Working PICOT Questions

**Why use PICOT?**

**Before:**
I will find research that supports delayed progression of multiple sclerosis as found through MRIs over the course of ten years in diagnosed Canadian women between age 20 and 50 with Calcium and Vitamin D supplementation versus without.

**After: clarity & a question**
In Canadian women with multiple sclerosis between ages 20 to 50 (P), how does supplementation with calcium & vitamin D (I) affect MS lesion loads detected by MRI (O) over a 10 year period (T)?

**Is it a real question?**

In Type 1 diabetics who have been diagnosed for over over 10 years (P), how does daily insulin therapy (I), compared with no insulin therapy (C), affect mortality (O) over a 1 year period (T)?

⇒ Not a real question

vs

In undergraduate nursing students (P), does using Quizlet (I) or writing hand written notes (C) lead to better grades in pathology (O) over the course of the 4 month term (T)?

⇒ Absolutely real...

**PICOT reduces cognitive load**

- For you and your instructor!
  - don’t make extra work for your reader

- Enter elements in standard order
  - first P, then I, then C, then O, then T

- Identify the elements right inside your question:
  - In older adults (P) how does hydromorphone (I) compared with acetaminophen (C) affect pain relief (O) within the first hour after administration (T)?

...not an end in itself
What is the population?

- In infants aging from newborns to 12 months (P), does supplementing with breast milk (I) compared to formula milk (C) lead to increased risk of obesity over the course of a year (T)?

vs:

- In infants aged 12 months (P), does supplementing with breast milk (I) compared to formula milk (C) lead to increased risk of obesity (O) over the course of a year (T)?

Population age and setting

- In older adults who have had TIA (P), does taking 81 mg of aspirin daily (I) compared to not taking 81 mg of aspirin daily (C) reduce the occurrence of strokes (O) over a 12 month period (T)?

vs:

- In independent-living older adults aged 65+ who have had TIA (P), how does taking 81 mg of aspirin daily (I) compared to not taking 81 mg of aspirin daily (C) affect the incidence of strokes (O) over a 12 month period (T)?

Population age and specifics

- In cancer patients, how does a ketogenic diet, compared with a standard North American diet, affect mortality over a five year period?

vs:

- In adult liver cancer patients (P), how does a ketogenic diet (I), compared with a standard North American diet (SAD) (C), affect mortality (O) over a five year period (T)?

Check standard age categories

- In older adults in residential care between the ages of 60 and 80 diagnosed with late-stage dementia, does conforming to their delusional episodes compared to re-orienting them promote decreased delusional re-occurrence over the span of 12 months?

vs:

- In older adults in residential care aged 65 and 79 years with late-stage dementia (P), how does conforming to delusional episodes (I) compared to re-orienting (C) affect delusional re-occurrence (O) over the span of 12 months (T)?

Clarify the Intervention

- In nursing students who are taking pathophysiology (P), how does studying frequently (I) compared to relaxing (C) affect their exam mark (O) within the last two weeks of class (T)?

vs:

- In undergraduate nursing students who are taking pathophysiology (P), how does studying frequently in the last two weeks of class (I) compared to relaxing (C) affect their final exam mark (O)?

Don’t be shy to get help! [next term+]

Email your Q or make an appointment:
- Alison Curtis  604-323-5465  acurtis@langara.ca

More urgent?
- Drop by the reference desk, or