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| SUBMISSION COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST: SYSTEMATIC REVIEW  DOCUMENT VERSION 07 MAY 2020  Ensure your manuscript complies with author guidelines by completing this SUBMISSION COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST, ensure to report the corresponding page number. Submit the completed form on the journal website during the manuscript submission process (Step 4). | | | |
| COMPLIANCE CRITERIA | | | COMPULSARY SECTION TO COMPLETE |
| SECTION/TOPIC | # | CHECKLIST ITEM | REPORTED ON PAGE # |
| *TITLE* |  |  |  |
| Title | 1 | Identify the report as a systematic review, meta-analysis, or both. |  |
| *ABSTRACT* |  |  |  |
| Structured summary | 2 | Provide a structured summary including, as applicable: background, aim, setting, methods, results, conclusion and contribution. |  |
| *INTRODUCTION* |  | *Focus on a clinical question that will be addressed in the review.* |  |
| Rationale | 3 | Describe the rationale for the review in the context of what is already known. |  |
| Objectives | 4 | Provide an explicit statement of questions being addressed with reference to participants, interventions, comparisons, outcomes, and study design (PICOS). |  |
| *METHODS* |  | *Describe in detail the search strategy, criteria used to select or reject articles, attempts made to obtain all important and relevant studies and deal with publication bias (including grey and unpublished literature), how the quality of included studies was appraised, the methodology used to extract and/or analyse data.* |  |
| Protocol and registration | 5 | Indicate if a review protocol exists, if and where it can be accessed (e.g., Web address), and, if available, provide registration information including registration number. |  |
| Eligibility criteria | 6 | Specify study characteristics (e.g., PICOS, length of follow-up) and report characteristics (e.g., years considered, language, publication status) used as criteria for eligibility, giving rationale. |  |
| Information sources | 7 | Describe all information sources (e.g., databases with dates of coverage, contact with study authors to identify additional studies) in the search and date last searched. |  |
| Search | 8 | Present full electronic search strategy for at least one database, including any limits used, such that it could be repeated. |  |
| Study selection | 9 | State the process for selecting studies (i.e., screening, eligibility, included in systematic review, and, if applicable, included in the meta-analysis). |  |
| Data collection process | 10 | Describe method of data extraction from reports (e.g., piloted forms, independently, in duplicate) and any processes for obtaining and confirming data from investigators. |  |
| Data items | 11 | List and define all variables for which data were sought (e.g., PICOS, funding sources) and any assumptions and simplifications made. |  |
| Risk of bias in individual studies | 12 | Describe methods used for assessing risk of bias of individual studies (including specification of whether this was done at the study or outcome level), and how this information is to be used in any data synthesis. |  |
| Summary measures | 13 | State the principal summary measures (e.g., risk ratio, difference in means). |  |
| Synthesis of results | 14 | Describe the methods of handling data and combining results of studies, if done, including measures of consistency (e.g., I2) for each meta-analysis. |  |
| Risk of bias across studies | 15 | Specify any assessment of risk of bias that may affect the cumulative evidence (e.g., publication bias, selective reporting within studies). |  |
| Additional analyses | 16 | Describe methods of additional analyses (e.g., sensitivity or subgroup analyses, meta-regression), if done, indicating which were pre-specified. |  |
| *RESULTS* |  | *Describe the homogeneity of the different findings; clearly present the overall results and any meta-analysis.* |  |
| Study selection | 17 | Give numbers of studies screened, assessed for eligibility, and included in the review, with reasons for exclusions at each stage, ideally with a flow diagram. |  |
| Study characteristics | 18 | For each study, present characteristics for which data were extracted (e.g., study size, PICOS, follow-up period) and provide the citations. |  |
| Risk of bias within studies | 19 | Present data on risk of bias of each study and, if available, any outcome level assessment (see item 12). |  |
| Results of individual studies | 20 | For all outcomes considered (benefits or harms), present, for each study: (a) simple summary data for each intervention group (b) effect estimates and confidence intervals, ideally with a forest plot. |  |
| Synthesis of results | 21 | Present results of each meta-analysis done, including confidence intervals and measures of consistency. |  |
| Risk of bias across studies | 22 | Present results of any assessment of risk of bias across studies (see Item 15). |  |
| Additional analysis | 23 | Give results of additional analyses, if done (e.g., sensitivity or subgroup analyses, meta-regression [see Item 16]). |  |
| *DISCUSSION* |  |  |  |
| Summary of evidence | 24 | Summarize the main findings including the strength of evidence for each main outcome; consider their relevance to key groups (e.g., healthcare providers, users, and policy makers). |  |
| Limitations | 25 | Discuss limitations at study and outcome level (e.g., risk of bias), and at review-level (e.g., incomplete retrieval of identified research, reporting bias). |  |
| Conclusions | 26 | Provide a general interpretation of the results in the context of other evidence, and implications for future research. |  |
| *ACKNOWLEDGEMENT* |  |  |  |
| Acknowledgements | 27 | The acknowledgement section follows the conclusions section and addresses formal, required statements of gratitude and required disclosures. It includes listing those who contributed to the work but did not meet authorship criteria, with the corresponding description of the contribution. |  |
| Competing interests | 28 | This section should list specific competing interests associated with any of the authors. If authors declare that no competing interests exist, the article will include a statement to this effect. |  |
| Author contributions | 29 | All authors must meet the criteria for authorship as outlined in the [authorship](https://aosis.co.za/policies#authorship) policy and [author contribution](https://aosis.co.za/policies#author_contributions_affiliations) statement policies. |  |
| Funding | 30 | Describe sources of funding for the systematic review and other support (e.g., supply of data); role of funders for the systematic review. |  |
| Data availability statement | 31 | Guide readers where the data associated with a paper is available, and under what conditions the data can be accessed. |  |
| Disclaimer | 32 | A statement that the views expressed in the submitted article are his or her own and not an official position of the institution or funder. |  |