

EBVM Toolkit 14

Narrative review 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 a narrative review. While a narrative review is not an explicit form of evidence review it is still important to critically appraise the content to ensure that it is accurate and applicable to your local circumstances. Answering the following questions will help you to reflect on how valid the content might be, whether there is any important information missing and any limitations.

	Yes	No	Not sure	Reason
Was the scope and purpose of the review clearly defined?				
Do the authors have appropriate knowledge and expertise to write this review? e.g. specialist status or appropriate postgraduate qualifications				
Is the subject matter relevant to your practice?				

Was a review of the literature carried out? If so was the methodology explicit? Look for search methods, databases used, reference list use, inclusion of unpublished studies etc.				
How recent was the search? Is there likely to be more recent evidence that has not been included?				
Did the authors include a range of suitable evidence? Did the papers included address relevant questions and have an appropriate study design?				
Have the authors critically appraised the evidence?				
Did the authors discuss areas of uncertainty and controversy? Have differing viewpoints and knowledge gaps been discussed?				
Is there any evidence of bias in the evidence included or its interpretation?				

Are all the important aspects of the subject considered? Are there any questions that you would consider important that were not addressed in the review?				
What are the main take home messages from the review?				
Having read the review, are there any papers that you want to read?				
Can information from the review be applied to your practice? Is the review relevant to your patient population? Are there aspects of the review which could be used to change your clinical practice?				
What steps would need to be taken to implement these changes? e.g. staff training, new equipment or protocols.				

Would there be any problems in implementing these changes? Are there any potential adverse effects of the change? What costs would the change incur?				
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Want to try it out?

You could use the following paper to try out the questions:

Ison, S.H. et al (2016) A Review of pain assessment in pigs. *Frontiers in Veterinary Science*, 3 (108) DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fvets.2016.00108>

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We welcome comments and suggestions for improvement to this guide.

Please email ebvm@rcvsknowledge.org