SUMMARY OF KEY BIBLIOGRAPHIC HEALTH DATABASES
accessible at St Vincent’s Hospital Melbourne, August 2020

The following diagram shows the type of content, and a rough idea of the overlap, of key databases. It demonstrates the need for multiple databases to be included in a comprehensive literature search, but it does not attempt to be exact or exhaustive. Databases change constantly and there are many layers of duplication.

Don't confuse the name of the database with the years of coverage

Database content constantly changes and records are added retrospectively so years of coverage are fluid.

It is important to understand that the years indicated in a database name – such as Ovid MEDLINE(R) ALL <1946 to present> often refer to the date the catalogue started (1946 in this case) and not to the date of the earliest publications indexed in the database, which in Medline go back to the late 1700s.

For many bibliographic databases it is not possible to accurately define the years of coverage. That is why we keep these records for systematic reviews:

- the full name of the database on the day you searched it eg Ovid MEDLINE(R) ALL 1946 to August 11, 2020 (copy and paste this from the database when you are searching it - in Ovid it sits above the search box)
- the full search strategy, including any limits
- the date you carried out the search
- the number of results you retrieved on that day