

Cochrane Colloquium 2013 abstract submission

Title:

Peer review of literature search strategies: does it make a difference?

Structured Abstract: 218 words

Background:

Peer review is an integral part of scientific research. For Information Specialists, peer review feedback is used to validate the quality of search strategies.

Objective:

To determine whether the peer review of literature search strategies has an effect on the number and quality of articles included in CADTH rapid review reports.

Method:

A total of 150 pairs of pre-peer-reviewed and peer-reviewed search strategies for CADTH rapid review reports related to health devices, medical procedures and pharmaceuticals were randomly selected and screened. For search strategies meeting specified selection criteria, pre-peer-reviewed searches and their corresponding peer-reviewed searches were run and the search results were compared. Unique articles retrieved solely by the peer-reviewed searches and included in the rapid review reports were identified and categorized according to publication type.

Results:

Of the 150 pairs of pre-peer-reviewed and peer-reviewed searches screened, 47 met the selection criteria. Of these 47 pairs of searches, 43% (20/47) of the peer-reviewed searches retrieved a total of 81 unique articles that were included in rapid review reports. The 81 articles consisted of 5 systematic reviews, 3 randomized controlled trials, 52 non-randomized studies, 1 guideline, 18 review articles and 2 other.

Conclusions:

The results of this investigation suggest that the peer review of literature search strategies can improve both the number and quality of relevant articles retrieved.