Welcome to the Health Sciences Library Online Tutorial Series. This multi-part tutorial will explore the keys to successful searching within CINAHL, the Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature.

In part 1, we will look at starting a search: turning key concepts into subject headings and adding them to our search history.

CINAHL is easily accessible from the Health Sciences Library's homepage, at hsl.mcmaster.ca. You'll find it located under "Article databases" in the "Key Resources" box. If you are off-campus, clicking the CINAHL link will redirect you to LibAccess, where you can sign in using your MacID and password.

Before we start searching, we need to clearly define the question we are trying to answer. When searching databases, we like to take a concept-by-concept approach. When you take the time to strategically develop your question, the concepts are easily identified.

In real life, the questions we encounter generally don't come in a form that is ready made for searching. We often need to fill in some gaps, so take some time to identify your information needs.

For the purposes of this tutorial, we will trace the following sample question through the various search stages: In teens trying to quit smoking, is cognitive behaviour therapy more effective than nicotine replacement therapy?

So let's fill in some of those gaps. Who are we looking at? Teenagers who smoke. What are we looking for? Proof of the effectiveness of two types of therapy: cognitive behaviour and nicotine replacement. Why are we looking for this information? We want to find the most effective way to quit smoking. Finally, where might we find this information? Likely in an academic journal, and the best way to find those is in a health database like CINAHL. So we're in the right place!

Before starting our search, note that the default screen features three search bars. However, because we are searching for one concept at a time, we will only ever use the first search line. Also notice that the checkbox labeled "Suggest Subject Terms" is selected. This feature suggests potential subject headings for your concepts.

Let's give it a try with our concept of quitting smoking. Enter our concept into the search box and click search.

The results are a list of potential subject headings. Here's one called smoking cessation. If we need clarification of subject heading we can look at the yellow scope note. "Discontinuing the smoking habit". That sounds about right.

Selecting the checkbox next to smoking cessation will bring up a list of potential subheadings that will narrow your results to articles covering specific aspects of smoking cessation. These can be tempting as
they will quickly narrow a search, but be careful. They will often exclude relevant results. Let's leave this search with the default, "Include all Subheadings" and click search database.

This brings the subject heading into our search history and tells us how many articles were returned. The results of our latest search will be displayed beneath the search history. Great.

Now let's add a second concept. Type cognitive behaviour therapy into the search bar.

Again, we are given a list of potential subject headings. Cognitive behaviour therapy does not exist as a standalone subject heading, but the subject headings "Cognitive Therapy" and "Behavior Therapy" might be worth investigating.

Clicking on a subject heading will take you to its place in CINAHL's subject index. Entries are arranged in a hierarchy, with broader terms appearing above narrower ones. Here we see that "Behavior Therapy" is a broader heading that includes the more narrow term "Cognitive Therapy". "Cognitive Therapy" can be broken down even further.

To represent our concept of cognitive behaviour therapy, we want to include all these terms in a single search line. This is where CINAHL's explode function is useful. Exploding the term "Behavior Therapy" will find articles about behavior therapy or any of its more narrow terms. In this case, we are searching for four subject headings with a single search line.

Located beside the explode function is the major concept checkbox. This option narrows our results to articles in which our subject heading has been identified as the primary topic. Because our search question deals with multiple concepts, we'll leave the major concept box unchecked and search the database for the exploded subject heading "Behavior Therapy".

"Behavior Therapy" has been added to our search history. A plus symbol following a subject heading tells us the term has been exploded.

Our next concept is nicotine replacement therapy. It has a subject heading all its own. The explode checkbox is faded out, meaning that this subject heading has no narrower terms. Simply check the box beside the term and click "Search Database".

We've now successfully translated our three main concepts into subject headings and have added them to our search history. In the next video we will look at supplementing these subject headings with keywords, combining our concepts with search operators, and using limits to retrieve the most relevant results.

Thanks for watching!