# Prepare for success!

How to lead a review team and complete your review (or update) on time

contact@cochraneresponse.com

**Trusted evidence.**
**Informed decisions.**
**Better health.**

# Contents

We have no actual or potential conflict of interest in relation to this presentation.

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# Introduction

- Cochrane Response ([www.cochraneresponse.com](www.cochraneresponse.com))

- Evidence synthesis consultancy from Cochrane CET
  - Undertake reviews and guidelines for external stakeholders
  - Support for Cochrane reviews
  - User testing of systematic review tools

- Systematic review services on wide range of health topics

- Time sensitive (3-9 months per review)

# Steps in a systematic review

- ✓ Develop a protocol
- ✓ Conduct the search
- ✓ Select studies
- ✓ Extract data
- ✓ Synthesize your results
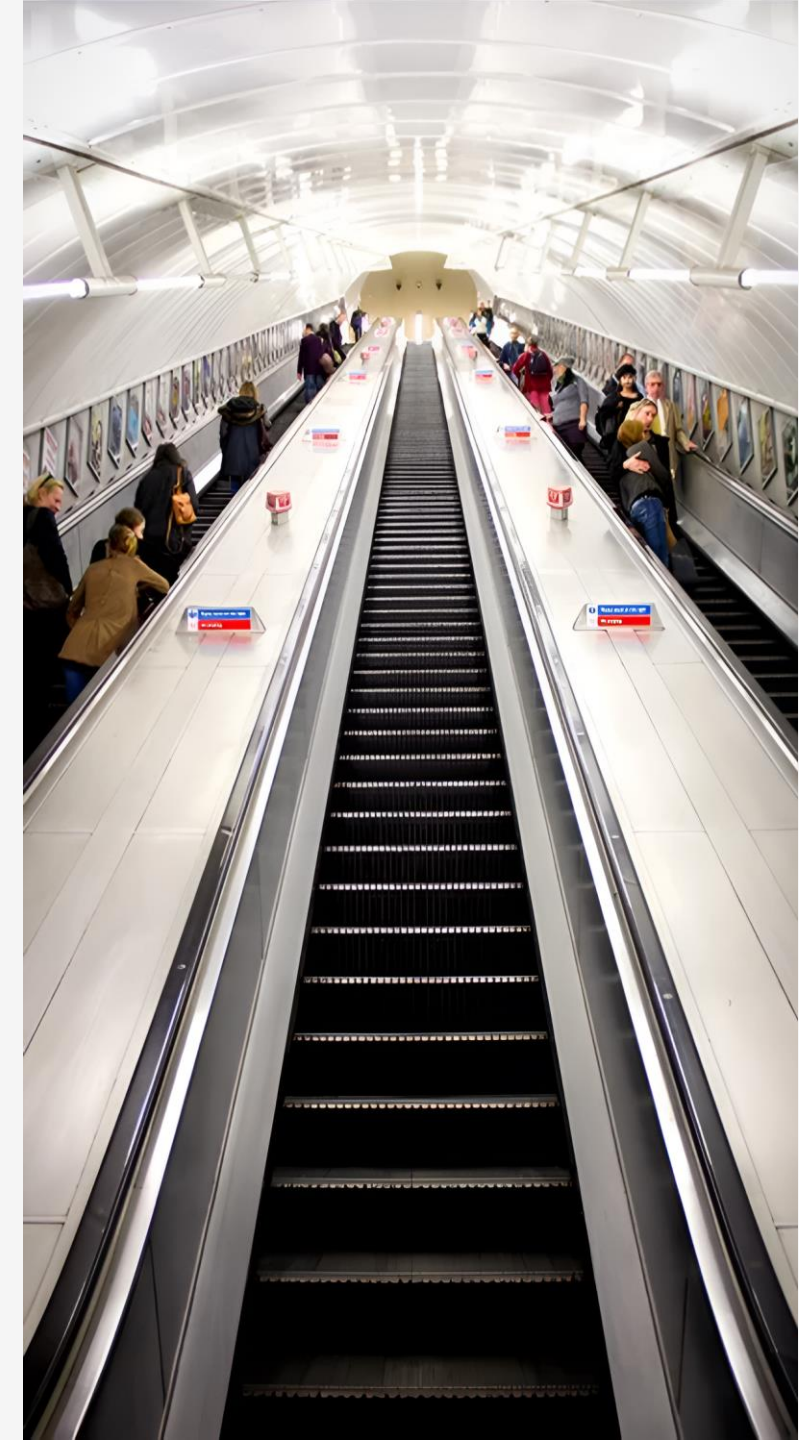- ✓ Interpret the findings
- ✓ Publish your review

What to extract?

Source PDFs?

Resolving conflicts?

PRISMA flowchart?

Risk of bias assessment?

Subgroup analysis?

# Be systematic and methodical

## Plan out each step of your systematic review

- What is involved with each step?

- How are you going to do each step?

- Which software/tools do you need?

- Who is going to do each step?

- Do you have a timeline? Deadlines?

*"Why didn't we think of this when we wrote the protocol?"*

KEEP CALM AND BE SYSTEMATIC

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# *What are the main barriers when performing a systematic review?*

Group discussion 1

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# Group discussion 1

## What are the main barriers when performing a systematic review?

- Small group discussion (20 minutes)

  – Quick introduction – who are you, what is your topic?

  – What is taking so long in your review?

  – What part do you find is the most difficult?

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# Discuss and create a task list for each step of the systematic review

Small group discussion 2

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# From protocol to task list

## Create a detailed list of all tasks to be performed during the systematic review

- Systematic review protocol is the source of tasks
  - Protocol should be clear, concise, and feasible
  - Think carefully about search methods, study designs, and analyses

- Detailed list of tasks to be performed
  - Each step of review broken down into individual tasks
  - Status of tasks as "ongoing", "completed", or "for discussion"
  - Assignment to team members

- Clearly describes the next steps in the review process
  - Keep to time schedule
  - Some tasks do not need to be done in order

Keep it feasible!

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# Task list example

| Step | Task | Assignment | Progress | Notes |
|------|------|-----------|----------|-------|
| 1 Protocol | First draft of protocol | HB/NH/JM | Completed | |
| 1 Protocol | Author list confirmed | all | Completed | |
| 1 Protocol | Feedback on protocol from all authors | YL/SG/KD | Completed | |
| 1 Protocol | Author meeting to discuss protocol | NH | Completed 1/12/2021 | |
| 1 Protocol | Submit protocol | NH | Submitted 16/12/2021 | |
| 1 Protocol | Editorial comments on protocol | Cochrane | Completed | |
| 1 Protocol | Peer review comments on protocol | Cochrane | Completed | |
| 1 Protocol | Author meeting to discuss comments | NH | Completed 1/2/2022 | |
| 1 Protocol | Draft responses to peer review comments | HB/NH/JM/YL | Completed | |
| 1 Protocol | Draft blank SoF/GRADE table for protocol | HB/NH/JM/EC | Completed | |
| 1 Protocol | Protocol re-submitted | HB | Submitted 3/4/2022 | |
| 1 Protocol | Editorial comments on protocol | HB/NH | Completed | |
| 1 Protocol | Protocol copy edit | HB | Completed | |
| 1 Protocol | Protocol published | | Published 20/4/2022 | |

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| Step | Task | Assignment | Progress | Notes |
|------|------|------------|----------|-------|
| 2 Search | Develop search strategies | JP/SG | completed | |
| 2 Search | Electronic database searches (PubMed, Embase, Cochrane) | JP | completed | |
| 2 Search | Trial registry search: clinicaltrials.gov | JP | completed | part of electronic database search |
| 2 Search | Trial registry search: ICTRP: www.who.int/clinicaltrials-registry-platform | JP | completed | part of electronic database search |
| 2 Search | Epistemonikos search https://www.epistemonikos.org | SG | completed | |
| 2 Search | HTA database search: www.york.ac.uk/crd/#HTA | SG | completed | |
| 2 Search | CSR searches (manufacturer database) | HB | completed | |
| 2 Search | Apply for CSR data through EMA | HB/NH | ongoing | |
| 2 Search | PubMed seeds of all relevant studies using the related articles feature to determine whether articles citing these studies are also relevant | EC | completed | |
| 2 Search | Science Citation Index ISI Web of Knowledge seeds of all relevant studies to determine whether articles citing these studies are also relevant | EC | completed | |
| 2 Search | ResearchGate seeds of all relevant studies to determine whether articles citing these studies are also relevant | EC | completed | |
| 2 Search | Google Scholar seeds of all relevant studies to determine whether articles citing these studies are also relevant | EC | completed | |
| 2 Search | Hand-search abstract books of meetings of the International Gynaecological Cancer Society (from 2010) | NH | completed | |
| 2 Search | Hand-search abstract books of meetings of the European Society of Gynaecological Oncology (from 2010) | NH | completed | |
| 2 Search | Hand-search abstract books of meetings of International Papillomavirus Meetings (from 2010) | NH | completed | |

# Group discussion 2

## Discuss and create a task list for each phase of the systematic review

- Small group discussion (30 minutes)
    - Title/abstract screening
    - Full-text screening
    - Data extraction
    - Data analysis
    - GRADE
    - Report writing

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# Group discussion 2

| Step | Task | Assignment | Progress |
|------|------|------------|----------|
| 3 Title/abstract screening | Receive de-duplicated search results (or deduplicate in Endnote/Distiller) | | |
| 3 Title/abstract screening | Start PRISMA record | | |
| 3 Title/abstract screening | Search other sources (depending on protocol) | | |
| 3 Title/abstract screening | Import search results to Distiller | | |
| 3 Title/abstract screening | De-duplicate results in Distiller (if necessary) | | |
| 3 Title/abstract screening | Create title/abstract screening form in Distiller | | |
| 3 Title/abstract screening | Schedule daily meetings with reviewers (and content leads) | | |
| 3 Title/abstract screening | Assign tasks to reviewers | | |
| 3 Title/abstract screening | Title screening all references | | |
| 3 Title/abstract screening | Resolve conflicts (titles) | | |
| 3 Title/abstract screening | Pilot abstract screening form (meeting to discuss pilot) | | |
| 3 Title/abstract screening | Abstract screening | | |
| 3 Title/abstract screening | Resolve conflicts (abstracts) | | |
| 3 Title/abstract screening | Foreign language abstracts | | |
| 3 Title/abstract screening | No abstract available | | |
| 3 Title/abstract screening | Find and import PDFs for full text screening | | |

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| Step | Task | Assignment | Progress | Notes |
|------|------|------------|----------|-------|
| 4 Full-text screening | Full text screening forms in Distiller | | | |
| 4 Full-text screening | Pilot full text screening forms | | | |
| 4 Full-text screening | Full text screening | | | |
| 4 Full-text screening | Reconcile conflicts (full text) | | | |
| 4 Full-text screening | Foreign language full text | | | |
| 4 Full-text screening | Studification | | | observational studies |
| 4 Full-text screening | Forward citation search of included studies | | | |
| 4 Full-text screening | Checking reference lists of included studies | | | |
| 4 Full-text screening | Generate list of SRs and included studies to be screened | | | |
| 4 Full-text screening | Full-text screening of studies from other sources | | | |
| 4 Full-text screening | Final included/excluded studies list | | | |
| 4 Full-text screening | Update PRISMA | | | |
| 4 Full-text screening | Search for other sources of data / protocols/ clinical study reports | | | |
| 4 Full-text screening | Add final list of included and excluded studies to folder | | | |
| 4 Full-text screening | Organise PDFs and study documents | | | |

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| Step | Task | Assignment | Progress | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 Data extraction | Table of comparisons (all reviews) | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | Determine RoB scales (RCTs/observational) | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | Data extraction forms in Distiller (parent/child forms) | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | RoB forms in Distiller | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | RoB forms in Excel (if needed for observational) | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | Pilot data extraction forms | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | Pilot RoB forms | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | Data extraction/RoB RCTs | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | Data extraction/RoB observational studies | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | RCT data extraction checking - QC | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | Observational data extraction checking - QC | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | RoB checking - QC | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | Reconcile data extraction | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | Reconcile observational data extraction | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | Reconcile RoB judgements | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | RCT Table of characteristics | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | Observational Table of Characteristics | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | Minimal data extraction form for trialists (missing data) | | | |
| 5 Data extraction | Keep record of original data extraction and double-checking notes in folder (for study characteristics, risk of bias and outcome data) | | | |

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| Step | Task | Assignment | Progress | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 Analysis | Comparison structure for analysis plan | | | |
| 6 Analysis | Analysis plan | | | |
| 6 Analysis | Obs - prepare data for analysis | | | |
| 6 Analysis | RCT - prepare data for analysis | | | |
| 6 Analysis | RCT data analysis | | | |
| 6 Analysis | RCT - outcome narrative results tables | | | |
| 6 Analysis | Obs data analysis | | | |
| 6 Analysis | Obs - outcome narrative results tables | | | |
| 6 Analysis | Subgroup analyses | | | |
| 6 Analysis | Sensitivity analyses | | | |
| 6 Analysis | Keep record of final analysis results / forest plots / analysis code / other figures | | | |

# Document/file management

- PDFs/spreadsheets/documents = research data

- Start early & be organised

- Version control - file naming/date convention

- Prepare for review update or new author team



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# Tool Selection process

## TOOL CHARACTERISTICS

- Increase efficiency
- Enhance collaboration
- Facilitate updates
- Facilitate project management in real time
- Transparent and auditable process
- Automation
- Adaptability/ flexibility

## PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

- Objective and scope
- Review type
- Complexity
- Commissioner needs
- Number of reviewers involved

## USABILITY

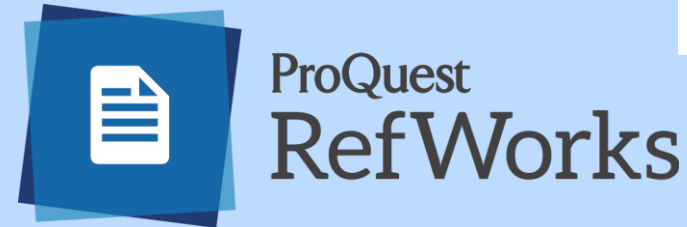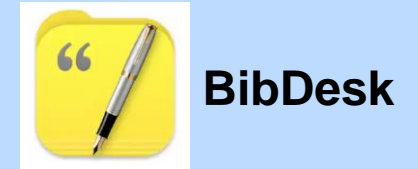- Easy and friendly to use
- Support
- Training
- Mobile app

## OTHER

- Confidentiality
- Security (IT)
- Convenience, accessibility
- Costs

# TOOLS

## SEARCHING

Wolters Kluwer

PubMed

Scopus®

POPLINE

Cochrane Library

LILACS

Epistemonikos

Google Scholar

EBSCOhost

## REFERENCE MANAGEMENT

EndNote™

zotero

Mendeley

BibDesk

ProQuest RefWorks

Paperpile

# Managing a review team

- Define review team roles during the protocol writing

- Many steps require > 1 reviewer to complete

- Quality control at each step – screening, extraction, analysis

- Resolve conflicts and queries

# Managing a review team

- Communication is key
  - Feasible time schedule
  - Deadlines
  - Regular meetings/contact



Legend:
- CET
- Cochrane Response Team Members
- Freelancers

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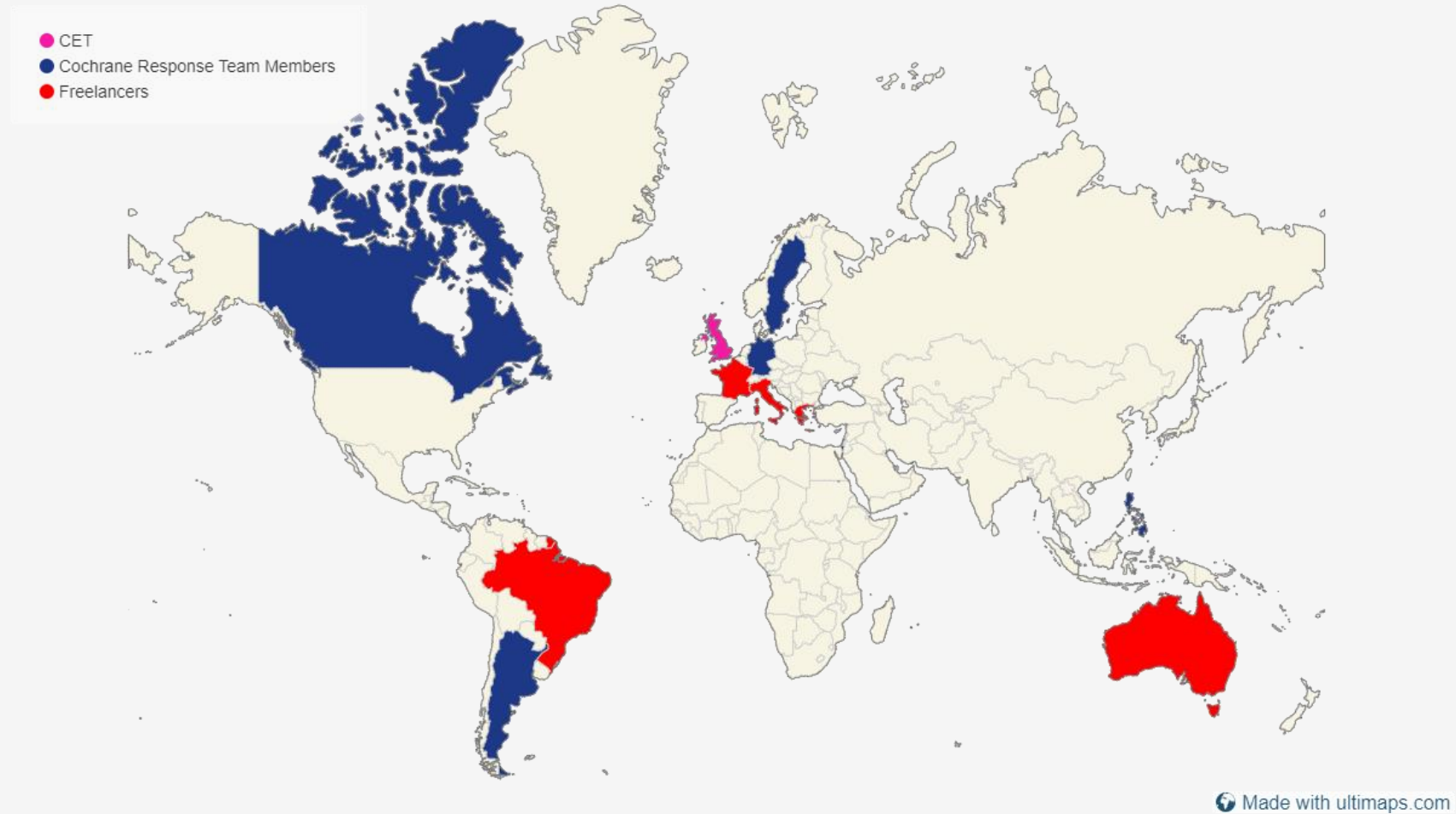
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# Prepare for success!
# Be systematic!

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