**Appendix 1. Literature Search**

A medical librarian constructed search strategies for MEDLINE (Ovid), EMBASE (Ovid), and PubMed for each topic. Each search retrieved English-only publications from January 1998-October 2013. Pediatric articles were excluded from the results. Results were organized using EndNote and delivered to each author via email. The MEDLINE (Ovid) searches with the number of results in parenthesis following each search statement are shown below:

MEDLINE (OVID)

**Search for *admission criteria***

1. exp Intensive Care Units/ (50706)
2. Critical Care/ (24158)
3. Intensive Care/ (15012)
4. intensive care unit?.mp. or ICU.ti,ab. (87181)
5. 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 (126273)
6. Patient Admission/ (17087)
7. admission?.ti (13116)
8. 6 or 7 (26409)
9. 5 and 8 (2932)
10. criteria.ti,ab. (345664)
11. 7 and 8 (336)
12. limit 11 to (english language and yr="1998 -Current" and "all adult (19 plus years)") (185)

MEDLINE (OVID)

**Search for *benefit***

1. exp \*Intensive Care Units/ (25909)
2. \*Critical Care/ (15451)
3. \*Intensive Care (8380)
4. 1 or 2 or 3 (47628)
5. benefit.ti. (15534)
6. exp Trauma Severity Indices/ (22905)
7. scor\* system\*.ti,ab. (19158)
8. 5 or 6 or 7 (57043)
9. 4 and 8 (1305)
10. limit 9 to (english language and yr="1998 -Current" and "all adult (19 plus years)") (525)

MEDLINE (OVID)

**Search for *triage in epidemics, crises, and disasters***

1. exp Intensive Care Units/ (50706)
2. Critical Care/ or intensive care/ (37009)
3. intensive care unit?.mp. or ICU.ti,ab. (87181)
4. 1 or 2 or 3 (116453)
5. Patient Admission/ (17087)
6. Triage/ (7260)
7. 5 or 6 (23967)
8. 4 and 7 (2247)
9. exp Disease Outbreaks/ (61924)
10. exp Disasters/ (56043)
11. Military Personnel/ (21857)
12. Military Medicine/ (24991)
13. 9 or 10 or 11 or 12 (158414)
14. 8 and 13 (192)
15. limit 9 to (english language and yr="1998 -Current" and "all adult (19 plus years)") (50)

MEDLINE (OVID)

**Search for *discharge***

1. exp \*Intensive Care Units/ (25909)
2. \*Critical Care/ (15451)
3. \*Intensive Care (8380)
4. 1 or 2 or 3 (47628)
5. Patient Discharge/ (18361)
6. discharge adj3 criteria.mp. (726)
7. early discharge.mp. (1856)
8. 5 or 6 or 7 (20047)
9. 4 and 8 (718)
10. limit 10 to (english language and yr="1998 -Current" and "all adult (19 plus years)") (271)

MEDLINE (OVID)

**Search for *ICU or critical care outreach programs***

1. exp \*Intensive Care Units/ (25909)
2. \*Critical Care/ or \*Intensive Care/ (23742)
3. 1 or 2 (47628)
4. Hospital Rapid Response Team/ OR rapid response team\*.ti,ab. (450)
5. Hospital Units/ (8707)
6. ward\*.ti,ab. (40105)
7. “liaison nurse”.ti,ab. (176)
8. outreach.ti,ab. (7653)
9. 4 or 5 or 7 or 8 (55080)
10. 3 and 9 (1654)
11. Limit 10 to (english language and yr="1998 - 2013" and "all adult (19 plus years)") (498)

MEDLINE (OVID)

**Search for *Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement***

1. exp \*Intensive Care Units/ (25909)
2. \*Critical Care/ or \*Intensive Care/ (23742)
3. 1 or 2 (47628)
4. Exp Quality Assurance, Health Care/ (250292)
5. performance improvement.ti (535)
6. 4 or 5 (250535)
7. 3 and 6 (3950)
8. limit 7 to (english language and yr="1998 -Current" and "all adult (19 plus years)") (682)

MEDLINE (OVID)

**Search for *metrics***

1. \*Intensive Care Units/sn, ut [Statistics & Numerical Data, Utilization] (2257)
2. exp Hospitalization/ (154639)
3. Triage/ (7837)
4. 2 or 3 (161330)
5. 1 and 4 (974)
6. limit 1 to (english language and yr="1998 -Current" and "all adult (19 plus years)") (596)

MEDLINE (OVID)

**Search for *futility and rationing***

1. exp Intensive Care Units/ (50706)
2. Critical Care/ (24158)
3. Intensive Care (15012)
4. intensive care unit?.mp. or ICU.ti,ab. (87181)
5. 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 (126273)
6. Medical Futility/ (2274)
7. Futility.ti,ab. (1575)
8. 6 or 7 (3340)
9. 5 and 8 (487)
10. Resource Allocation/ or Health Care Rationing (14859)
11. Rationing.ti,ab. (2280)
12. 10 or 11 (15606)
13. 5 and 12 (696)
14. 9 or 13 (1112)
15. Limit 14 to (english language and yr="1998 - Current" and "all adult (19 plus years)") (182)

These search strategies were modified for the EMBASE and PubMed databases. For more information about searches, contact the authors.

**Guidelines search**

A medical librarian identified 51 guidelines from searches in MEDLINE, EMBASE, and PubMed. Searching the following repositories and professional societies yielded 10 additional guidelines.

* Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN)
* TRIP database
* Guidelines.gov
* Society of Critical Care Medicine
* Australian and New Zealand Intensive Care Society
* European Society of Intensive Care Medicine
* Canadian Critical Care Society