Author's response to reviews

Title: Understanding interventions for improving routine immunisation coverage in children in low- and middle-income countries: a systematic review protocol

Authors:

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Author's response to reviews:


Editorial Comments
All authors have been individually mentioned in the Authors Contribution section as requested.

Reviewer Comments
Response Comments on page 2:
- The search was done until June 2012
- The Methodological Investigation of Cochrane Reviews of Complex Interventions (MICCI) from which the Cochrane Complexity Matrix originates is described in greater detail in the Methods sections on page 4

Response to Comments on page 5:
- We decided to focus our review on interventions for routine EPI services only as the vast majority of children receive vaccination through these services. For this reason supplementary immunisation activities (SIAs) and school based immunisations will be excluded (ie. a RCT on SIAs will be excluded as this is not a routine service)

Response to Comments on page 6:
- The characteristics of health facilities or health programmes providing immunisation services are included as a secondary outcome as we would like to assess the differences between these various facilities and programmes. For example, routine EPI services can be given from, hospitals, clinics, mobile clinics etc and perhaps certain characteristics allow a specific type of facility to reach more children.
- Given the magnitude of the search outputs we anticipate, this review will be limited to published literature only. A separate systematic review of the grey literature may be undertaken at a later stage.

Response to comments on page 7:
- Screening of titles and abstracts will be done independently. The word “independently” has been added in the first line of page 7
- The word “the” has been added in the second line of the second paragraph on page 7
- The version number of RevMan “5” has been added on the last line of the second paragraph on page 7.
- We decided to use the GATE tool to assess risk of bias as it has a tool for both experimental studies and observational studies. The Cochrane risk of bias tools is only for experimental studies.
- The second paragraph under the title ‘Assessment of risk of bias’ on page 7 has been deleted due to duplication.
- The word “similar” has replaced the word ‘same’ in the third line of the paragraph under the title ‘Measures of treatment effect and data synthesis’ on page 7

Response to comments on page 8:
- Heterogeneity will be assessed using forest plots, however, the Chi² and I² tests will be used as well.
- The method of meta-analysis has been added in the second line of the paragraph under the title ‘Sensitivity analyses’

Additional changes made by authors:
Due to the extremely large outputs we are currently getting as we conduct the search strategies for each proposed database, we have firstly modified the PubMed search to be more specific (now giving 9749 hits) and we will be reducing the number of databases being searched due to our limited capacity and finances. We will adapt the searches for the other databases accordingly. See new PubMed Search Strategy attached (Appendix 1)
We will now be searching the following databases:
1. PubMed
2. EMBASE
3. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR)
4. Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL)
In addition to this, an additional affiliation has been added for Dr Charles S Wiysonge.
Joy Oliver and colleagues from the South African Cochrane Centre were acknowledges for their contribution towards the search strategies used for the
review.

I hope you find all the corrections mentioned in order. Please let me should you require any further corrections.

Kind regards,
Shingai Machingaidze