



# TREAT JOURNAL CLUBS FACILITATOR GUIDE



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# INTRODUCTION



Congratulations on deciding to facilitate your own TREAT journal club! The following guide is used as a resource for the facilitator(s) of the TREAT journal club and refers to other relevant resources on the [treatjournalclubs.com](http://treatjournalclubs.com) website. This guide will introduce you to the TREAT format and individual roles within the journal club. It will then give you more detail about your role as a facilitator, and how to lead the journal clubs including:

- Suggested training
- Setting up the journal club
- Running the journal club
- Tips for facilitation



## Benefits of Being A Facilitator

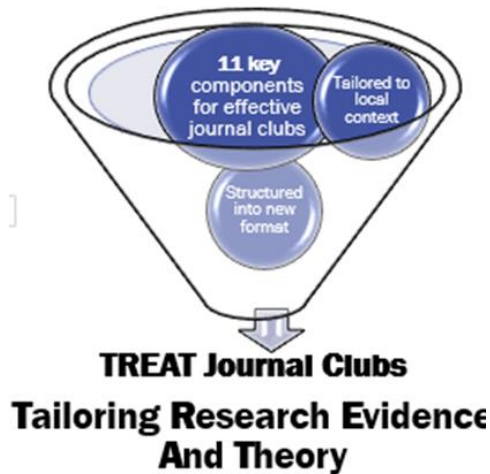
Although facilitating a journal club may seem daunting at first, potential benefits you may experience include:

- Increasing your skills and confidence in Evidence Based Practice (EBP)
- Helping ensure your healthcare team's clinical practice is based on current evidence
- Increasing your skills and confidence in group facilitation and leadership
- Assisting with career development in leadership and EBP and succession planning

# WHAT ARE TREAT JOURNAL CLUBS?



Many health professionals use journal clubs to discuss current evidence, however they aren't always run in the most effective way. As a result, standard journal clubs can result in reduced participation from members and limited impact on practice. In contrast to standard journal clubs, TREAT journal clubs are based on 11 key components from the **research evidence** <sup>1, 2</sup> (listed below), which are **tailored** to the individual needs of each journal club group.







Component from evidence
1. Establish JC of similar interests
2. Have overarching goal and purpose
3. Regular predictable attendance
4. Circulating articles for discussion prior to session
5. Didactic support and training
6. Mentoring & support from researcher/academics
7. Have a facilitator to guide discussion
8. Use of structured appraisal tools
9. Adhering to principles of adult learning and use multi-faceted learning strategies
10. Put evidence in context of clinical practice and evaluate knowledge uptake ^
11. Provide food^

## Evidence for Benefits of TREAT

The TREAT format has been investigated in a randomised controlled trial with 125 health professionals<sup>3</sup> and an implementation study with 134 health professionals<sup>4</sup>. Health professionals were significantly **more satisfied** using the TREAT format compared to standard journal club formats and reported **increased interaction and skill development**<sup>3</sup>. Participants also demonstrated significantly **improved Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) skills**, improved self-reported **confidence** using EBP<sup>4</sup> and reported **changes to clinical practice** including 88 new treatments/resources adopted and 64 clinical procedures updated<sup>4</sup>. For further information on this research conducted within Gold Coast Health, Australia, please [click here](#).

## How is TREAT different to standard journal clubs?

TREAT uses principles of adult learning to **maximize engagement, interaction, and relevance**. In contrast to standard journal clubs, the journal club sessions use:

	<p><b>Hand-picked topics</b> considered to be a <b>priority</b> by the journal club members</p>
	<p>An <b>active, group-based discussion</b> and <b>appraisal using structured critical appraisal tools</b> rather than one person presenting in a journal club while others passively listen.</p>
	<p>The “<b>PICO approach</b>” to make clinical questions more answerable and searchable in the literature. More info about this approach <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
	<p>Greater focus on how research evidence <b>applies to clinical practice</b></p>
	<p><b>Defined roles</b> within the journal club (Facilitator, Presenter and Scribe)</p>



To get an overview of the format and concepts, it is recommended you watch the video [linked here](#) before moving forward. Each journal club’s implementation is

tailored to your local setting using the **Journal Club Implementation Plan**. This plan is emailed to you after accessing the “Journal Club Helper survey” which you can find [here](#).

# ROLES & SUGGESTED LEARNING



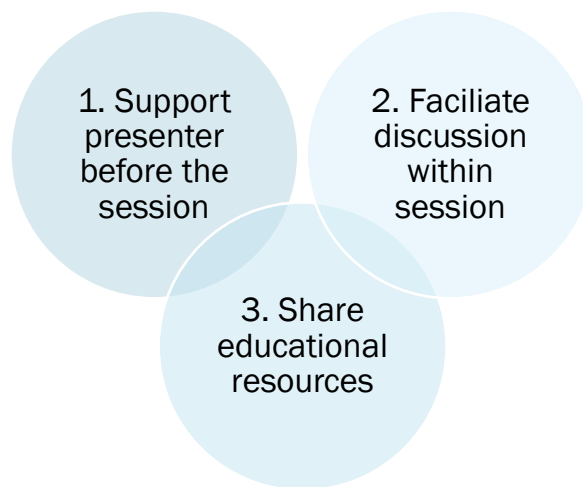
There are three roles within the journal club: Facilitator, Presenter and Scribe. Their roles, suggested learning and the function of the other group members is described below:

Role	Who?	Function & Suggested Learning
Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Anyone who has completed Facilitator EBP training (<a href="#">linked here</a>) and read this manual</li> <li>✓ More than one facilitator is recommended particularly for larger journal clubs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Facilitate discussion within the actual journal club and ensure all key components are undertaken</li> <li>✓ Share with members appropriate resources and education <a href="#">linked here</a> (as required)</li> <li>✓ Supports presenter before the journal club</li> <li>✓ Goes through CASP tool prior to session to help guide discussion</li> </ul> <p><b>Training:</b> Facilitator Guide (<a href="#">linked here</a>) Member &amp; Facilitator EBP training (<a href="#">linked here</a>) Access to Research Mentor (see page 9)</p>
Presenter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Rotates between members each month</li> <li>✓ The presenter is allocated during each topic selection session or after every few months.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Presents clinical question and accesses article with support from the Library (or facilitator where needed).</li> <li>✓ This can be done individually or in pairs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Training:</b> Presenter Guide (<a href="#">linked here</a>) Member EBP training (<a href="#">linked here</a>)</p>
Scribe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Rotates between members each month</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Documents PICO question, and actions made within group using minutes <a href="#">template</a>, and outcome of appraisal using relevant <a href="#">CASP form</a></li> <li>✓ Saves electronically in an agreed location</li> </ul> <p><b>Training:</b> Member EBP training (<a href="#">linked here</a>)</p>
All members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ All members within your Journal Club</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Come ready to participate at each journal club</li> </ul> <p><b>Training:</b> Member EBP training (<a href="#">linked here</a>)</p>

# WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR?



As a facilitator, your role is to facilitate the monthly running of the journal club within your team. As a facilitator, you are not expected to be an expert in EBP however it is expected that you have an interest in EBP and have completed our formal EBP training ([linked here](#)) if you have not already done so. The three primary roles of the facilitator include:



## 1. Supporting presenting clinician before the journal club:

- Send the presenter Instructions to presenting clinicians ([linked here](#))
- Ensure the presenter has selected appropriate CASP critical appraisal tool for the article they selected ([linked here](#)).
- Read and appraise the article using tool in preparation for the journal club session

## 2. Facilitating discussion within the journal club

- Keep the discussion focussed, facilitate participation from group members as required particularly those who may be more quiet
- Ensure enough time to cover key components of the session
- Guide your team in interpreting the journal article, drawing upon EBP resources and training undertaken, as well as support from a research mentor (*we will discuss more about this soon*). You are not expected to know all the



answers that may come up during a journal club session but assist with linking to resources to find an answer.

- Help focus the discussion to identify any follow up actions from the journal club that may arise (e.g., further consultation with stakeholders regarding implementing evidence, potential research, knowledge translation or quality projects)

### 3. Share educational resources

- A range of handouts are available to download in the resource section of [treatjournalclubs.com](http://treatjournalclubs.com) ([linked here](#)). These can be used incidentally to assist your team’s understanding of concepts which may come up within your journal club when appraising an article (e.g., interpreting a forest plot, concepts of sensitivity and specificity, overview of bias).
- If team members have not already recently completed formal EBP training, it is strongly encouraged that all members within your journal club access the “What is EBP?” “Asking answerable clinical questions” and “searching the evidence” modules as a refresher prior to commencing journal club ([link here](#)).

The facilitator is not expected to know all the answers that may come up during a journal club session but assist with linking to resources to find an answer.

### Can you have more than one facilitator?

The role is encouraged to be shared between members, taking turns facilitating each session. Smaller journal clubs (e.g., under 8 members) may share the role between 2 members, however larger journal clubs may want 3-4 facilitators, however having a lead facilitator (someone who oversees overall organisation of the journal club) is



recommended. This includes aspects such as timetabling of presenters and topics as outlined in the video.

### How do I develop my confidence in my EBP skills?

- Ensure you have completed EBP training ([linked here](#)).
- Facilitators, particularly those who don't feel as confident in their research or EBP skills are encouraged to [find a research mentor](#). The mentor is someone with research or EBP expertise who can act as a support person that you can contact if you want to clarify things regarding the critical appraisal or interpretation of a particular article.

### Finding a mentor

The mentor may be someone you already know in your workplace who has a PhD or undertaken a research higher degree.

Some tips to finding a mentor include:

- If you work at a Hospital or Health service, ask your local Research Office (or ethics office) or library for research active staff in your clinical area. Do a search on your hospital internet page or call switch to contact these departments.
- If you work privately, reach out to your local university department or academics in your area that you may know of or you have met through other networks.
- If they have the same profession or speciality that is ideal, although not essential.



Although there is no obligation, your mentor may also want to help “co-facilitate” a session with you in the earlier stages and participate in the journal club as a member. Further tips for finding a mentor including templates to reach out to someone to be a

mentor (link [here](#)). An information sheet to send to your mentor about the TREAT journal club can also be found [here](#).

# SETTING UP YOUR JOURNAL CLUB



## Things to do prior to your first journal club session:

### 1. Get approval from your team leader/manager

If you are wanting to run your journal club during work hours, you will need to run this by your manager. You can use a handout about TREAT tailored to managers ([link here](#)) to help with these discussions.

### 2. Familiarise your team with the TREAT format

Once you have received your Journal Club Implementation Plan via email and accessed the resources share the email link with those interested in attending the journal club. This link will include access to videos introducing the TREAT journal club format and how the TREAT journal club works and how they can complete the 5min evaluation questionnaire and complete member EBP training (30min).

### 3. Team brainstorm, prioritizes and allocates topics

Ask members in your team to identify important topics/ problems that affect day to day practice that they want to address in future journal clubs. This is best done during a **30 min meeting** if people are given some notice to think of their ideas in advance.

Consider which will have the most impact or be most meaningful to your team?

Does addressing this issue align with your profession/s team's strategic and operational plans?

Once the list of ideas is compiled, have **members vote** on which topic(s) they think are most important and ask members to nominate topics they are willing to present on.

Narrow it down to your top 4-6 topics. Hopefully members would already be somewhat familiar with the format from watching the videos but you can clarify there is step by step guidance for being a presenter and there is less pressure as the article is appraised as a

group ([see Presenter guide here](#)). You may wish to summarise the allocated list of presenters into a Timetable (as well as allocating a scribe) and send this to your team for the next 4-6 months. See [timetable template](#) at the top of the additional resources page.



You will need to repeat step 2 a month before your timetable runs out (e.g., every ~5 months) to ensure ideas are current and relevant to your service's needs.

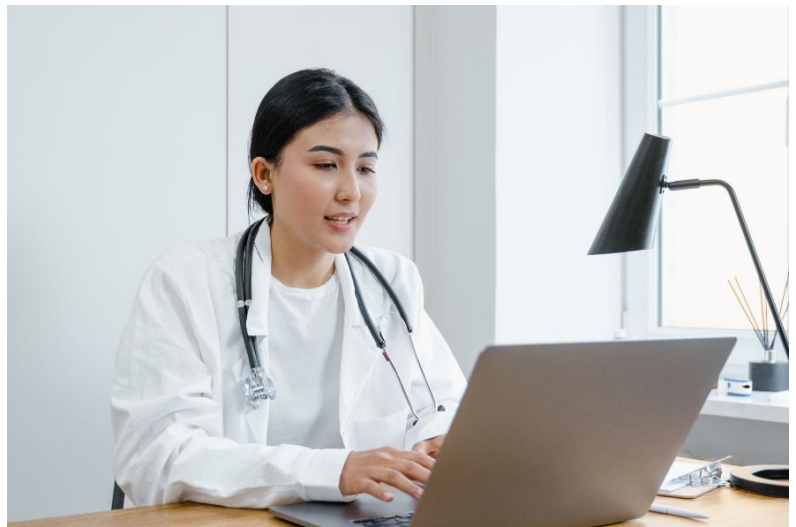
#### **4. Decide on agreed time and place and send out invites**

Choose a regular 1-hour time slot each month that suits your team members to have the journal club. Send out a recurring monthly calendar invites via email to the team members. If you are meeting face to face include the room, you are meeting or if you are meeting via videoconference include the videoconference link.

#### **5. Presenter prepares for first session**

The Presenter follows the Presenter guide ([linked here](#)) to prepare for the journal club session.

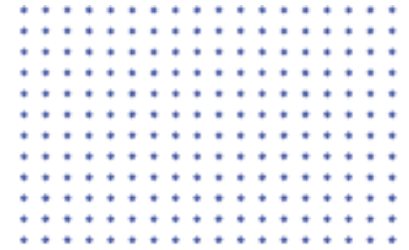
- A few weeks before the first session they transform their allocated topic into an answerable PICO question.
- They use the P and I term of the PICO question to search the literature for a relevant journal article
- They choose a relevant CASP critical appraisal tool based on the study design
- They send the chosen article



As a facilitator, you can offer support through this process. If you haven't heard from the allocated Presenter a couple weeks prior to first session, contact them to see if they are on track and/or having any trouble identifying the article.

# RUNNING THE JOURNAL CLUB

## SESSIONS



### What to bring to the session (if face to face)

- ✓ Access to computer/laptop for scribe to complete minutes (have minutes template and CASP tools saved on shared drive)
- ✓ Access to clock/watch to keep track of time
- ✓ Critical appraisal sheets (CASP) and some spare journal article copies (although ideally clinicians should be emailed these prior and bring along their own copy)
- ✓ (Optional): Print outs of educational handouts (depending on topic/time)
- ✓ (Optional) Food organised (members may wish to take turns bringing)

If the session is being run via videoconference, [refer here](#) for additional instructions.

### Other general considerations:

- ✓ Remember to integrate any other implementation strategies from your Implementation Plan highlighted as relevant for your journal club context.
- ✓ Make sure you **leave enough time** (at least 15-20 minutes) for the application to context discussion. This is the most important part and you may need to remind the team members to always link back the article to your local workplace.
- ✓ Define new concepts (e.g., terms you think people may not be familiar with) and don't be afraid to repeat information to reinforce learning
- ✓ Try to have team members give you answers in the discussion (rather than spoon feeding them) but gently explain if you notice that an incorrect answer is given during the critical appraisal discussion



## Session Plan

Below is a plan of the different activities to be undertaken within each TREAT JC session. An overview of these components can be viewed on the video [here](#).

Activity	Detail	Time
<b>Welcome</b>	Welcome everyone and thank their participation and those volunteering	<b>5 min</b>
<b>Assign Scribe</b>	Nominate scribe for the session (if not already allocated)	
<b>Review actions from last meeting</b>	Follow up previous actions from last meeting and troubleshoot any barriers. Modify new actions if needed (documented by scribe).	
<b>Clinical Question</b>	Clinical question/background introduced by presenting clinician(s)	<b>5min</b>
	Presenting clinician discusses the process of forming PICO and search strategy (database, terms, limiters) for identifying article.	
<b>Abstract reading &amp; Appraisal (CASP)</b>	<p><b>Everyone reads the abstract</b> independently (~2min)</p> <p>Complete <b>first two questions of Section A together</b> as group and decide whether worth continuing appraisal</p> <p><b>Rest of Section A then appraised as a group (or Section B in RCT).</b> For larger groups or to increase involvement, break up into groups of 2-3 and look at different questions of the tool (e.g., pairs do 1 question each and then come back to discuss after 5-10 minutes).</p> <p>Incidental teaching/handouts provided as indicated.</p> <p><b>Discuss Results together (Section C for RCT, Section B in others)</b></p>	<b>25 min</b>
<b>Application to context</b>	<b>Discuss final section of CASP tool together (Section D for RCT and C in others)</b> (how relates to current clinical context, patient values, experience etc.), How does this influence current practice?	<b>15 min</b>
<b>Actions/ Follow up</b>	Discuss actions needed to implement evidence and who is accountable (to be followed up at subsequent session) which is documented by the scribe. Review topic and presenter for next meeting (brainstorm topics if none allocated).	<b>5min</b>

# TIPS FOR GROUP FACILITATION



Here are some additional tips for facilitating the group as part of the journal club.

## Create an open and enabling environment for sharing

For the sessions to run smoothly, it may be helpful to **lay down ground rules** to encourage an environment of open sharing and contribution. This may include:

- ✓ not checking their personal mobiles during sessions to maximise engagement
- ✓ allowing opportunity for everyone to contribute in the session
- ✓ one person speaking at a time
- ✓ coming prepared with the journal article
- ✓ respecting others' opinions and contributions.



- Reinforce and **encourage** when people make contributions with statement's like, "Thanks so much for sharing", "Great to hear your input"
- Role model **active listening** through eye contact, paraphrasing people's statements and using affirmative body language and non-verbals (e.g., head nodding, relaxed open posture rather than arms folded, smiling)

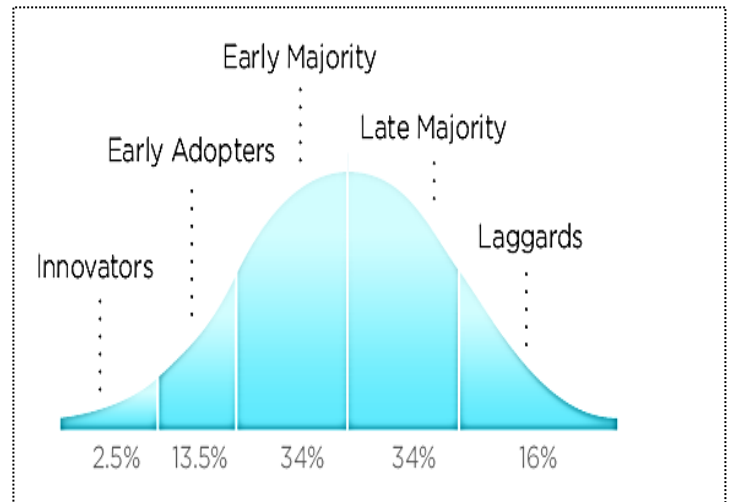
## Encourage contributions

- If one or two people are dominating the discussion, seek input from other members. For example, you may ask, "What are someone else's thoughts for this question?"
- If people give short "yes" or "no" responses, encourage elaboration with probe responses such as, "Can you tell me what led you to that answer?" "Can you give any examples?" "Where did you find that in the article?"



## Be aware of how people respond to change

For many of you, this journal club will be a new change you are introducing to your team. When introducing changes into the workplace, it is important to be aware of the different ways people adopt change and how you can engage with them. According to Roger's Diffusion of Innovation Theory<sup>5</sup>, a small group of people, the **innovators** and **early adopters**, will be the first to adopt the change with little encouragement. The **early majority** and **late majority** will sit back a bit and take a "wait and see" approach. Be patient with this group and continue to encourage their attendance but understand they might just take time until they fully embrace the new journal club. A small percentage of people called



the "**laggards**", may be sceptical of the idea from the start and not want to participate despite the majority embracing the change. While it is important to listen to the laggards' point of view and take on board some of their constructive feedback, don't exert too much time trying to convince them of the change. Instead, focus on those who are already interested and motivated to participate.

## Self-reflect on your facilitation

After facilitating a session ask yourself these questions:

1. What worked well in the session?
2. What didn't work so well?
3. What could I do differently next time?

You may want to document your reflections and/or share with another member or facilitator or mentor to enable your own personal development as a facilitator.

# MORE SUPPORT



## Email Support

If you have any questions about the TREAT journal club format or difficulties finding a mentor, please contact the TREAT journal club team:

**[Treatjournalclubs@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:Treatjournalclubs@health.qld.gov.au)**

## Twitter Community

Join our online TREAT journal club twitter community to post questions to others involved in TREAT journal clubs and get updates on other relevant information



**[@journalclubs](https://twitter.com/journalclubs)**

# REFERENCES

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