Objective
This study aims to assess the information needs of public health workers based on a review of the literature using a systematic search strategy.

Methods
Screening
- Databases searched: PubMed, Web of Science, Library Literature, LISTA
- Inclusion criteria: English language, published between 2005-2015, primary data collection only, study population of PH workers
- After screening 1037 records, 12 qualitative studies and 21 quantitative studies (total= 33) were included in the final analysis.

Data extraction & critical appraisal
- What is critical appraisal?
- The process of carefully and systematically examining research to judge its trustworthiness and its value and relevance in a particular context.1
- Data extraction and critical appraisal were conducted using CASP (qualitative) and STROBE (quantitative) checklists2,3.

Example questions
- Was data analysis sufficiently rigorous? (CASP)
- Discuss generalizability of study results. (STROBE)
- Describe efforts to address potential sources of bias. (STROBE)

Results
- Critical appraisal revealed potential biases that affected the validity of studies.
- Five themes emerged in the analysis: defining information needs, defining evidence-based information, information-seeking behaviour and use, barriers to information needs, and public health-specific issues.

Conclusions
- PH workers do not have a clear understanding of evidence and how to apply it to PH practice
- PH workers are unaware of library services including databases and librarians’ expertise
- PH workers are interested in improving their skills in epidemiological research methods and finding & using information to inform practice
- Research studies conducted by librarians had low internal and external validity

Recommendations for librarians working with public health populations
- Teach evidence-based information basics (e.g. what is evidence, importance of peer-review)
- Increase awareness of library collections, services, and public health-specific resources
- Measure actual use of library services in addition to reported use to inform purchase decisions and outreach needs

Recommendations for librarians conducting research
- Increase sample size to increase generalizability
- Use multiple data collection methods
- Pilot surveys to increase face & content validity
- Analyze data; do not report primary data
- Acknowledge potential biases and confounders

References