### Reference interview for systematic review searches

#### Preparing

- **Pre-existing research**
  - Protocols for ongoing SRs
  - Preliminary searches in Prospero, Cochrane Library, PubMed

- **Protocol**
  - Is a protocol written?
  - Published in Prospero?

- **Relevant references**
  - Gold standard for search
  - Useful for identifying search terms

- **Published searches**
  - Useful for identifying search terms
  - Useful for identifying relevant databases

- **Where to publish?**
  - In a journal?
  - Through an organization?

- **Use of any standards?**
  - Guidelines for systematic reviews
  - Literature search
  - Reporting — PRISMA
  - Journals' instruction for authors
  - Peer review of search — PRESS?

#### Organizing the work

- **Project group**
  - Earlier experience with systematic reviews?
  - Work in independent pairs?
  - Contact person who can make decisions on behalf of the group?

- **A systematic review? Or a review done systematically?**
  - A systematic review should include quality assessment of included studies, will this be done?
  - For other types of reviews, see Grant & Booth (2009).

- **Role of librarian**
  - Supervising or do the search?
  - Will the search be published?
  - Author of methodology chapter in review?
  - Librarian as co-author/ acknowledgement?

- **Time frame and deadlines**
  - What is the time frame for the whole project?
  - What is the time frame for the literature search?
  - Will the search result be reviewed regardless of size?

#### The literature search

- **Is the research question clearly defined?**
  - Clear inclusion criteria?
  - Clear exclusion criteria?

- **Framework research question**
  - PICO
  - SPICE
  - SPIDER
  - Other...

- **Search sources and methods**
  - Reference databases
  - Databases outside institution portfolio?
  - Unpublished literature
  - Gray literature, hand search, citation search

- **Search terms and phrases**
  - Subject headings, text words, phrases, concepts incl. variations
  - Relevant study designs
  - Which study designs answers the research question?

- **Limitation by languages or years**
  - Any limitations by language or year?
  - Plan for managing studies in foreign languages?

#### Supplementary work

- **Documentation of literature search should include**
  - Name, affiliation and contact information of librarian
  - Name of databases, incl vendor
  - Search date
  - Copy of the literature search
  - Number of references per database
  - Number of references before and after duplicate check

- **Import to other software?**
  - Reference manager?
  - Screening software?
  - Which formats are required?

- **Review update?**
  - Update of literature search before publishing?
  - Plan for updating the review?

- **Article access and requests**
  - Provide researchers with information on how to access electronic articles or request those who need to be ordered.

- **Notification when SR is published**
  - The librarian would be happy to know when the SR is published!

### Aim of interview guide

- Increased requests for assistance with systematic review searching.
- Methodological knowledge vary in user.
- Methodological knowledge vary in librarian.
- Increase knowledge on systematic reviews, particularly methodological requirements.
- Clarify perception and expectations to the literature search.
- Strengthen knowledge about workload invested by librarians among researchers.
- Literature on reference interviews traditionally lack questions on methodology.

### This interview guide is based on

- Published interview guides for literature searching.
- Methodology literature for systematic reviews.
- Own experiences.

### The guide can be

- Used in meeting with research groups as topics needed to be discussed.
- A part of information on the library’s services for systematic reviews.
- Used in in-house training of library staff.

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### References