**Systematic Review Protocol & Support Template**

**Version 1.0**

**Version Date 17MAY2024**

**Recommended resources:**

[Systematic reviews: Structure, form and content - PMC (nih.gov)](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8406371/)

[A step by step guide for conducting a systematic review and meta-analysis with simulation data - PMC (nih.gov)](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6670166/)

[An overview of methodological approaches in systematic reviews - PMC (nih.gov)](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9322259/)

[Systematic review protocol - outline/template (york.ac.uk)](https://www.crd.york.ac.uk/PROSPEROFILES/3611_STRATEGY_20130031.pdf)

[PROSPERO (york.ac.uk)](https://www.crd.york.ac.uk/PROSPERO/#serviceinfopage)

[litsearchr - an R package to facilitate quasi-automatic search strategy development for systematic reviews (elizagrames.github.io)](https://elizagrames.github.io/litsearchr/#tutorials)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Overview *– basic study information* | |
| Title of the review |  |
| First reviewer |  |
| Team of reviewers |  |
| Communication method |  |
| Supervisor/project principal investigator |  |
| Organization |  |
| Project title *(If different from review title)* |  |
| Review method *(PRISMA, PRISMA-P, Cochrane)* |  |
| Funding mechanism |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Support *– management plan* | |
| SR Overview |  |
| Protocol Development |  |
| Literature Searching |  |
| Data Extraction |  |
| Synthesis/Analysis |  |
| Writing Up |  |

Table of Contents

[1. Background to Review 3](#_Toc166805983)

[1.1 Important characteristics 3](#_Toc166805984)

[1.2 Relevance 3](#_Toc166805985)

[1.3 Rationale 3](#_Toc166805986)

[1.4 Justification 3](#_Toc166805987)

[1.5 Specification 3](#_Toc166805988)

[2. Specific Objectives 3](#_Toc166805989)

[3. Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria 3](#_Toc166805990)

[3.1 Inclusion Criteria 3](#_Toc166805991)

[3.2 Exclusion Criteria 4](#_Toc166805992)

[4. Search Methods 4](#_Toc166805993)

[5. Methods of Review 4](#_Toc166805994)

[6. Processes and Resources 5](#_Toc166805995)

[7. Presentation of Results 5](#_Toc166805996)

[8. Timeline for Review (*estimated*) 5](#_Toc166805997)

## 1. Background to Review

### 1.1 Important characteristics

*What are the important population and/or disease characteristics (diagnostic criteria, epidemiology, aetiology, prognosis)?*

### 1.2 Relevance

*Does the review topic have important implications for health (individual and/or public), as well as health care, policy and research?*

### 1.3 Rationale

*Does the evidence (including existing systematic reviews) fail to answer the review question, and why?*

### 1.4 Justification

*Is the need for the review justified in the light of the potential health implications and current limitations of the evidence base?*

### 1.5 Specification

*What are the PICO (population, intervention, comparison, outcome) components of the review question / objective?*

## 2. Specific Objectives

## 3. Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

### 3.1 Inclusion Criteria

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Population, participants and conditions of interest |  |
| Interventions or exposures |  |
| Comparisons or control groups |  |
| Outcomes of interest |  |
| Setting |  |
| Study designs |  |

### 3.2 Exclusion Criteria

*Any specific populations excluded, date range, language, region, full text availability, etc.*

## 4. Search Methods

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Electronic databases *(Highly suggested to include multiple, with data ranges searched for each)* |  |
| Key search terms, and method of identification of search terms *(must be sensitive and specific, can narrow down)* |  |
| Other methods used for identifying relevant research *(i.e., experts, grey literature via CADTH, etc.)* |  |
| Journals hand searched *(include journals, date of search, and rationale for selection)* |  |
| Use of snowballing methods *(i.e., capture of citing papers)* |  |

## 5. Methods of Review

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Details of methods *(At least 3 reviewers suggested, dealing with agreements and disagreements)* |  |
| Quality assessment *(tools or checklists used with references or URLs – CASP, AACODS)* |  |
| Data extraction *(information to be collected from each study, methods)* |  |
| Narrative synthesis *(what and how synthesis will be done)* |  |
| Meta-analysis *(methods – Cochrane)* |  |
| Grading evidence *(system used, such as GRADE)* |  |
| Bias mitigation plan *(tools or checklists used with references or URLs – RoBiS/RoB 2)* |  |

## 6. Processes and Resources

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Background/expertise |  |
| Computing facilities |  |
| Research databases |  |
| Bibliographic software |  |
| Statistical software |  |

## 7. Presentation of Results

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Additional material *(summary tables, flowcharts, etc. to be included in the final manuscript or associated database/GitHub)* |  |
| Outputs from review *(target conferences, journals)* |  |

## 8. Timeline for Review (*estimated*)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Protocol development & registration through PROSPERO ([PROSPERO (york.ac.uk)](https://www.crd.york.ac.uk/prospero/)) |  |
| Literature searching and study selection |  |
| Study quality appraisal |  |
| Data extraction |  |
| Synthesis |  |
| Writing up |  |
| Draft manuscript for internal/peer review |  |
| Submission for publication |  |
| Celebrate publication |  |