



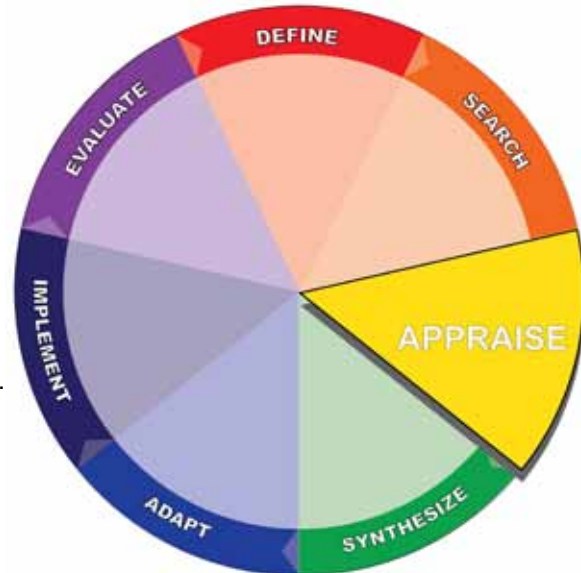
## Webcast:

### Part three: Appraise

We started with defining the question, moved on to doing an efficient search of the literature and now we're moving on to critical appraisal. The critical appraisal piece involves trying to find the best evidence that exists about a particular clinical issue or an issue related to public health interventions. It's not about finding only randomized trials and systematic research, but rather it's about finding the best evidence for decision making. In terms of critical appraisal, we have developed a tool called the Compendium of Critical Appraisal Tools for Public Health Practice. When we looked at the literature, we found 90 to 100 different tools for helping you figure out the best evidence in a particular area. For example, what's the best study design? Was the study done well enough that you would be confident in using this information in your decision making?

To decide which tools to put into this compendium, we wanted to find tools that were freely accessible, so you wouldn't have to pay for using them, tools that were particularly relevant for public health practice and decision making, and tools that were easy to use and self-explanatory. So, for that reason, we chose a number of the CASP tools. CASP is a program in the UK, called Critical Appraisal Skills Program. The CASP tools sometimes look a bit daunting. Unlike other tools that are one page and look very short and efficient, the CASP tools take world-wide accepted criteria for different critical appraisal questions, and include an explanation about the criteria and where to find them in most studies. As you become more comfortable with critical appraisal, you can figure out where to find the answers to those questions and where the critical appraisals are located. We divided the CASP tools into examples and recommended tools, and we split them in terms of quantitative questions. For example, we consider questions like the effectiveness of a particular intervention, and questions about causation and about prognosis, and then also include some systematic reviews.

We also included some tools about critical appraisal



#### An Introduction to Evidence-Informed Public Health and A Compendium of Critical Appraisal Tools for Public Health Practice

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guidelines, again making sure there is world-wide agreement about the best tools to use, that it is freely accessible and that it gives a good explanation for how to access the criteria that they're assessing. Finally, we also included tools about qualitative research. How do you critically appraise qualitative research? This area is much cloudier than the guidelines or criteria for systematic reviews or criteria for intervention studies. There are several different types of qualitative research, and there hasn't been the same kind of world-wide gathering of people to make decisions about the key criteria in qualitative research. We provide a few different tools in the compendium, and we also recommend which ones we think might be the easiest and best to use in public health practice. You'll find this compendium for critical appraisal on our website, at [www.nccmt.ca](http://www.nccmt.ca). I hope that you'll explore these tools and find some other useful things on our website.

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