychoeducation, supported employment, and co-occurring disorders: integrated dual diagnosis treatment. The information is organized for consumers, family and supporters, mental health program leaders, mental health public authorities, and practitioners and clinical supervisors. Each intervention also provides additional links and resources, training contacts, and articles.

**Center for Evidence-Based Mental Health**

(University of Oxford, Oxford, UK)

<http://www.cebmh.com/>

*Description:*

This site is newly updated and offers links to journals and databases which contain reviews and studies on evidence-based mental health. This site also offers an eNewsletter.

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association (SAMHSA)**

[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

*Description:*

This site, run by the U.S. government Department of Health and Human Services, contains a wealth of information about federally-funded grants and mental health and substance abuse developments. The site can be searched to find more information about mental health and to learn more about the various initiatives around mental health.

**SAMHSA Model Programs (National Registry of Effective Practices)**

<http://modelprograms.samhsa.gov/template.cfm?page=default>

*Description:*

This site provides detailed information about how programs are evaluated as or “effective”, “promising”, or “model”.

Promising practices show some positive outcomes, effective programs consistently show positive outcomes and have been strongly implemented and evaluated, and model programs are well-implemented, well-developed, and have technical assistance available from their developers.

After the programs receive a model status, they are displayed on the registry of model programs. Thus, all of the programs displayed on this page have met the criteria to be dubbed evidence-based. All of the content submitted on the program is searchable. Thus, searching for specific mental illnesses and/or specific interventions is possible. Additionally, the user may use the advanced search to find information on specific target populations, age groups, geographic locations, delivery locations, and/or genders.

### **NAMI TRIAD (Treatment Recovery Information and Advocacy Database)**

<http://www.nami.org/triadfeature.html>

*Description:*

TRIAD is a database available through NAMI. The database plans to include reports on the implementation of evidence-based practices and their outcomes and an interactive guide for consumers and family members on evidence-based treatment for schizophrenia. The Triad site also plans to have a national survey of how consumers' and families' experiences with evidence-based practice, a systematic assessment of discrimination in legislation and newspaper coverage of mental illness across the 50 states, and a national survey of consumer and family member experiences of evidence-based care and outcomes.

## **SITES THAT CONTAIN REVIEWS OF INTERVENTIONS FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND OTHER MEDICAL DISORDERS**

### **The Cochrane Collaboration**

(Based in the U.K., but reviews are international)

<http://www.update-software.com/cochrane/>

*Description:*

The Cochrane Library includes several databases containing abstracts, articles, and other information regarding evidence-based health practices. Published on a quarterly basis, the library's goal is to provide consumers and providers as well as researchers, teachers, and persons at all levels of involvement in health care access to an extensive collection of comprehensive and high-quality evidence-based reviews. The reviews are put together by clinicians, consumers, and researchers all over the world. Most of the reviews are written on a volunteer basis by reviewers who are salaried by national departments of health or universities. In order to keep the reviews free of bias, the Cochrane Collaboration provides strict guidelines to ensure high quality reviews and to avoid conflicts of interest.

Specific to mental health, as of late May, the Cochrane Library produces 35 search results for the term psychosocial, 62 for mental health, and 52 for mental illness. It is also possible to search using keywords of specific interventions or mental illnesses.

By clicking on the above link, you will be able to search and retrieve abstracts of reviews contained in the most recent version of The Cochrane Library *for free*. The Cochrane Library search results include items from DARE automatically (see *University of York: NHS Centre for Reviews and Dissemination section for more information on DARE*). However, the results generated from The Cochrane Library search will not contain as much information as the results of a DARE search.

### **The University of York: NHS Centre for Reviews and Dissemination**

<http://agatha.york.ac.uk/welcome.htm>

*Description:*

The University of York: NHS Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD) contains a number of tools for finding and understanding evidence-based medicine. The University of York site has 10 gateways to information on its homepage: publications, databases, research, dissemination, about CRD, information and enquiry service, cost-effectiveness information, Cochrane Library training and user group, links, and search.

Of the gateways offered on the CRD's homepage, three are most useful to finding evidence-based practices: publications, research, and databases. By following the publications gateway, the user is taken to various CRD reports on evidence-based medicine and brief updates on health care effectiveness. The research gateway provides the user with information about completed research carried out by CRD. Additionally, the research page provides information such as search strategies used to find reviews, materials about how to conduct a systematic review, training and advice on systematic reviews, and the importance of creating an on-line register of systematic reviews.

The database gateway links to three databases of reviews, two of which contain some reviews relevant to evidence-based mental health and are listed below.

**Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effectiveness (DARE)** (available: <http://agatha.york.ac.uk/darehp.htm>) is an on-line database produced and maintained by the NHS Centre for Reviews and Dissemination based at the University of York, England. The database provides information about quality-assessed abstracts dating back to February of 1995. Specifically, DARE

focuses on evaluating abstracts that address the effectiveness of healthcare interventions. At the end of each month, DARE's collection of "structured abstracts" is updated with the results of "hand searching key major medical journals, regular searching of bibliographic databases and by scanning grey literature". Unlike The Cochrane Library, which, when searched, returns detailed abstracts, DARE retrieves the following information about the article: publication type, author's objectives, type of intervention, study design, sources searched, author's conclusions, subject index terms, and author's contact information.

**NHS Economic Evaluation Database (NHSEED)** (available: <http://agatha.york.ac.uk/nhsdhp.htm>) is a database of studies comparing two or more conditions of treatment in terms of costs and outcomes. This database includes cost-effectiveness, cost-benefit, and cost offset studies. This database contains reviews as well as individual studies.

### **Netting the Evidence**

(U.K.)

<http://www.nettingtheevidence.org.uk>

#### Description:

Netting the Evidence organizes a wealth of information about evidence-based medicine. Although this site is not specific to mental health, it provides detailed information about finding, appraising, and implementing evidence-based medicine.

Specific to mental health, the implementation section of this site contains a link to the [National Electronic Library for Mental Health](http://www.nelmh.org/) (available at <http://www.nelmh.org/>). The National Electronic Library for Mental Health (NELMH) provides information for consumers, providers and policymakers about depression, suicide, and schizophrenia. To meet the needs of the various stakeholders, NELMH offers basic information without technical medical terms and detailed information more useful to providers.

Links to databases, journals, software programs, and organizations provide articles, reviews, and information that compliment information on finding, appraising, and implementing evidence-based practices. One of these links, the Centre for Evidence-Based Mental Health (discussed above), is particularly relevant to mental health.

### **National Guideline Clearinghouse**

[www.guidelines.gov/index.asp](http://www.guidelines.gov/index.asp)

#### Description:

This site, sponsored by the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, allows users to search guidelines for medical interventions. A search for the term mental health produces 166 guidelines as of late May. Similarly, searching for psychiatry produced 86 guidelines, for psychology 39 guidelines, for depression 197 guidelines, for schizophrenia 15 guidelines, and for bipolar 33 guidelines. This database is updated weekly.

It is important to use caution in interpreting these guidelines as not all of the guidelines are evidence-based.

## **SITES FOCUSED ON UNDERSTANDING AND USING EVIDENCE BASED MEDICINE (NOT SPECIFIC TO MENTAL HEALTH)**

### **University of Alberta**

(Alberta, Canada)

<http://www.med.ualberta.ca/ebm/sysrev.htm>

#### Description:

The Evidence Based Medicine Toolkit site sponsored by the University of Alberta not only provides information about how to search through the literature to find reviews of medical interventions but also shares instructions about how to identify a strong review. This Evidence Based Medicine Toolkit is adapted from the Users' Guides series prepared by the Evidence Based Medicine Working Group and originally published in JAMA

The site provides questions to keep in mind when reading the review to help decide whether or not the provider should use the review to guide practice. Additionally, the Evidence Based Medicine Toolkit provides links to tools from the Centre for Evidence Based Medicine to calculate information relevant to evaluating the strength of the review such as sample size and power.

### **Center for Evidence Based Medicine, University of Toronto**

(Toronto, Canada)

<http://www.cebm.utoronto.ca/>

#### Description:

This site gives a thorough introduction of general evidence-based medicine. For example, the site defines evidence-based medicine and its limitations. Additionally, the Center for Evidence Based Medicine site includes information for providers about adopting evidence-based practices. This site is particularly useful to the mental health field because it offers a link to a specific syllabus for persons in the mental health profession interested in practicing evidence-based practices (<http://www.cebm.utoronto.ca/syllabi/men/>)

### **Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality**

<http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/evrptfiles.htm#strength>

Description:

EbPmetabse users may also be interested in a report released by (West, King, Carey, et. al., 2002). This report includes sections describing systems for grading the strength of bodies of evidence. These systems incorporate judgments of both study quality and whether the same findings have been detected by others using different studies or different people. The report proposes that any system for rating the overall strength of a body of evidence should address three general areas:

- The quality of findings measures as the quality of all relevant studies for a given intervention, where quality is defined as the extent to which study design, conduct, and analysis has minimized selection, measurement and confounding biases.
- The quantity of findings measured as the magnitude of treatment effect, the number of studies that have evaluated the intervention and the overall sample sizes of the studies considered.
- The consistency of findings measured as the extent to which similar findings are reported from work using similar and different study designs.

West, S., King, V., Carey, T.S., Lohr, K.N., McKoy, N., Sutton, S.F., & Lux, L. (2002). Systems to rate the strength of scientific evidence. *Evidence Report/Technology Assessment No. 47* (Prepared by the Research Triangle Institute-University of North Carolina Evidence-based Practice Center under Contract No. 290-97-0011). (AHRQ Publication No. 02-E016). Rockville, MD: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

**Centre for Health Evidence, University of Alberta**

(Alberta, Canada)

<http://www.cche.net/usersguides/main.asp>

Description:

The Centre for Health Evidence is useful for understanding evidence-based practices as it contains users' guide about how to evaluate the evidence contained in a review as well as how to apply the review to practice. Users' guides accessible on this page include a users' guide to evaluate primary studies on harm, primary studies on therapies, integrative studies on treatment recommendations, integrative studies on disease probability for different diagnoses, and on how to apply the users' guide.

**Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine**

(Oxford, U.K.)

<http://www.cebm.net/>

Description:

This site provides a strong base of information about evidence-based practices such as what evidence-based medicine is and what it is not. It also provides information about how to search for evidence-based medicine and to evaluate the quality of studies supporting the evidence-based practice.

**BOOKS ON EVIDENCE BASED MENTAL HEALTH PRACTICES**

- Nathan, P. E., Gorman, J. M., & Salkind, N. J. (1999). *Treating mental disorders: A guide to what works*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Pikoff, H. B. (1996). *Treatment effectiveness handbook: A reference guide to the key research reviews in mental health and substance abuse*. Buffalo: Data For Decisions.
- Roth, A., & Fonagy, P. (1996). *What works for whom? : A critical review of psychotherapy research*. New York: The Guilford Press.

**LOOKING FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?**

If you are in need of further assistance, please feel free to contact Terry Camacho-Gonsalves of the Evaluation Center@HSRI (phone: 617-876-0426, email: [tcamacho@hsri.org](mailto:tcamacho@hsri.org)). The Evaluation Center@HSRI is a SAMHSA-funded organization that provides technical assistance to States, public entities within States, and other organizations to improve the evaluation, development, and operation of adult mental health services.