New journal on Systematic Reviews

Description

Tweet

from BioMed Central Blog, thanks to tweet by **@bengoldacre**

â??Systematic Reviews, a new journal in the BioMed Central portfolio, launches today. The journal, headed by Editors-in-Chief David Moher, Lesley Stewart and Paul Shekelle, aims to encompass all aspects of the design, conduct and reporting of systematic reviews.

As the first open access journal to focus on systematic reviews and associated literature, *Systematic Reviews* aims to publish high quality systematic review products including systematic review protocols, systematic reviews related to a very broad definition of health, rapid reviews, updates of already completed systematic reviews, and methods research related to the science of systematic reviews, such as decision modeling. The journal also aims to ensure that the results of all well-conducted systematic reviews are published, regardless of their outcome.

The journal supports innovation and transparency in the reporting of systematic reviews. In a thematic series published upon launch, six articles explore the importance of registering systematic reviews and review protocols, including a commentary from the Chief Medical Officer for the UK, Prof Dame Sally Davies, who writes on the value of registering reviews from a funderâ??s perspective.

With the launch of *Systematic Reviews*, the Editors-in-Chief note that â??The explosion in the number of systematic reviews being published across a range of disciplines demonstrates widespread interest in a broad range of systematic review activities and products. Beyond the Cochrane Library there is no journal singularly devoted to all things systematic review. We hope *Systematic Reviews* will become that journal and that its open access status will attract authors and readers globally.â??

The journal will provide an important addition to medical research, in promoting systematic reviews as an important means of analysing and assessing trial outcomes, and developing responses to failing approaches in healthcare treatments and research. The journal has already garnered support from the medical community, with Dr Ben Goldacre, author, journalist and research fellow at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine stating: â??Medicine cannot depend on meandering essays, presenting an incomplete or inconsistent view of the scientific literature: to understand whether treatments work or not, we need complete summaries â?? collating all the evidence â?? using clearly explained methods to track it down. Systematic reviews are the key, and yet this tool is surprisingly new in medical science. At a time of rising concern about biased under-reporting of negative results, itâ??s good to see a new open access journal devoted to improving the science of systematic reviews.â??

As the Editors-in-Chief note in their launch editorial, â??individual studies are seldom sufficient to drive change. They are often too small to reach reliable conclusions, and for fair evaluation, it is important to look at the totality (or at least an unbiased sample of the totality) of evidence in favour of, against, or neutral to the healthcare intervention under consideration.â?? *Systematic Reviews* aims to provide the platform for such evaluation, and in doing so, contribute to the wider development and improvement of healthcare.â?•

RD Comment: These developments are relevant to aid agencies who are commissioning synthesis type studies of large fields of work, such as governance and accountability or livelihoods (both done by DFID recently), and to the evaluators considering this work. Andâ?¦its great to see that this is an Open Access journal. Well done.

The initial issue is worth scanning, especially the Editorial on the topic of Why prospective registration of systematic reviews makes sense See also: Evidence summaries: the evolution of a rapid review approach

There is more material on the use of systematic reviews re development aid interventions on the 3ie website

Category

1. Uncategorized

Tags

1. meta-evaluation
2. synthesis
3. systematic review

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