



## Guidelines for Third Party Tools/Resources (TRs) Approval

### Purpose:

To ensure that externally-developed resources (third party TRs) are valuable additions to the PEN<sup>®</sup> System.

Consider the following criteria for new and current TRs:

- PEN System developed client handouts are the preferred resources to be used with clients in Canada. When these are not available, use clinical judgment when reviewing external resources.
- Generally, the more national/global or widely applicable a resource is, the better. However country, or even region specific resources can be added to the PEN System.
- Critical / key criteria that help to make a decision on including a resource within the PEN System are bolded in the table below and include:
  - consistency with PEN evidence (see PEN Supporting evidence)
  - does not contain sponsorship or links to sponsored information (see Sponsorship).
- The usability (and readability) of a TR is additional (but not critical) criteria that can be used in deciding upon a TR. Note that items, such as a high literacy, may prevent a TR from being added to the PEN System; however the TR description can be used to inform users of these types of issues. Exceptions are sometimes made, particularly if no other TR exists on the topic. If in doubt, check with the PEN Resource Manager.

Topic Area	Criteria
Existing TRs (critical)	<b>Does the TR currently exist in the PEN System?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Search the PEN System, and all related collections to ensure the resource does not already exist.</li> <li>• If the TR is already in the PEN System, is the new TR an updated version? (If it is, then the existing TR could be updated).</li> <li>• If it does not exist in the PEN System, is the new information better than what already exists? Should it replace a resource in the PEN System or be added as an additional Related TR? An example would be a resource with similar content, but from another country of origin.</li> </ul>
PEN Supporting evidence (critical)	<b>Is the information in the TR current (last 5 years) and congruent with the evidence in the PEN System?</b> <p>To assess this, review any content statements made in the TR against related Practice Questions (PQs), Key Practice Points (KPPs) and Backgrounds in PEN.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For example, if within the TR it says that, 'individuals with cystic fibrosis who take probiotic supplements do have any improvement in their health outcomes', this needs to be searched and verified with evidence in the relevant PEN content.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ search in the PEN System would bring up the PQ: <i>Do individuals with</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Topic Area	Criteria
	<p><i>cystic fibrosis (CF) who supplement their diets with probiotics have improved health outcomes compared with individuals with CF not using probiotics?</i> Reviewing the PQ, it would be noted that, "Clinical trials suggest there may be some health benefits for individuals with CF who use probiotics, such as reduced pulmonary exacerbations and improved intestinal inflammation."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Therefore this TR would need to be edited to have the content statement removed. If the TR can't be edited, then it cannot be added to the PEN System.</li> <li>● If there isn't evidence in the PEN System that covers the complete content of the TR, the reviewer must ensure that the content is evidence-based and/or best practice.</li> <li>● If the TR topic isn't in the PEN System, then the TR cannot be added, and the topic should be submitted to the PEN Evidence Analysts for future consideration for addition to the PEN System. (This can also be done through <a href="#">Submit a Content Idea</a>). The TR can be put aside until there is evidence in the PEN System to support the information and/or the TR can be modified.</li> </ul>
Sponsorship (critical)	<p><b>Does the TR meet the PEN Sponsorship Policy Guidelines?</b>  In accordance with the guidelines:  "Resources and or tools that have been developed by the corporate sector may be eligible for inclusion in PEN if they are reviewed through an independent peer review process and deemed congruent with the evidence in PEN. However, preference will always be given to tools that have not been developed by corporate interests, should similar tools exist."</p>
Access Considerations	<p>If the TR is housed on a website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Is the website appropriate (information is unbiased); credible (author's qualifications are sound and preferably peer reviewed); and directly related to KP content and is current (last 3-5 years)?</li> <li>● The website does not contain sponsorship; or advertising and other links are appropriate (as defined above)</li> <li>● If the TR is a PDF, is there a URL to use instead? (URLs are easier for updating and identifying broken links.)</li> <li>● Is there information within the PEN System that needs to be added around the TR?</li> </ul>
Design Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Does the TR have a date and organization logo identifying where it is from?</li> <li>● Is the TR national/global in scope? Or specific to one country? Or is it specific to one geographic area within a country?</li> <li>● Is it clear who the intended audience is for the TR?</li> <li>● Does it provide useful/relevant information for the intended audience?</li> <li>● Is the layout clear, good flow of information, grammatically correct, no typos?</li> <li>● Can the TR be easily loaded and printed?</li> <li>● Does the user have to be registered to the site to access the tool? Is there a user fee or a subscription required? Note: it is OK to use tools that require any of these but it should be noted in the description of the tool.</li> <li>● Is the TR available in other languages and/or culturally adapted?</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the TR have an option for the visually impaired?</li> <li>Are all the links in the TR active?</li> </ul>
Resources for Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the information source referenced and are the references of sound quality?</li> <li>Does the resource contain company/product sponsorship? Advertisements? If so, best to avoid.</li> <li>Is the resource written by an association such as Dietitians Australia (DA) or Dietitians of Canada (DC)?</li> <li>Does it promote or profile a personal business (e.g. is the resource only accessible through a personal/ business website, or does it promote their personal business), if so consider adding it to the Associations website instead.</li> <li>Is the resource a website? If so it may fit in Web Links tool format if available for the topic area. Search the PEN System using terms 'web links' to find current TRs.</li> <li>Is the resource a clinical practice guideline? If so check that is not already available within the PEN System, and if it needs updating.</li> </ul>
Resources for Clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the language/reading level match the audience? Aim for reading levels of about grade 5 to 9. TRs for clients with a high level of literacy may be fine in some cases; the literacy level would need to be noted in the description.</li> <li>Is there an advisory to the effect that health information should not be taken as health advice and does not substitute consultation with a health professional?</li> </ul>
Corporate Sector Developed TRs	<p>TRs that have been developed by the corporate sector or other organizations / agencies external to the PEN System may be eligible for inclusion in the PEN System if they are reviewed through an independent peer review process and deemed congruent with the evidence in the PEN System.</p> <p>Preference will always be given to TRs that have not been developed by corporate interests, should similar tools exist.</p> <p>If the TRs contain names/logos of products or services the following considerations should be used for their assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the TR is a database listing of products or services, its goal should be to assist the consumer and/or health provider in making healthy food choices;</li> <li>Should be inclusive and as national in scope as possible, or at least be broader than one region; product or company; and</li> <li>If there is no other resource that is available and there is a high user need for the information.</li> </ul> <p>An example currently in the PEN System is: <a href="#">Infant Formulas for Healthy Term Infants</a></p>