Qeios

Peer Review

Review of: "A Systematic Review of Multi-Sectoral Coordination During the COVID-19 Pandemic—Practices, Challenges, and Recommendations for Future Preparedness: A Review Protocol"

Lauren M. Fletcher[1]

1. Brown University Library, Brown University, United States

Overall, the authors have presented a robust protocol. The information is of value to the research and public health community. The protocol has several methodological flaws, and the team would benefit from adding an expert in evidence synthesis methodology, a specialist in literature searching, and a biostatistician. Authors should consider limiting the scope of this proposed review or changing the review type to that of a scoping or umbrella review.

1.2 Objectives.

- The authors should clarify the main/primary research question of interest.
- The authors could benefit from using only a one-question framework (PICO).
  - The PICO framework can include non-quantitative study designs.
  - Authors are advised to remove the SPIDER framework and update the outcomes to reflect all study design types.
  - The same outcome can be achieved with the stated PICO question.

2.1 Eligibility Criteria should follow the PICO framework

- Eligibility #1 & #2 should be combined to reflect the population of interest
  - I.e., multi-sectoral coordination and/or stakeholders that make up those multi-sectoral efforts.

- Will this review be examining both LMIC and HIC data? If so, the eligibility information should indicate that there is no geographic limitation.
- The authors should define multi-sectoral coordination.
  - The authors provide good examples of the types of coordination efforts to be addressed.
- Eligibility #3
  - Please define "robust" secondary analysis.
  - Please provide the study designs to be included in the review.
- Eligibility #4
  - Please provide examples of or data points to be captured that will be used to determine effectiveness, barriers, etc.
- Eligibility #5
  - Please provide the dates for which this review will be limited.

2.2 Information Sources

- Information sources should be listed as Database (Platform)
  - Ex: Medline (Ebscohost)
  - Emerald Insight is a publisher; please explain how this platform was systematically searched.
  - Please list what platform PubMed was searched using, i.e., PubMed.gov
  - Please explain how the WHO was searched for reports and publications; additionally, please provide information on which government bodies were searched and how.

2.3 Search Strategy

- The example search does not include controlled vocabulary. Authors should provide an explanation as to why controlled vocabulary was not used or revise the search to include it.
- The authors would benefit from utilizing a peer-reviewed search hedge for concepts such as COVID-19.
- The search string for multi-sectoral collaboration could be broadened to include terminology for collaborating institutions.
  - Sectors, levels, efforts/mechanisms
- The search string for outcome measures (e.g., efficacy and impact) needs expanded terms to encapsulate all outcome options. If this is not feasible, the authors are advised to remove it from the search.

- The authors should clearly state planned limits to the search (e.g., date ranges, etc.)

2.4 Study Records

- The authors should clarify which platform selection processes will occur and the methods used to ensure blinding between reviewers

2.6 Outcomes and Prioritization

- Authors should explain how and why they will prioritize/place specific focus on some outcomes over others.

2.7 Risk of Bias Assessment

- Authors should ensure that an appropriate risk of bias tool has been selected for use in each study design included in the review.

2.8 Data Synthesis

- The authors should utilize the Synthesis without Meta-Analysis (SWiM) reporting guidelines for all data that cannot be quantitatively aggregated.
- The authors should specify which software will be used for the meta-analysis and, where applicable, detail the summary measures to be employed, how the data will be combined, and which measures of consistency will be used (i.e., I^2, etc.).

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.