Rapid systematic reviews: Methods and implications

OTC Alumni Event

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Overview of Presentation

• What are Rapid Reviews? Why conduct them?
• Study Objectives
• Findings
  • Rapid review methods
  • Rapid versus systematic reviews
  • Implications
• Conclusions
What are Rapid Reviews?

• Literature reviews that utilize methods to accelerate traditional systematic reviews
• Vary in:
  • Terminology
  • Timelines
  • Methods used to streamline
Why conduct Rapid Reviews?

- Demands for rapid access to current research synthesis driven by:
  - Clinical urgency
  - Emerging issues
  - Technology uptake
  - Limited time and resources
Targets

• Audiences:
  • Government policymakers, health care institutions, health professionals, patient associations

• Conclusions:
  • May focus on federal, regional or local contexts
Our Study Objectives:

1. Are there any comparisons of rapid versus traditional methods?
2. What is lost in taking short-cuts from Cochrane review? What biases increase?
Methods

• Literature search included:
  • Database searches (X6)
  • Systematic grey literature search
  • Contact with experts
  • Hand search – Reference lists, journal *Evaluation*

• Reviewers conducted
  • Title and abstract screening (x2)
  • Full text review (x2)
  • Data abstraction (x1)
Findings – Rapid Review Methods

• How are methods streamlined?

- Search
- Inclusion/Exclusion
- Quality Assessment
- Data Abstraction
- Peer review
- Time Frame
Balancing Time, Costs and Yield

- Extensive searching – Database, grey, hand search
- Contacting experts
- Quality assessment
Findings – What’s lost?

• Conclusions?
• Data reported
• Depth of information
• Detail in recommendations
• Transferability
Findings – Implications of RR methods

- Potential for bias
  - Selection, publication, language of publication bias
- Types of questions, content areas
- Grey literature, language exclusion
- Interim guidance
Recommendations

• Standardization of methods?
• Transparency
• Reporting standards
• Acknowledgement of limitations, bias introduced, need to follow-up with systematic review
Conclusions

• Future research comparing rapid versus systematic methods
• Role for rapid reviews in knowledge translation and synthesis
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