COVID-19 Rapid Reviews

Workflow

Choosing a question

IMPORTANT: This document provides guidance for teams wanting to conduct Cochrane Rapid Reviews for urgent questions arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The aim of the COVID-19 rapid reviews priority questions list is to help researchers find and respond to the most important questions and produce urgent and high-quality rapid reviews with minimum duplication of effort.

Many rapid review questions have been submitted to Cochrane by various stakeholders. Some of these questions have undergone very early, high-level prioritisation to allow work to begin immediately on the most urgent reviews.

Questions that have not already been prioritised will be checked to ensure they have not already been answered by existing systematic reviews (Cochrane or non-Cochrane) or by rapid reviews being undertaken by other organisations.

Questions that are still considered to be open and able to be answered by a rapid review will go into a rapid prioritisation process with external stakeholders to ensure that the most important questions are selected to progress as Cochrane Rapid Reviews.

The COVID Rapid Reviews page will be updated as new questions are submitted and as question refinement and prioritisation progress over the coming days and weeks.

Please email [covidrapidreviews@cochrane.org](mailto:covidrapidreviews@cochrane.org) before starting work on any review.

When viewing the list, you can filter by ‘Type’ (diagnosis, prevention, treatment etc.) and ‘Status’ (e.g. awaiting prioritisation, author team to be assigned). If you have read the important information and would like to take on a review, please email [covidrapidreviews@cochrane.org](mailto:covidrapidreviews@cochrane.org).

Finding a team

The review team must include the following roles and expertise as a minimum, some of which may be fulfilled by the same person. Cochrane has identified some capacity to provide central support for search development, methods and clinical expertise if needed, but these are limited. The Cochrane Central Team is exploring options for linking up those who have the expertise to lead rapid reviews with those who have capacity to conduct specific tasks.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Role | Name (initials) | Expertise |
| Project lead |  | Experience conducting/managing rapid reviews |
| Systematic reviewer(s) |  | (At least) basic expertise in systematic reviewing |
| Information specialist |  |  |
| Statistician |  |  |
| Clinical expert |  |  |
| *[Add as necessary]* |  |  |

# Topic refinement

The urgent process of identifying priority questions means that many of them need to be refined before they can be addressed as a rapid review. Some high priority questions have already undergone topic refinement which is reflected by the ‘status’ of the question in the list, and in some cases preliminary searches may have been conducted.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Task | Responsible | X |
| To minimize research waste, preliminary literature search for existing or ongoing systematic reviews (if not already done during prioritisation):   * Epistemonikos, OpenScience, CEBM and the Cochrane Library   To estimate review feasibility, preliminary literature search of:   * LitCovid (for COVID-19 specific topics) * Other sources at discretion of CIS | *[Information specialist]* |  |
| Kick off team meeting to:   * Fill out Topic Refinement Form below (if not already done) * Record roles and deadlines in discussion with the Central team | All team members |  |
| Circulate this document to all team members | *[Project lead]* |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Topic refinement form | | | |
| Review Details | | | |
| Working Title |  | | |
| Question |  | | |
| Question number | *[if related to collated list of Cochrane Rapid Reviews questions]* | | |
| Refiner | *[person(s) filling out the form]* | | |
| Information Specialist |  | | |
| Search Peer Reviewer |  | | |
| Final deadline |  | | |
| Background | | | |
| From requester | *[add any pertinent detail about how the question was posed or prioritised, and what is known about the evidence base]* | | |
| Refined research questions | | | |
| *[add one or more questions following team discussion to operationalise the proposed title]* | | | |
| Refiner questions | | | |
| *[List any uncertainties about scope that need to be discussed/addressed, e.g.:*  *Age; confirmed/suspected COVID-19; COVID-19 only or SARS, MERS, influenza, pneumonia etc.; language limits (English only/English and Chinese)]* | | | |
| PICO | | | |
| Population | *[list separately for each question if more than one defined]* | | |
| Intervention |  | | |
| Comparator |  | | |
| Outcome | *[Where possible, consider patient-important and resource-related outcomes e.g., mortality, morbidity, length of stay]* | | |
| Literature Search | | | |
| Search timeframe |  | | |
| Limits |  | | |
| Study designs requested |  | | |
| Preliminary search results |  | | |
| Protocol (agreed target for submission: dd/mm) | | | |
| Task | | Responsible | X |
| Complete using Cochrane Rapid Review Protocol template | | *[Project lead]* |  |
| Create screening and data extraction templates | | *[Project lead]* |  |
| Internal review | | *[Statistician]* |  |
| *[Content expert]* |  |
| Submit to [covidrapidreviews@cochrane.org](mailto:covidrapidreviews@cochrane.org) for fast-track review | | *[Project lead]* |  |
| Make any changes arising from central review and submit final | | *[Project lead]* |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Review conduct (agreed target for completion: dd/mm) | | |
| Task | Responsible | X |
| *Searching* | | |
| Design strategies in line with topic refinement and protocol | *[Information specialist]* |  |
| Peer Review of Electronic Search Strategies (PRESS) | *[Add initials]* |  |
| Run, collate, deduplicate and share results with team | *[Information specialist]* |  |
| *Screening* | | |
| Conduct abstract and full text screening | *[Add initials]* |  |
| Translate foreign language records [if in protocol] | *[Add initials]* |  |
| Resolve conflicts, link publications, record final decisions | *[Add initials]* |  |
| *Data extraction and analysis* | | |
| Assess risk of bias and extract study characteristics and data using predefined tools | *[Add initials]* |  |
| Cross check and finalise extracted data | *[Add initials]* |  |
| Meeting to discuss analysis plan (e.g. unit of analysis issues, data transformation, etc.) | *[Statistician*  *Project lead]* |  |
| Check consistency with methods defined in the protocol | *[Project lead]* |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Publication (agreed deadline: dd/mm) | | |
|  | Responsible | X |
| *Report preparation and submission* | | |
| Prepare report in Cochrane Rapid Review template | *[Add initials]* |  |
| Submit to [covidrapidreviews@cochrane.org](mailto:covidrapidreviews@cochrane.org) for fast-track review with any supplementary files | *[Project lead]* |  |
| Peer review | Expert bank |  |
| Stats check | Central team |  |
| Copy-edit | CE Support |  |