Definitions of Evidence-Based Publication Types in CINAHL, in alphabetical order

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CASE STUDY
♦ Indicates a review of a particular condition, disease, or administrative problem.
♦ Also includes case reports.

CLINICAL TRIAL
♦ Indicates the research study is a clinical trial, a randomized clinical trial, or a randomized controlled trial.
♦ An experiment to compare the effects of two or more healthcare interventions.

META ANALYSIS
♦ Combines the results of independent studies performed to evaluate therapeutic effectiveness, plan new studies, etc.

META SYNTHESIS
♦ Indicates the presence of a qualitative methodology that integrates results from a number of different, but interrelated studies.

PRACTICE GUIDELINES
♦ Set of directions or principles to assist health care practitioners with patient care decisions about appropriate diagnostic, therapeutic, preventive, or other clinical procedures for specific clinical circumstances.
♦ The guidelines may be developed and issued by government agencies, institutions, organizations such as professional societies or governing boards, or by expert panels.
♦ *Do not* confuse with standards of practice, which are authoritative statements that describe standards of care, standards of professional performance, and the full scope of professional practice.
RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL
- An experiment in which two or more interventions, possibly including a control intervention or no intervention, are compared by being randomly allocated to participants.
- In most trials one intervention is assigned to each individual, but sometimes assignment is to defined groups of individuals (for example, in a household) or interventions are assigned within individuals (for example, in different orders or to different parts of the body).

RESEARCH
- Indicates an original (includes secondary analysis), complete research study containing data collection, methodology, discussion of results, etc.

REVIEW
- Indicates a review of the published literature that can cover a wide range of subject matter of various levels of completeness or comprehensiveness.
- Summarizes a number of different studies and may draw conclusions about a particular intervention.

STANDARDS
- Indicates a formal standard of practice or position paper issued by a professional organization.

SYSTEMATIC REVIEW
- Indicates a research process in which a concept is identified and the research which has studied is analyzed and evaluated. The results of this research are synthesized to present the current state of knowledge regarding the concept.
- Summarizes the results of available carefully designed healthcare studies (controlled trials) and provides a high level of evidence on the effectiveness of healthcare interventions. Judgments may be made about the evidence and inform recommendations for healthcare.
  - These reviews are complicated and depend largely on what clinical trials are available, how they were carried out (the quality of the trials), and the health outcomes that were measured.

References