### TYPES OF REVIEWS

#### SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OR A LITERATURE REVIEW?

It’s common to confuse systematic and literature reviews because both are used to provide a summary of the existing literature or research on a specific topic. This table provides an overview of the differences in systematic and narrative literature reviews:

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<tr>
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<th>Systematic Review</th>
<th>Literature Review</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definition</strong></td>
<td>High-level overview of primary research on a focused question that identifies, selects, synthesizes, and appraises all high quality research evidence relevant to that question.</td>
<td>Qualitatively summarizes evidence on a topic using informal or subjective methods to collect and interpret studies and results.</td>
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<td><strong>Goals</strong></td>
<td>Answer a focused clinical question and eliminate potential biases.</td>
<td>Provides summary or overview of topic.</td>
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<td><strong>Question</strong></td>
<td>Clearly defined and answerable question. Uses the recommended PICO framework as a guide.</td>
<td>Can be a general topic or specific questions.</td>
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<td><strong>Components</strong></td>
<td>Pre-specified eligibility criteria, systematic search strategy, assessment of the validity of findings, interpretation and presentation of results, and reference list.</td>
<td>Offers the following components: Introduction, Methods, Discussion, Conclusion, and Reference List.</td>
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<td><strong>Number of Authors</strong></td>
<td>Three or more.</td>
<td>One or more.</td>
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<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
<td>Months to years. The average timeline for a systematic review is eighteen months.</td>
<td>Weeks to months.</td>
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<td><strong>Requirements</strong></td>
<td>Thorough knowledge of topic. Perform searches of all relevant databases. Statistical analysis (aka Meta-Analysis)</td>
<td>Understanding of topic. Performs searches of one or more databases.</td>
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<td><strong>Value</strong></td>
<td>Connects practicing clinicians to high quality evidence. Supports evidence-based practice.</td>
<td>Provides a summary of literature on a topic.</td>
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TYPES OF REVIEWS

GENERAL REVIEWS

LITERATURE REVIEW/NARRATIVE REVIEW
• Board term refers to reviews with a wide scope that examine recent or current literature
• Does not follow established methodology or reporting guidelines
• Search does not need to be comprehensive or exhaustive
• Critical appraisal is not necessary
• A good choice for reviewing literature without following defined parameters and on a shorter time frame

EVIDENCE SYNTHESSES

SYSTEMATIC REVIEW
• Seeks to answer a clearly defined research question formulated using a preexisting framework, ex: PICO
• Follows a standard/published methodology
• Comprehensive and exhaustive searching is required to find all scholarly research on the topic, including both traditionally published and gray literature
• Conducted in an unbiased and reproducible manner
• Must include critical appraisal of the literature
• Literature is synthesized in both narrative and tabular formats.
• Typically take 12-18 months to complete

RAPID REVIEW
• Applies systematic review methodology within a time-constrained setting
• Employs methodological "shortcuts" at the risk of introducing bias
• Useful for addressing issues needing quick decisions
• Shorter time-frame than a systematic review

META-ANALYSIS
• Should follow the methodology of a systematic review
• Literature is synthesized using a statistical technique for combining the findings from disparate quantitative studies
• Uses statistical methods/software to objectively evaluate, synthesize, and summarize results

SCOPING REVIEW
• Seeks to address a broader research question, set of questions, and/or identify gaps in research
• Follows a standard/published methodology
• Comprehensive and exhaustive searching is required to find all scholarly research on the topic, including both traditionally published and gray literature
• Conducted in an unbiased and reproducible manner
• May critically appraise literature but does not seek to synthesize or analyze data in the same manner as a systematic review
• May take longer to complete than a systematic review

UMBRELLA REVIEW
• Seeks to review other systematic reviews on a particular topic
• Follows a standard/published methodology
• Often requires a broader question than is typical for a traditional systematic review
• Comprehensive and exhaustive searching is required to find all evidence syntheses on a topic
• Conducted in an unbiased and reproducible manner
• May or may not include a meta-analysis
• Useful for when there are competing interventions to consider
WHAT TYPE OF REVIEW IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

- Do you want to gather all the evidence on a particular research topic?
  - Yes
  - Do you have 3 or more people to work on the review?
    - Yes
      - Literature (Narrative) Review
    - No
      - Literature (Narrative) Review
  - No
    - Literature (Narrative) Review

- Do you have 12–18 months to complete a review?
  - Yes
  - Do you have a broad topic or multiple research questions?
    - Yes
      - Rapid Review
    - No
      - Scoping Review
  - No
    - More intensive reviews usually require a multi-person team for unbiased article screening.

- Do you want to review other published systematic reviews on your topic?
  - Yes
    - Umbrella Review
  - No
    - Do you have a well-formulated research question?
      - Yes
        - Systematic Review
        - Will you use statistical methods to objectively evaluate, synthesize, and summarize results?
          - Yes
            - Systematic Review
            - Meta-Analysis
          - No
            - A meta-analysis will not be needed.
        - No
      - No
        - Systematic reviews are conducted in an unbiased, reproducible way to provide evidence for practice and policy-making and to identify gaps in research. They require a well-formulated research question.