

**Title of Workshop:** Critical Appraisal Skills for Consumers – Understanding the Evidence using an online course

**Facilitators:** Elizabeth McCurdy, Laura Coe, Maryann Napoli and Kay Dickersin

**Objectives:**

The workshop will introduce a new web-based course for consumers on evidence-based healthcare and critical appraisal as well as provide the tools needed to critically appraise a variety of sources, including filtered and unfiltered, of healthcare literature. At the conclusion of the workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Understand what evidence-based healthcare is and how they can use it to inform their own healthcare decisions;
2. Find reliable sources of evidence-based information;
3. Critically appraise information found in clinical guidelines, healthcare web sites, journal articles, newspaper articles and systematic reviews.

**Description:**

Consumers are bombarded with healthcare information from the print media, TV, radio, internet and from their doctors. Interpreting the accuracy and validity of information is often difficult, as reports can be conflicting and evidence may seem to change over time.

The United States Cochrane Center and its Consumer Coalition have developed a web-based course on evidence-based healthcare and critical appraisal skills for consumers.

We will present the course contents and request participant feedback. The course contains 5 modules based on the following topics:

1. Introduction to evidence-based healthcare,
2. Formulating an answerable question,
3. Developing an effective search strategy and performing the search,
4. Critically appraising your search results, and
5. Making an informed decision.

We will dedicate a significant part of the workshop time to hands-on, skill development through practice exercises and discussion on critical appraisal of filtered and un-filtered sources. Participant groups will present what their findings and the facilitators will lead the discussion of the exercises.

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