What is Grey Literature?

Grey literature is defined as information “produced on all levels of government, academics, business and industry in print and electronic formats, but which is not controlled by commercial publishers” (1). In other words, grey literature is created when publishing is not the primary activity of the organization (2).

Examples of grey literature:

Unpublished clinical trials, government or NGO reports, conference proceedings, dissertations, clinical practice guidelines, etc.

Why is Grey Literature important?

- May be the only information available for certain topics.
- Minimizes publication bias or reporting bias. Many scientifically valid studies, especially those with negative results, may never be published in the academic literature.
- Sole reliance on published literature (which tends to have positive findings) when considering a therapeutic intervention may lead to exaggeration of effectiveness.

How to use the Checklist

Searching for grey literature can be intimidating, and results on Google can be either overwhelming or require some serious appraisal to ensure they come from legitimate sources. By searching these main sources for physical rehabilitation grey literature, users can ensure they’re looking in the right places while also reducing the number of irrelevant results.

The checklist is made up of:

1) a list of grey literature databases, which the user can search individually using keywords, and

2) a custom list of relevant organization websites.

The checklist is not meant to be prescriptive. You may want to search only a few sources, or all of them, depending on your search topic and purpose.

Have more resources that could improve the checklist?

Email us at katie.mclean@nshealth.ca or lana.maceachern@nshealth.ca
Databases:

- **Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH)** (CAN)
- **National Rehabilitation Information Center (NARIC)** (US)
- **Clinicaltrials.gov** (US)
- **Able Data** (US)
- **PEDro: Physiotherapy Evidence Database** (AU)
- **OTSeeker** (AU)
- **Psychological Database for Brain Impairment Treatment Efficacy (PsycBITE)** (AU)
- **OpenGrey** (EU)
- **Turning Research into Practice (TRIP)** (UK)

Organizations

- **Praxis Spinal Cord Institute** (CAN)
- **Sci Action Canada** (CAN)
- **Canadian Centre on Disability Studies** (CAN)
- **Stroke Engine** (CAN)
- **Northwestern University Prosthetics-Orthotics Center** (US)
- **Royal Australasian College of Physicians** (AU)
- **Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA)**
- **Wheelchair Skills Training Program** (CA)

References