

Title: Preferred Reporting Items for Overviews of Reviews (PRIOR)

Principal Investigator: Dr. Lisa Hartling (hartling@ualberta.ca)

Protocol outline drafted by: Michelle Pollock, Lisa Hartling

Date: December 21, 2016

Background

Overviews of reviews (overviews) use explicit and systematic methods to integrate information from multiple related systematic reviews (SRs). They therefore aim to provide a comprehensive synthesis of all SR evidence related to a specific clinical question [1]. Given their objective to synthesize extensive data in a user-friendly format, overviews have been gaining momentum as a valuable knowledge synthesis product to facilitate the uptake and application of knowledge by decision-makers. Thus, the number of published overviews has been steadily increasing in recent years [2, 3]. We recently published a scoping review summarizing existing guidance for conducting overviews of healthcare interventions [4]; we then used the results of this project to update the chapter on overview methods in the Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions (currently under review). However, despite these advances in methods for conducting overviews, there are currently no guidelines for reporting overviews. Reporting guidelines for overviews are an important next step, especially since two descriptive analyses of overviews both found deficiencies in the reporting of key methodological steps [2, 3]. A

standardized approach to reporting can lead to improvements in the completeness and transparency of overviews.

Objective

To develop a reporting guideline for overviews (Preferred Reporting Items for Overviews of Reviews - PRIOR) and to subsequently develop an accompanying explanation and elaboration document with detailed recommendations and examples. Our intent is to focus on overviews of healthcare interventions; however, we will discuss this with our project team as we fully develop the study protocol.

Methods

Development of the PRIOR reporting guideline will be based on the Enhancing QUALity and Transparency Of health Research (EQUATOR) Network guidance for developing reporting guidelines [5] and will be modeled on the methods used to develop reporting guidelines for SRs (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses - PRISMA) [6]. A detailed protocol outlining the steps for development of PRIOR is currently being produced, and we plan to publish this protocol in an open-access, peer-reviewed journal. In general, the methods we will use to develop the reporting guidance are as follows: review the literature to identify the need for reporting guidance, generate a list of items for consideration, conduct a Delphi exercise [7], hold a face-to-face consensus meeting, and develop and publish the guidance statement.

References

1. Becker LA, Oxman AD. Chapter 22: overviews of reviews. In: Higgins JPT, Green S, editors. *Cochrane handbook for systematic reviews of interventions* (version 5.1.0). The Cochrane Collaboration; 2011. www.handbook.cochrane.org.
2. Hartling L, Chisholm A, Thomson D, Dryden DM. A descriptive analysis of overviews of reviews published between 2000 and 2011. *PLoS One*. 2012;7(11):e49667.
3. Pieper D, Buechter R, Jerinic P, Eikermann M. Overviews of reviews often have limited rigor: a systematic review. *J Clin Epidemiol*. 2012;65(12):1267–73.
4. Pollock M, Fernandes RM, Becker LA, Featherstone R, Hartling L. What guidance is available for researchers conducting overviews of reviews of healthcare interventions? a scoping review and qualitative metasummary. *Syst Rev*. 2016;5:190.
5. Moher D, Schulz KF, Simera I, Altman DG. Guidance for developers of health research reporting guidelines. *PLoS Med*. 2010;7(2):e1000217.
6. Moher D, Liberati A, Tetzlaff J, Altman DG, The PRISMA Group. Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: the PRISMA statement. *PLoS Med*. 2009;6(7):e1000097.
7. Murphy MK, Black NA, Lamping DL, McKee CM, Sanderson CF, Askham J, et al. Consensus development methods, and their use in clinical guideline development. *Health Technol Assess*. 1998;2(3):1-88.