Reviewer's report

Title: Knowledge, attitudes and practices on adolescent vaccination among parents, teachers and adolescents in Africa: A systematic review protocol

Version: 1 Date: 14 July 2014

Reviewer: Alexander Tsertsvadze

Reviewer's report:

Protocol registration
• Will the authors register the protocol with the PROSPERO? Once registered, please include a statement with the registration number in the beginning of Methods section

Introduction
Page 6, 1st paragraph
• The authors state that adolescent immunisation programmes are non-existent or have a suboptimal coverage in African countries. Will the authors back up these statement by providing relevant literature citations/references?

Objective
Page 7
I would suggest dividing the review objective into two parts:
a) To assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) of adolescent vaccination among parents, teachers and adolescents in Africa
b) To assess/evaluate the effect of KAP on adolescent vaccines’ uptake in Africa

Methodology
Pages 8-12
This section needs some re-organization of its sub-sections. Specifically, the sub-sections should be in the following order:
• Study eligibility criteria (inclusion/exclusion criteria by study design, population, intervention/comparator, study outcomes, setting, publication type: full text/abstract, language, publication status)
• Search strategy
• Study selection
• Data extraction
• Study quality (e.g., risk of bias, reporting quality) assessment
• Data analysis and synthesis

Page 8
• ‘Study eligibility’, ‘Search strategy’, Study selection’, ‘Data extraction’, ‘Assessment of Study quality’ and ‘Data analysis/synthesis’ should be the same level subheadings, whereas inclusion/exclusion criteria by study design, population, etc. need to be lower level subheadings because they all fall under ‘Study eligibility criteria’ section
• Study quality (e.g., risk of bias, reporting quality) assessment
• Data analysis and synthesis
• Please, change ‘Study selection criteria’ and ‘Type of studies’ to ‘Study eligibility criteria’ and ‘Study design’ respectively
• The merits/description of qualitative research seems out of place in the ‘Study design’ section (1st paragraph on page 8) and could be moved to Discussion section

Type of intervention – not applicable
Page 9
• If one of the aims of the review is the assessment of the effect of KAP on adolescent vaccines’ uptake in Africa, would not ‘KAP’ be an intervention and ‘uptake of vaccines’ an outcome?

Primary outcomes
Page 9
• Will the authors measure uptake of vaccines?

Search strategy on the systematic reviews
Page 10
• Please delete ‘on the systematic reviews’ from the above sub-section heading; should read ‘Search strategy’
• Indicate years/dates for which the databases and other sources will be sought
• Will the authors search unpublished studies (i.e., grey lit)? explicit statement and justification for not doing it would be useful

Study selection
Page 10
• Will the authors screen their studies using a pre-defined and piloted screening form containing their eligibility criteria?
• Will the authors provide the study flow chart (graphical depiction of study screening, eligibility, and exclusion processes)?

Data extraction Data synthesis
Page 11
• Please, delete ‘Data synthesis’ after ‘Data extraction’
• Will the data be extracted by two independent extractors? How the conflicts will be resolved?
• I cannot find Appendix 2 at the end of the manuscript, will the authors add it?

• Data extraction section needs more detail. For example, will the authors specify what type of data (e.g., study and population characteristics, outcomes, etc...) will be extracted from included studies?

• How the authors will handle missing data?

Data analysis and synthesis

Page 11

• This section is little bit vague and needs more detail. Specifically, provide what methods will be used to synthesize the results (mixed, quantitative, etc...). If there is any quantitative data, how this will be handled? What will be the summary (statistical parameters) of association and variability measures for each individual study? Is there any subgroup/sensitivity analysis planned in order to explore clinical and methodological sources of heterogeneity? I am not sure if publication bias is applicable to this review, but it would be useful if the authors provide a statement to this effect. This type of bias may be relevant if non-English language publications are excluded.

• The authors mentioned ‘strength of evidence’. If they plan to only assess the quality of included studies (without grading overall quality using GRADE system), I suggest to delete this term.

Discussion

Page 12

• Will the authors highlight strengths/limitations in identified evidence (e.g., amount, validity, applicability, etc...)?

• Will the authors highlight strengths/limitations of their review (any limitations in the review methods)?

• Will the authors highlight future research and policy implications of this review?