From CINAHL’s homepage select “CINAHL Headings” from the top of the page.

Enter the term you would like to search and click on “Browse”.

Select the terms from the list of subject headings, which pertain to your search. With each term listing you have the option to select subheadings, which can be selected to narrow the scope of your search. As you make selections, terms are added to the search. Note: if you are doing a systematic review, it is best to include all subheadings.
For each subject heading listed click on the note symbol to read a “Scope note”, which provides a definition of the term.

By choosing to “Explode” a heading, a listing of various related terms that fall below your original search term in the hierarchy of CINAHL terms will appear. Using the “Explode” option means that the search will include all of these terms. You can pick and choose specific terms to include in your search.

From the list of subject headings you are also able to identify any that should be “Major Concepts” in your search. To do this select the “Major Concept” box in the appropriate heading’s row.

Once you have made your selections for this first search, you can now add other terms to your search by clicking on “Browse Additional Terms”.

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Complete the search the same way you did for your original term, by typing it into the search box and clicking “Browse”. *Note: CINAHL will save your previously search term(s).*

Once again make selections of subheadings and terms from the list of subject headings generated from this search. As you make selections each will be added to your search.
Once you have selected the terms and subheadings you would like to search, the final step before searching is to determine whether terms should be combine with “AND” or “OR”. When you combine different concepts, as shown in this example, you should select “AND”. This tells the database to search for articles and citations that include both concepts (note that CINAHL defaults to “OR”).

Make your selection under the search terms. Then click on “Search Database”.

The search result list will appear similar to the image below.