What Makes a Good Question for CHRSP?

In order to provide decision support in a timely manner for the most pressing issues facing the provincial health system, all questions submitted to CHRSP are reviewed according to a specific set of filtering criteria:

**AT THE TOPIC SELECTION STAGE:**

**IMPORTANCE**
- The question/topic is viewed by health decision makers and other stakeholders as important and of high priority to the healthcare system
- There is a policy purpose or impending decision that justifies conducting a synthesis on the topic
- The decision will have an impact on a significant portion of the NL population, or is crucial for an identified sub-population of NL
- The decision has the potential to improve health outcomes

**TIMELINE**
- The timeline for providing decision support is appropriate (i.e., approximately six months for a full CHRSP or one month for a Rapid Evidence Report)

**FEASIBILITY**
- The question is clearly worded to avoid ambiguity about what is to be studied and can be formulated as a researchable question

**AT THE FINAL ASSESSMENT STAGE:**

**AVAILABILITY OF EVIDENCE**
- Once we have identified the topics of importance, the CHRSP team will confirm that the question can be answered on the basis of high-level research evidence (see the box to the right) for a full CHRSP; where the evidence base is less robust and/or the topic is of a highly urgent nature, the topic may be better suited for a Rapid Evidence Report
- Sufficient local input (e.g., key informants, statistical data, grey literature) must be available to inform the contextualization

**AVAILABILITY OF A TEAM**
- A Team Leader with expertise in the subject area is available to lead the project
- Local health system experts are committed to the project
- Local academic support is available
- Local consultants can provide input into the contextual factors of interest in NL

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**High-level research evidence** refers to reports of research studies on a topic that have been synthesized in a systematic way. For example, a systematic review responds to a specific research question, identifies and selects all relevant primary research based on set criteria, critically appraises the studies and summarizes the results.

A meta-analysis goes one step further and combines the statistical results from the individual studies comprising the review.

A health technology assessment (HTA) provides a comprehensive, systematic assessment of the conditions for and consequences of using a health technology (i.e., a drug, a therapeutic or diagnostic device, or a process for the organization or delivery of care).

Other forms of evidence may be useful in informing CHRSP projects but may not, in the absence of high-level review literature, be sufficiently robust to justify a full CHRSP report. These include, for example,
- Government reports
- Program evaluations
- Statistical data
- Expert opinion
- Clinical Practice Guidelines