

EBVM Toolkit 13

Evidence summary checklist

There are five key steps to follow in Evidence-based Veterinary Medicine (EBVM).

1. Asking an answerable clinical question
2. Finding the best available evidence to answer the question
3. **Critically appraising the evidence for validity**
4. Applying the results to clinical practice
5. Evaluating performance

This handout is designed to help you appraise an evidence summary, such as a Knowledge Summary or Critically Appraised Topic (CAT), which are short critical summaries of the best available information on a defined clinical question. These summaries are intended to provide a pragmatic approach to summarising the evidence on a specific clinical question and as such will seek to include the most relevant evidence rather than review all evidence on a topic (see Systematic Review). Answering the questions below will help you to reflect on how valid the results might be, how well reported they are and whether they are applicable to your local circumstances.

	Yes	No	Not sure	Reason
Is the summary answering a question, or is it based on a clinical scenario, which is relevant to your practice?				
Did the summary address a clearly focused question? Is there a clear question; can the Patient, Intervention, Comparison and Outcome (PICO) be identified?				

Do you think the search would have found the most relevant and important papers? Look for search methods (strategy and search terms) and the databases used. For information on compiling a search strategy see Toolkit 2: Finding the best available evidence to answer the question				
How recent was the search? Is there likely to be more recent evidence that has not been included?				
Did the authors select the right papers to review or appraise? Were the inclusion and exclusion criteria clear? Did the papers selected address the question and have an appropriate study design?				
Did the authors do enough to critically assess the quality of included studies? Is the process of assessment described? Was the assessment carried out by more than one author? Have the authors discussed the strength of evidence?				

Is there a clear summary of the evidence?				
Does the evidence summary include a clear “clinical bottom line”?				
Can the results be applied to your practice? Is the review relevant to your patient population? Are there any differences between your patients and the patients in the study?				
Was the summary peer reviewed?				

Want to try it out?

You could use any of the evidence summaries found on the following websites to try out the questions:

Veterinary Evidence Knowledge Summaries www.veterinaryevidence.org

BestBETs for Vets <https://bestbetsforvets.org/>

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We welcome comments and suggestions for improvement to this guide.

Please email ebvm@rcvsknowledge.org