

RESEARCH

The Foundation for Life Care Planning and Rehabilitation Research defines research as follows:

Research is defined as a qualitative or quantitative process to discover new knowledge through systematic inquiry that involves collection of data; documentation of information; and analysis/interpretation of the data consistent with established research methodologies and processes. This process can take many forms, such as:

- Investigations aimed at the discovery and interpretations of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts, or practical application of new or revised theories
- Synthesis and analysis of existing research in a novel or creative way to generate new principles.
- A detailed case study of a single subject or group of subjects intended to discover (new) information or reach a (new) understanding.
- Creation of new knowledge to generate new concepts, methodologies and understanding.

RESEARCH STEP-BY-STEP

Research can be broken down into several steps. These include (but are not limited to) the following steps:

1. **Identify** your topic:
 - a. Consider topics you have read about that intrigue you.
 - b. Consider topics from your practice, e.g., an observed phenomenon you want to learn more about.
 - c. Talk with peers about areas of interest.
 - d. Consider topics posted on listservs or areas you have observed in reports that are not in the literature.

The goal of your research can include:

- i. Discovery of facts
 - ii. Revision of accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts
 - iii. Practical application of new or revised theories
 - iv. Synthesis and analysis of existing research in a novel or creative way to generate new principles.
 - v. A detailed case study of a single subject or group of subjects intended to discover (new) information or reach a (new) understanding.
 - vi. Create new knowledge to generate new concepts, methodologies and understanding.
2. Conduct a preliminary *literature search* of your topic. In a preliminary literature review (more information is provided below about literature reviews), if you find too much information on your topic, narrow your search. If you do not find enough information, consider expanding your topic.
3. Once you have identified your topic, *pose your research topic as a question*. For example, if you are interested in exploring the effect of obesity on medical care/vocational options, frame your research in the question, “*What is the effect of obesity on medical care/vocational options?*”
4. Once you have framed your research question, it is time to *conduct a full review of the literature*. While a Google Scholar search may provide some resources, your goal is to identify relevant, recent, peer-reviewed literature of the highest level available. Access to peer-review literature will probably be available online through your local library. Recommended academic databases (EBSCO,

ProQuest, JSTOR, PubMed, Web of Science, etc.) are free online through local libraries to continue to access the peer-reviewed literature. Guidance for conducting efficient searches can be found at <https://youtu.be/sdx9dACkvyI> and at <https://library.alliant.edu/screens/boolean.pdf>

The review of the literature (ROL) provides a foundation within the professional literature and brings you to the point where your research adds to that literature. It is recommended that you use the highest level of literature possible based on the evidence pyramid below with a preference towards the use of meta-analytic, longitudinal, and systematic reviews. Starting with existing seminal publications on your topic (e.g., books, peer reviewed articles), through the ROL you paint the picture of what has been published already and how your research brings it together in a form that is applicable to the reader of your research. The review should contain the most updated standards, treatment protocols, and recent literature available on the topic. Primary sources should be cited whenever possible. Literature older than 10 years may be used when it is considered a seminal publication or it is used within a historical context. As a researcher, it is your responsibility to evaluate the credibility of your sources. As you review the literature, make notes about data that you gather including details about the sources (e.g., author, date, source).



5. Identify the *type of research you will conduct* to answer your research question. Consider what type of research will best answer your research question. Your research may be qualitative in nature and may not involve a quantitative analysis.

TYPES OF RESEARCH

Qualitative Research

- a. Ethnography-
 - i. Researcher embeds himself or herself into the daily life and routine of a subject or subjects. Researcher experiences the subjects' customs, traditions, mannerisms, reactions to situations, etc.
Example: A month in the life of a young mother with newly acquired lower extremity amputation.
- b. Phenomenology-

- i. Studying an event or activity as it is occurring from multiple angles to gain perspectives from the participants about the activity or event. Uses interviews, videos, observation, and location visits.
Example: Emotional coping of a family addressing end-stage brain cancer of a young father.
- c. Grounded Theory-
 - i. Data is systematically analyzed and repetitive ideas or elements are coded. Codes are synthesized to find trends, concepts, and ideas that emerge from the data. *Example:* The prevalence of key elements documented in expert witness reports in a forensic evaluation setting.
- d. Case Study-
 - i. The ultimate N=1 analysis. This method is used to gather in-depth and detailed information about a single subject or group. Can be explanatory and exploratory. *Example:* Exploring one man's transition from chronic pain to opioid addiction.

Quantitative Research

- e. Survey-
 - i. Attempting to answer a question or set of questions based upon the input of a group of people.
- f. Non-Experimental-
 - i. No manipulation of independent or dependent variables
- g. Experimental-

- i. Manipulation of independent variables and measurement of dependent variables. Attempting to evaluate cause and effect. If your research project involves hypothesis testing, you may choose to consult a statistician in your research.
6. Prepare an outline and *begin writing*. At this point, you have completed a review of literature and are ready to begin organizing your manuscript. While each manuscript will be different, in general APA formatting provides parameters that can be useful. A sample APA formatted paper can be found at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_sample_paper.html
7. Revise and prepare citations. Most research projects involved countless revisions. It may be helpful to have a peer review conduct an informal review of your project for feedback. Be sure to properly cite your sources. Again, the APA Sample Paper can provide guidance on citing resources properly https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/reference_list_basic_rules.html

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I apply for FLCPRR funding?

The process by which an individual or group can apply for funding is outlined in the *Proposal Process for Research Funding* located at <https://connect.rehabpro.org/flcprp/research/proposal>

How long will it take to review my proposal?

Upon receipt of the research proposal, a Foundation member will confirm that your proposal has been received and will provide a point of contact for the review process. Most proposals can be reviewed within 4-6 weeks.

Are mentors available to help me with my research?

The Foundation board does not provide one-to-one research mentorship. However, you will be provided with feedback about your proposal upon review.

Is there a dollar limit of what will be funded?

There is no predetermined dollar limit of what will be funded. However, all proposed anticipated costs must be specified by you at the time of your research proposal submission.

What types of projects are typically funded?

While historically, the Foundation focused specifically on life care planning topics, the Foundation has expanded its focus to include research projects with a rehabilitation focus. A list of previously-sponsored projects can be found at <https://connect.rehabpro.org/flcpr/r/research/publications>

Tools & Resources for the Researcher

General Research resources:

<https://railroads.dot.gov/elibrary/research-results-guidelines-2019>

<https://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/sites/default/files/2020-09/nci-dccps-implementation-science-whitepaper.pdf>

<https://digital.gov/topics/research/>

https://www.cio.noaa.gov/itmanagement/pdfs/OMBSurveyGuidance_0106.pdf

<https://libguides.elmira.edu/research>

<https://www.nhcc.edu/student-resources/library/doinglibraryresearch/basic-steps-in-the-research-process>

Rehabilitation Related Research Resources

Naric.com National Rehabilitation Information Center

<https://www.sralab.org/rehabilitation-measures>

Rehabilitation & Life Care Planning Journals

Journal of Life Care Planning https://rehabpro.org/general/custom.asp?page=journal_life_care

Journal of Rehabilitation <https://www.nationalrehab.org/journal-of-rehabilitation>

Journal of Nurse Life Care Planning <https://www.aanlcp.org/journal-archive/>

Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/rcb>

The Rehabilitation Professional https://rehabpro.org/page/rehabpro_journal

Archives of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation <https://www.archives-pmr.org/>

Rehabilitation & Life Care Planning Textbooks

Robinson, R. (Ed.). (2013). *Foundations of forensic vocational rehabilitation*. Springer Publishing Company.

Weed, R. & Berens, D. (Eds.) (2019). *Life care planning & case management handbook* (5th edition). Routledge.

Grisham, S. & Deming, L. (2011) *Pediatric life care planning and case management* (2nd edition). CRC Press.

Weed, R. & Field, T. (2012). *Rehabilitation consultant's handbook* (4th edition). Elliott & Fitzpatrick.

Falvo, D. & Holland, B. (2013). *Medical and psychosocial aspects of chronic illness and disability* (6th edition). Jones and Bartlett Publishing.