CINAHL Help Sheet
An Introduction to Using CINAHL

Creating a Basic or Advanced Search

1. On the Basic Search Screen, enter search terms in the **Find** field to conduct a *text word* search. On the Advanced Search Screen, enter search terms in the **Find** field to conduct a *subject* search.

2. Use **Limiters** to narrow your search, for example:
   - **Publication** – Limit search results to records from a specific title.
   - **Journal Subset** – Choose from blind peer reviewed, behavioral sciences, nursing, etc.
   - **Special Interest** – Limit to advanced nursing practice, case management, critical care, etc.
   - **Publication Type** – Limit results to source types such as care plans or systematic review.
   - **Age Groups** (Advanced) – Limit to Child, 6-12 years; Middle Age, 45-64 years, etc.

3. Click the **Search** button.

Searching Techniques

The **CINAHL Subject Heading List** (controlled vocabulary or thesaurus) provides a more effective searching capability in the CINAHL database. On the Advanced Search Screen, enter a research topic (e.g., **arthritis**). To retrieve a relevancy ranked list of related subject headings, first click the **Suggest subject terms** box above the **Find** field, then click **Search**. Click on a resulting hyperlinked term for details.

Tree views of the subject heading are shown on the left side of the screen; subheadings are on the right. To retrieve results with arthritis as a subject headings click the box to the left of the term *arthritis.*To retrieve results in which *arthritis* is the major point of the article, click **Major Concept**. To expand on a subject heading, click the box to the left of **Explode**. Specific sub-headings can be selected by checking the box to the left of each. Click **Search Database** to view results. To narrow the focus of your search, click the *Refine Search* tab. Select the limiters you want to apply to your search, then click **Search** for a more focused Result List.

Field Searching allows you to designate one *specific* field in the CINAHL record within which your term will be searched. These fields include (but are not limited to):
Article Title (TI), **Author (AU)**, **Author Affiliation (AF)**, **Abstract (AB)**, **Pagination (PG), Source (SO)**.
- To search within a field, enter the two-letter field code, followed by your search term. For example, type **au Smith** to search for **Smith** in the **Author** field of the record. **Note**: *Field codes are not case sensitive.* For a complete list of field codes, click the **Field Codes** link that appears directly above the **Find** field on your search screen. .
- Depending upon the format of your Advanced Search Screen, you may be allowed to select the most commonly searched field codes from a drop-down list.

Managing Your Search Results

To manage (print/e-mail/save) results for the current session only, click on the folder icon next to a desired item in the Result List.   Items placed in the session folder will be removed if you log out of EBSCO*host,* or if your session times out. **Sign in to My EBSCO*host*** to create a personalized folder for saving results, searches, persistent links to searches, search or journal alerts and web pages created using Page Composer, which will remain in your folder *after* you log out of EBSCO*host.*