How to Ask a Research Question.
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Overview

• A study question should have one primary question

• Ask a research question that is:
  o Important
  o Specific
  o Answerable (by investigation or experiment)

• Formulate a research question that is “FINER”:
  o Feasible
  o Interesting
  o Novel
  o Ethical
  o Relevant

• Research questions come from:
  o Skepticism of conventional wisdom- “What is the evidence for these answers?” (T. Chalmers)
  o Meetings
  o Journal clubs
  o Teaching
  o Patient care

• A good research question requires a qualified and interested mentor

• A background literature review allows you to:
  o Ask a better question
  o Define questions that have been answered and still need to be answered
  o Provide insights and methodology
  o Identify future mentors or collaborators

• Research questions can be answered by more than 1 design
  o There is no one best single design to answer the question
  o Compromises in rigorous scientific integrity are made in the setting of limited resource and clinical reality

Reference