Reviewer's report

Title: Quality of reporting of systematic reviews related to interventions published in Chinese journals with "Evidence-Based" in titles

Version: 2 Date: 7 March 2014

Reviewer: Larissa Shamseer

Reviewer's report:

MAJOR:
Title:
The title is still not clear. Perhaps the following will work: "Quality of reporting of systematic reviews published in "Evidence-Based" Chinese journals"

ABSTRACT
Methods:
change to "SRs/MAs assessing efficacy and/or harms of clinical interventions were included"

Methods/Results
page 2 - Authors still do not provide their cutoffs for major, minor and minimal flaws in the abstract. The text found in the Methods section of the main text can be used "A review was considered to have major flaws if it received a total score of #15.0, minor flaws if it received a total score of 15.5~21, and minimal flaws if it received a total score 21.5~27.0[12]."

Conclusions (Abstract and Main text):
Unsure why authors make a statement that the "quality of systematic reviews must be assessed before used in clinical decision-making" since you did not assess or discuss quality throughout the report. That is a different issue than reporting, which would require use of a tool such as AMSTAR. Authors should remove the statement about quality both in the conclusion in the abstract and main body of the report. Author may wish to state that "the reporting of systematic reviews published in "Evidence-based" Chinese journals is poor and needs to be improved in order for reviews to be useful. Systematic review authors should use the PRISMA checklist to ensure complete and accurate accounts of their systematic reviews."

METHODS
Sample collection
Page 5 - Author still do not provide their Selection criteria explicitly. You MUST provide a definition for what was considered a Systematic Review or Meta-Analysis. Was it just that these terms were stated in the title of studies? abstract? Must state that only reviews assess the safety and/or efficacy of clinical
interventions were included. The paragraph should read more like:

"A systematic review was defined as: .... A meta-analysis was defined as:......

Using these criteria, we searched the online databases of the Chinese Journal of Evidence-based Medicine (www.cjebm.org.cn, 2001~2011.12), The Journal of Evidence-Based Medicine (www.jebm.cn, 2001~2011.12), the Chinese Journal of Evidence Based Pediatrics (www.cjebp.net, 2006~2011.12) and the Chinese Journal of Evidence-Based Cardiovascular Medicine (ebcvm.yywkt.cn, 2008~2011.12) for systematic reviews and meta-analyses. Only reviews assessing the safety and/or efficacy of clinical interventions were included."

Data extraction:
Authors did not address my previous comment regarding “Endorsement of PRISMA”. They should identify which of the journals, if any, endorse PRISMA. Authors can check each journals’ “Instruction to Authors” for this information and email editors to find out when they did so. If there are some journals that endorse and others that don’t endorse, this will be meaningful for the interpretation of their results. Analysis by time is severely limited.

RESULTS
- There are two different ways in which the word "improvement" is used inappropriately. Authors should replace "improvement" with "difference". 1) Improvement over time - authors must discuss the natural effect that time may have on reporting quality and why this is not a robust or valid comparison. Authors should provide a comparison of or even knowledge of journal endorsement status, that is more relevant than time. 2) 'Improvement in one subgroup vs. another - this is not an accurate way to state results. For instance, SRs conducted within universities were reported better than those conducted outside at hospitals. Currently authors state that university SRs show an improvement over hospital SRs - this is incorrect.

MINOR:
page 5 - Methods/sample collection
- This section should be called "Selection of studies" not "Sample collection"

page 6
- Typo on the word PRISMA

DISCUSSION:
Page 11 and 12: Since authors draw attention to the poor reporting of abstracts, they should cite the PRISMA extension for abstracts as one way of improving structured abstracts.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I work for/with the PRISMA group as a research coordinator (unfunded).
I am employed by the co-editor-in-chief of Systematic Reviews, David Moher.