

Stage 1: Healthcare academic database search

- Implemented : March 2010; updated August 2011
- Healthcare academic databases: Medline; Psych INFO; EMBASE; Social Work; CINAHL
- Topics: 'accreditation' ; 'standard'; 'guideline'; 'policy'; 'legislation'

N = 9386



Stage 2: Refinement of identified abstracts

- Selecting for empirical research studies, criteria: 'research'; 'study'; empirical'; 'report'; 'method' (n=2111)
- Selecting for impact of accreditation standards, criteria: 'impacts'
- Removal of papers covering clinical/ biomedical studies
- Exclusion of discussion papers, commentaries or editorials
- Snowball searching: assembled papers and accreditation agencies websites

N = 140



Stage 3: Review and selection of papers

- Independent review by two researchers
- Selecting for development and application or impact of healthcare accreditation standards

N = 13