**Webisode 10 – Systematic maps**

Presenter: David Gough (EPPI-Centre, UCL)

EPPI-Centre Evidence Tools, Products, and Projects – A series of webisodes from the Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating (EPPI) Centre. Hosted by AIR’s Center on Knowledge Translation for Disability and Rehabilitation Research (KTDRR).

**Slide 1: Cover slide**

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**Slide 2: Systematic maps**

February 2018. David Gough (EPPI-Centre, UCL).

**Title slide template:** Blue bar at top. On far left, Institute of Education. On the far right, UCL Logo: White image of Main Building with large white letters UCL to the right. In the center background, a photograph of London with title text superimposed over the image. White bar at the bottom: On far right, EPPI-Centre logo: A large blue script letter E to the left, with smaller black letters PPI to the right. Below PPI, in a smaller black box, is the word CENTRE in white text.

**Slide 3: The common stages of a systematic review**

Two stages: Map and Synthesis

These stages are included in the Map stage:

Form review team (involve ‘users’)

Formulate review question, conceptual framework and inclusion criteria (develop ‘protocol’)

These two stages overlap with Map and Synthesis:

Search for and identify relevant studies

Describe studies

These stages are included in the Synthesis stage:

Appraise included studies

Synthesise and appraise findings

Communicate and engage

**Slide 4: A two-phase systematic review**

1. Systematic Map

2. Systematic Research Synthesis

**Slide 5: Maps implicit in the review process**

•But not used explicitly

•Early examples of explicit use:

Peersman G (1996) A Descriptive Mapping of Health Promotion Studies in Young People, EPPI Research Report. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.

Gough, D. A., Kiwan, D., Sutcliffe, K., Simpson, D. and Houghton, N. (2003). A systematic map and synthesis review of the effectiveness of personal development planning for improving student learning. In: *Research Evidence in Education Library*. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.

**Slide 6: Purpose of coding of studies in a review**

1. Management of studies through the review

2. Map the research filed

3. Describe studies for critical appraisal

4. Identify findings for synthesis

**Slide 7: Codes for mapping**

Any variable that is of interest. For example:

• Bibliographic information

• Geography

• Research method

• Theory

Not usually study findings as there is no critical appraisal of the studies (and so could be misleading to examine the findings without such an appraisal)

**Slide 8: Purposes of mapping 1: Describe the research field**

• Describe the research field of the included studies

• The map of studies is defined by the review question (and thus the inclusion criteria) and may not reflect traditional academic topic areas (particularly if a non-academic user driven review)

• Clarifies what has been studied and how

• Clarifies possible gaps in what has been studied (gap maps)

• Can be useful products in their own right

**Slide 9: Purpose of mapping 2: Inform the focus of a synthesis**

• On examining the map, the decision may be to synthesize only part of the map (i.e. narrow the inclusion criteria)

• The narrowing may be for:

* Due to lack of resources
* Some aspect of the included studies (such as too much heterogeneity);
* A plan to wish to describe the wider literature as a context for a narrower synthesis
* A plan to undertake a sequence of reviews on the wider topic

**Slide 10: Purposes of mapping 3: to inform the synthesis process or its interpretation**

• A map provides descriptive information on the literature defined by the review question. It thus can inform the nature of the synthesis.

• It provides a context for undertaking the synthesis and interpreting what evidence claims can be made from the included studies.

**Slide 11: Some terminological confusion with mapping**

• Some people use the term ‘scoping’ for mapping (but scoping can also mean a quick non-systematic review including synthesis)

• Some restrict maps to coding of particular types of variables but there need be no restriction on what is described about a research field

• Some use the term ‘mega map’ to refer to maps with broad inclusion criteria (broad map), but it can also be used to refer to maps which code on many variables (detailed map)

**Slide 12: Thank you**

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Picture of cover of An Introduction to Systematic Reviews (Cover reprinted with permission.)

Top right: IOE London logo. Leading education and social research. Institute of Education, University of London.

Image on right: London at night - the London Eye on left, bridge over River Thames center, Westminster Palace in background on right.

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**Slide 13**: **Disclaimer**

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