**Webisode 7 – Rapid reviews**

Presenter: Mark Newman (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**

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).

Copyright © 2018 American Institutes for Research (AIR). All rights reserved. No part of this presentation may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from AIR. Submit copyright permissions requests to the AIR Publications Copyright and Permissions Help Desk at [copyright\_PS@air.org](mailto:copyright_PS@air.org). Users may need to secure additional permissions from copyright holders whose work AIR included after obtaining permission as noted to reproduce or adapt materials for this presentation.

**Cover slide template:** dark blue background with white text and gray text. Gray bar at bottom with AIR logo on the left (gray and blue column on left; letters in blue, AIR (R) on the right; words below in blue, American Institutes for Research (R)). To the left of AIR logo, 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 2: Rapid Reviews**

February 2018. Mark Newman (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: Systematic reviews**

• Research reviews are a ’meta’ level of research that aim to answer a research question by synthesizing the findings of existing research studies

• Systematic Reviews are a form of research review that is systematic and explicit about methods

• Systematic Reviews can address different research questions and use different methods

*(See Webisode on Dimensions of Difference in reviews)*

**Slide 4: Variation in ‘work done’\* by a review**

• Whatever the type of research question the focus and complexity of the question may vary.

• The complexity of a question has a number of dimensions including:

–The population or participants

–The contexts

–The complexity of the phenomena either conceptually or practically

–The type of data & answers required

*\*See Gough D, Thomas J, Oliver S. (2012) Clarifying differences between review designs and methods.* Systematic Reviews 2012*, 1:28.*

**Slide 5: Systematic review as a project**.

• The possibilities of a systematic review are determined by the three factors

–The scope of the work

–The quality required

–The time and resources available

• Typically the broader and /or more complex the review research question and/or rigorous the review methods the longer it will take to complete a systematic review

On the right of the slide is a triangle divided into 4 smaller triangles. The triangle in the middle is blank. Triangle at the top is labeled Scope of ‘work’, the triangle on the bottom left is labeled Quality of the work, the triangle on the bottom right is labeled Time & resources

**Slide 6: Undertaking reviews rapidly**

Many reasons why a review might need to be taken more rapidly. Most approaches either:

1. Increase speed by increasing resources whilst maintaining ‘work done’

2. Reduce the complexity of review question (and thus the ‘work done’) by the review

AND/OR

3. Reducing rigour of the review process and reporting

*Approaches 2 and 3 common as require fewer resources than approach 1*

**Slide 7: The common stages of a systematic review**

1. Define review stakeholders and team

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

3. Search for and identify relevant studies

4. Describe studies

5. Appraise included studies

6. Synthesise and appraise findings

7. Communicate and engage

**Slide 8: The common stages of a systematic review – acceleration strategies**

1. Define review stakeholders and team

• Limit stakeholder engagement in range and methods

**Slide 9: The common stages of a systematic review – acceleration strategies**

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

• Focus on specific population, specific conceptual/ practical definitions of phenomena reflected in tightly specified selection criteria

**Slide 10: The common stages of a systematic review – acceleration strategies**

3. Search for and identify relevant studies

• Use fewer search sources; simpler search strings

• Reduced QA e.g. single person screening; emphasis on ‘clear fit’ when selecting for inclusion

**Slide 11: The common stages of a systematic review – acceleration strategies**

4. Describe studies

• Simplify data extraction to reduce information gained from individual studies; reduce QA e.g. single person data extraction

**Slide 12: The common stages of a systematic review – acceleration strategies**

5. Appraise included studies

• Use more simple study quality assessment or none at all. If quality assessment used for selection make it very simple, reduce QA e.g. single person quality assessment.

**Slide 13: The common stages of a systematic review – acceleration strategies**

6. Synthesise and appraise findings

• Use less complex methods of synthesis, less exploration and/or sensitivity analysis in the synthesis

**Slide 14: The common stages of a systematic review – acceleration strategies**

7. Communicate and engage

• Use shorter and less complex reports following pre-structured templates

**Slide 15: What is important to consider when deciding which acceleration strategies to use?**

•Important to remain systematic and transparent whatever choice is made

•Each strategy has potential to ‘speed–up’ review process alone or in combination with others

•Each strategy has potential to introduce ‘more’ error or ‘bias’ into a systematic review. More strategies = more risk

–e.g. fewer search sources increases risk of ‘not finding’ piece of relevant research

–e.g. less complex quality assessment increases risk of not identifying where methods of a study are influencing results in a particular way

• Choice should be informed by all stakeholders’ views about which ‘risks’ are most important to them

**Slide 16: General conclusions**

• Systematic reviews maybe ‘accelerated’ in a number of ways.

• Evidence claims based on the review findings should be consistent with the limitations of the systematic review question and methods.

• Acceleration strategies are probably less ‘risky’ when the review research question can be very clear about the population, phenomena and data/ answers/ outcomes of interest.

• Complexity in any of these dimensions will increase the risk that acceleration strategies may reduce the utility of the review to provide a clear rigorous answer to review research question.

**Slide 17: Follow up references**

• Thomas J, Newman M, Oliver S. (2013) Rapid evidence assessments of research to inform social policy: taking stock and moving forward. *Evidence & Policy*. 9:5–27.

• Caird J, Sutcliffe K, Kwan I, Dickson K, Thomas J (2015) Mediating policy-relevant evidence at speed: are systematic reviews of systematic reviews a useful approach? *Evidence & Policy*, 11 (1) 81-97

**Slide 18: Thank you**

Website: EPPI-Centre Website [http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk](http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/)

Twitter: @EPPICentre

Twitter: @ProfDavidGough

Email: [mark.newman@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:mark.newman@ucl.ac.uk)

Email: [david.gough@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:david.gough@ucl.ac.uk)

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.

Contact information below image:

EPPI-Centre

Social Science Research Unit

UCL Institute of Education

University College London

18 Woburn Square

London WC1H 0NR

Tel +44 (0)20 7612 6397

Fax +44 (0)20 7612 6400

Email eppi@ioe.ac.uk

Web eppi.ioe.ac.uk/

**Slide 19**: **Disclaimer**

The contents of this presentation were developed by the EPPI-Centre for grant number 90DP0027 from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this presentation do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

Bottom left AIR logo: gray and blue column on left; letters in blue, AIR (R) on the right; words below in blue, American Institutes for Research (R).