Editorial considerations for reviews that compare multiple interventions

Said Business School, Oxford, UK
March 22, 2013
Handout E8-L

Moving Forward – CMIMG Recommendations

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1. **Define Overviews as reviews of reviews.**
   - Return to the guidance outlined in the Handbook
   - Overviews should search for reviews
   - Overviews provide synthesis at the review level
2. Cochrane authors who wish to include indirect comparisons or network meta-analysis in their reviews should examine individual trial reports and use individual trial data in their analyses.

- Transitivity and other assumptions are difficult to assess without going into individual trial
3. The Overview format should only be used to do indirect comparisons when the Overview authors have evaluated the assumption of transitivity for all of the trials included in those comparisons.

- Same author team
- Included reviews are consistently done (e.g., same eligibility criteria, same outcomes)
- Rare in practice
4. Overviews that facilitate “informal” indirect comparison by readers must address transitivity issues.

• Overview authors should be careful when data from different systematic reviews are pulled together in a single table or figure
Moving Forward – CMIMG Recommendations

5. The Collaboration should re-examine the issue of “overlapping” reviews, and find an approach that allows both reviews that include a NMA and reviews that examine a more restricted subset of the available interventions to be published in The Cochrane Library.

• Define a new review type?
Moving Forward – CMIMG Recommendations

6. The Collaboration should develop mechanisms to facilitate the production of Reviews that include NMAs.

- Make use of data already extracted from one Cochrane review for use in another
- Data linking
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