

# Guide to Completing the BEAR

(Brief Evidence Based Assessment of Research)

The **BEAR** is a short assignment to help residents develop the skills to answer questions in daily practice.

The process of completing the form and getting familiar with the project will take approximately one hour. Once it is completed, it is hoped that some of principles of the BEAR project and exposure to internet resources will help you better answer questions in practice and develop skills in life-learning.

## Overview

Recognize the questions that occur in everyday practice. Select a question from practice and search for an answer from a variety of sources. Once you have selected some resources, quickly review them for strengths, weaknesses and take-home messages. Using the top 1-3 resources, develop your bottom-line and decide if this has influenced your practice with the patient you saw or for future patients.

## Goals

1. Identify clinical questions which occur in regular practice
2. Efficiently search and find resources to answer clinical questions
3. Rapidly retrieve (& appraise as necessary) evidence
4. Gain awareness of some of the available resources (& use more than 1-2)
5. Enhance the skills and comfort in presentation.

## Who

### *First Year Residents*

In the combined (urban) program, **four** BEAR assignments are completed during block-time. In the RAN program, the resident may complete them during other rotations.

## How

The BEAR Worksheet will be used to take you through the steps outlined in the “Overview” above. Preferably we would like you to complete each BEAR in one hour but realize that the first few may take longer.

## Guidelines

### *Guideline #1*

It is best to have more than one resource for your bottom-line decision. This is not always required, but one reference in isolation may not be strong enough to base your decision.

## **Guideline #2**

If the question / answer is

- somewhat on the fringe OR
- not well-supported in the literature (and you can only find 1 resource (1 trial) on the topic),

it is expected you would do a more thorough appraisal of that resource/article.

For example:

The use of a topical Nitro-patch for tennis elbow (Am J Sports Med 2003;31:915-20). This is unusual and there is only 1 paper so a full appraisal would be required (but remember from Journal Club practice, a focused appraisal can be done in 30-45 minutes).

## **Guideline #3**

You should not use the same filtered or summary site more than twice. Most of us have a few sites which we use regularly. It is a good idea to get comfortable with few sites and you will increase your efficiency in searching. Still, it is important to be familiar with a few of the multitude of resources. Therefore, four BEARs with Up-To-Date as the only resource is not acceptable.

## **Hints**

### **Hint #1**

Sometimes it is helpful to quickly scribble questions/ideas during the day and tack them to a post-it or cork-board. At the end of the day (or week), you can select one of these ideas for consideration later as possible clinical question to look-up or use as a BEAR.

### **Hint #2**

The level of appraisal of the information will depend on:

- the source,
- the information required,
- your background understanding of the topic,
- other information available, etc

As an example:

You may be aware that Metformin can be used in Polycystic Ovarian Disease to promote ovulation and pregnancy but are unsure of the particulars (dosing, do you stop when pregnancy occurs, etc). SOCG guidelines, review article, summary site might be good places to look and the sources might not require an extensive critical appraisal. If uncertain, discuss with your faculty advisor for suggestions or guidance.

## Presentation

You are expected to present four BEARs.

The presentation will include the following for each BEAR:

- the case (1 sentence),
- the question (1 sentence),
- the search (very brief),
- the resources (maximum 3 summarized to citation, strength, weakness and take-home message) and
- the bottom-line.

You can do the presentation separately or all together. You can use PowerPoint or other aids but usually it is done less formally (as a case-based discussion).

Each BEAR should take about four minutes, a total of approximately 20 minutes for all four BEARs.

## Where

### ***At the Teaching Site***

The individual BEARs are reviewed with your faculty advisor and then handed in to the Site Administrative Assistant (Site secretary). The presentation of BEAR's is site-specific, done with the clinical staff at the Teaching Site.

### ***With Your Behavioural Medicine Small Group***

You will present a Behavioural Medicine themed BEAR to your small group during Workshop #5 of your Behavioural Medicine course. This BEAR will be handed in to the small group facilitator or sent directly to the course coordinator.

## When

A BEAR happens approximately every 4 weeks during Family Medicine Block-time. The presentations can occur after each BEAR is complete or one presentation at the end of the block time (this varies by the site).

## Other Resources

At the end of this guide, there are examples of recent BEARs completed by our own residents.

## Faculty Role

BEARs: Your faculty advisor may provide some guidance in developing questions and good methods or resources for your search. They may offer suggestions or feedback on individual assignments.

Presentation: The faculty will be present at the presentation(s) and offer some feedback regarding your BEARs and the presentation. Remember, the presentation is pass/fail (with a pass “awarded” for doing the presentation), so feedback is only a suggestion for the future and is not part of a grade or mark.

Site Administrator Assistant Role: Collect the four BEAR assignments and any of the presentation(s) from each resident. Paper copies of the BEARS and e-copies of the presentation are forwarded to the Family Medicine Residency Program Office.

## Guide to the BEAR Worksheet

### Abbreviated Citation

No authors or titles. Abbreviated journal title, year, volume + pgs

### Filtered Resources

E.g. ACP journal club or EBM journal

### Summary

E.g. Bandolier or Up-to-Date

### Review/Meta-analysis

E.g. Cochrane

### College/Society/Guidelines

E.g. CFPC statements, SOGC recommendations, Consensus Statements

### Other Research

E.g. Problem Based Learning