

# Theory finding search strategies

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**Academic Unit of Health Economics, University of Leeds**

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## **About the strategies**

These search filters aim to find reports that describe theories for how an intervention may work. This can be used for identifying theories in realist reviews and for reviews of complex interventions. The strategies identify studies explicitly mentioning the term 'theory', and also documents such as policies, guidelines, letters, editorials, commentaries and other 'opinion' pieces that can describe theories in their text.

Our strategies were developed by iterative validation in 2011, 2014 and 2018. They were peer-reviewed by Natalie King and updated by Judy Wright in 2018

This document lists search filters for:

- EMBASE (Ovid)
- HMIC (Ovid)
- MEDLINE (Ovid)

## **Search field and symbol key**

.ti = title field

.ab = abstract field

.tw = title and abstract fields

.pt = publication type

/ = subject heading (if the / appears after a word e.g. policy/)

\* = focused subject heading (major subject heading) if it appears before a word e.g. \*policy/

exp = exploded subject heading

Adj = adjacent to (two words next to each other)

**Academic Unit of Health Economics**

## Embase Classic+Embase (Ovid) 1947 – 2018 March 05

1. "Comment on".ti.
2. (letter\* adj3 editor\*).ti.
3. opinion\*.ti.
4. (view or views).ti.
5. (editorial or journal letter or journal note or letter or note or report editorial or report letter or trade journal letter or trade journal note).pt.
6. or/1-5 [opinion pieces]
7. (policy or policies or guideline\* or recommendation\* or position).ti.
8. \*practice guideline/
9. exp \*public policy/ or \*policy/
10. (theor\* or concep\* or logic).ti.
11. ((theor\* or concep\* or logic) adj (framework\* or model\* or analy\* or evaluat\*)).ab.
12. or/7-11 [Policy, Guideline or overt Theory]
13. 6 or 12 [Theories search]

## HMIC Health Management Information Consortium (Ovid) 1983 - present

- 1 Commentaries/
- 2 "Comment on".ti.
- 3 editorial.ti.
- 4 letter.ti.
- 5 Opinions/
- 6 opinion\*.ti.
- 7 Views/
- 8 (view or views).ti.

- 9 (letter\* adj3 editor\*).ti.
- 10 or/1-9 [Opinion Pieces]
- 11 (evidence\* adj8 (policy or policies)).tw.
- 12 policy/ or health policy/ or public policy/
- 13 (policy or policies or guideline\* or recommendation\* or position).ti.
- 14 exp guidelines/
- 15 exp Theory/
- 16 (theor\* or concep\* or logic).ti.
- 17 ((theor\* or concep\* or logic) adj (framework\* or model\* or analy\* or evaluat\*)).ab.
- 18 or/11-17 [Policy, Guideline or overt Theory]
- 19 10 or 18 [Theories]

NB – HMIC search could be made more precise by removing or qualifying the terms ‘exp Theory/’, ‘Views/’ and ‘Opinions/’

## **Ovid MEDLINE(R) 1946 – February Week 4 2018**

- 1. (policy or policies or guideline\* or recommendation\* or position).ti.
- 2. guideline/ or practice guideline/
- 3. policy/ or public policy/ or exp health policy/
- 4. (theor\* or concep\* or logic).ti.
- 5. ((theor\* or concep\* or logic) adj (framework\* or model\* or analy\* or evaluat\*)).ab.
- 6. or/1-5 [Policy, Guideline or overt Theory]
- 7. Comment/
- 8. Letter/
- 9. Editorial/
- 10. news/ or newspaper article/
- 11. "Comment on".ti.
- 12. (letter\* adj3 editor\*).ti.

13. opinion\*.ti.

14. (view or views).ti.

15. or/7-14 [Opinion Pieces]

16. 6 or 15 [Theory Search]