British Nursing Index: Database Update: November 2017

In Q3 2017, British Nursing Index A&I-only records started getting indexed with new types of subject terms.

Why did we make this change?

The existing BNI thesaurus was originally designed for a much smaller database, which allowed very few headings (no more than four) to be added to each record. For this reason, the headings were made deliberately broad, e.g. Breast Cancer : Prevention and Screening to cover a number of concepts around mammography, health promotion, breast cancer prevention, and screening services.

We now have an opportunity to strategically expand the subject terminology we provide by adopting the well-established ProQuest Thesaurus. As this thesaurus is already widely used for indexing across ProQuest, this move will also facilitate cross-searching of BNI with other products, e.g., Nursing and Allied Health Source and Hospital Premium Collection.

The ProQuest Thesaurus has a wider taxonomy and allows us to assign more specific headings to facilitate accuracy in your searches, particularly in areas such as cancer, communicable diseases, psychiatric disorders, therapies and drug categories. Another advantage is the use of natural language terms rather than post-coordinate terms, making search queries easier to manage, especially for inexperienced searchers. Finally, the thesaurus is managed such that we have the ability to quickly incorporate new and emerging topics in nursing and midwifery.

What has changed?

There is some overlap between the two thesauri. For 209 BNI headings, the ProQuest heading matches exactly. For others, there is a very minor change of structure, e.g. Children : Health is replaced by Childrens health; Nursing : Education becomes Nursing education.

Many of the broader headings are replaced by more specific terms, e.g. Cardiovascular System and Disorders is replaced by two headings: Cardiovascular system and Cardiovascular disease. The “prevention and screening” headings are covered by Disease prevention and Medical screening as two separate terms.

A very small number of BNI terms have been retired, as they are underused or are no longer relevant. For example, Community Medicine has been retired and the content found under the terms Public Health, Pandemics, or Epidemics.

A full list of BNI headings and their equivalent ProQuest heading (or suggested alternatives) can be viewed in the attached spreadsheet. In each case, you will see the alternative heading. Please note:

- If there is no exact ProQuest alternative, a recommended search strategy combining two or more terms is given: e.g. for Accident and Emergency Nursing, the recommended search string is Emergency medical care AND Nurse specialists
- If a BNI heading has been broken into two or more terms, both are given, e.g. for Foot Care and Disorders, the two alternative terms are Podiatry OR Foot diseases.

If you need help converting older search strategies/saved searches to the new syntax, we will be more than happy to make the mapping for you. Just send us the searches that you would like to update and we will send them back to you reflecting the new subject terms.
When will the changes take place?

For all new records added from October 2017, the new headings are being used exclusively. For older records, ProQuest headings have been added alongside the existing BNI headings.

The BNI thesaurus is still available for selection and search, but since new records are now only being indexed using the ProQuest thesaurus, we are planning to retire this thesaurus in the near future.

New Indexing Fields

As of mid-2017 BNI is also indexing additional entity terms as they apply to the article. These are:

- Company/Organization names
- Personal names

These will appear in distinct fields in the document view and are searchable using the corresponding mnemonics ORG and PER. As these terms are available in a substantial number of records in the database, we will add these additional fields to the indexing section of the documents and the Advanced Search Page.

New Content

The changes above are linked directly to a new system that was introduced recently in order to update the content in BNI.

We have made a change in our ingestion process which means that instead of loading 2 different records into ProQuest for each article – one for BNI and one for Nursing & Allied Health Source (NAHS) – we are now only loading one record.

When we did that, we added all the records that were available in NAHS for all common publications to BNI. As an example, the publication British Journal of Nursing used to be indexed separately in the NAHS database and in BNI – so there were 2 separate records for each article published in ProQuest. Now we’re using a single source to add content to both products, and to enable that we have added all the records that we had in the NAHS version of the journal to BNI.

This new process allows us to add more valuable content to the database and update the content in BNI much quicker than in the past, as we move from a static monthly content delivery to a constant flow of new content into the product as soon as it becomes available to ProQuest.

This has resulted in a considerable growth in the database but also in the duplication of some of the older records in the near term – new records added won’t have this problem as there is now only one single copy being used for both products. For the older duplicate records, the NAHS version includes terms from the ProQuest thesaurus and the BNI version includes terms from both the BNI and the ProQuest thesaurus. As mentioned above, new records going forward will only include terms from the ProQuest thesaurus, so we are asking that you start the necessary development work to update your systems to reflect the use of the ProQuest thesaurus instead of the BNI thesaurus. At the moment searches run on terms that are common to both vocabularies will return all records in the database, whereas searches run on BNI-unique terms will only retrieve records up until October 2017.

The duplication is not visible in the platform because the search engine de-duplicates the records on the results page on the fly. However, this doesn’t happen on the XML gateway as de-duplication is
not supported there, which explains why searches run in HDAS and other federated search systems are retrieving 2 records for the same article, while the native platform only shows one.

It is our intention to remove the duplicates in the next few months and have all records consistently indexed, but that will only happen as this ingesting process is completed and we have gone through all the retrospective content to added the relevant subject headings to all records.

Another side effect of the changes is that any default searches run on BNI will search the full text of the BNI/NAHS records, even if the NAHS full text might not be available in your subscription. We are looking at ways to improve the user experience around this issue by either suppressing searching of the full text or by adding information for the user that lets him/her know that their term was found as part of the full text. We will keep you updated with any developments on this front.