**Reviewer's report**

**Title:** Assessment of the abstract reporting of systematic reviews of dose-response meta-analysis: A literature survey

**Version:** 0 **Date:** 18 Apr 2019

**Reviewer:** Edoardo Aromataris

**Reviewer's report:**

The authors present a cross-sectional study investigating the reporting quality of published dose response meta-analyses from 2011 to 2017. Factors influencing reporting quality are also assessed.

Overarching comments:

I appreciate this is semantics, however a meta-analysis is a statistical exercise. While there are minor nuances in detail, a published meta-analysis and a systematic review with meta-analysis are conceptually different and methodologically different. Furthermore, one review may present multiple meta-analyses. I think it would be ideal to know across the included dataset which DRMAs were presented as part of a systematic review and those that were independent articles - this may have an influence on what is reported in abstracts in my view.

The authors have determined quality by aligning abstract content of published DRMAs with the PRISMA for abstracts checklist plus two additional items, making 14 in total. While I agree these additional items appear important, this addition would seem to have implications for the results of this study. Abstracts with >250 words appeared to have better reporting quality (adherence)…the more items that are added would necessarily demand more words…there will be an event horizon where all criteria simply can't be covered in 250 words.

Unfortunately, deficits in reporting of the abstract do not appear to have been aligned with the actual conduct of the DRMA. For example, where methods and results of RoB assessment do not appear in the abstract….was it because they simply weren't done? If so, I think it is unreasonable to expect to see it in the abstract. That then becomes an issue of conduct of the DRMA.
Specific points:

Five 'potential influential factors' have been investigated. I think the manuscript would benefit from the rationale for these factors being chosen/investigated. I appreciate references are provided, but some explicit link here would be ideal. I can't immediately see the potential link with year of publication (other than to investigate the influence of PRISMA for abstracts), region of first author or the funding information. In regards to this, how was region of first author determined - by affiliation?

Results, para 3, Line 21-24 - should be 'funding'

Results, Adherence rate..., final para. Should read "For the methods section, there were 4 items appointed..." Throughout these paragraphs the authors have simply stated how many have been well, moderately and poorly compiled. It would take little effort to indicate which of the criteria they are rather than leave the reader to work it out. On this point, where the authors have attempted this for the 2 items relevant to the discussion section (line 13-16 next page), I think they should read poorly compiled (35%) and well compiled (92%) respectively, rather than 'well' and 'moderate'.

Figure 1 and Figure 2 require some useful figure titles/captions describing what the figure is showing.

The 3rd para of the discussion is repeating results unnecessarily.

The major omission from the DRMA abstract is around the methods and results of risk of bias assessment. Regarding my distinction re meta-analyses and systematic reviews above, I think this is important. RoB assessment is a requirement of a systematic review, without it, I don't you have an SR, I can't say the same for a meta-analysis. This needs some consideration in the discussion/conclusions.

Copyediting is required.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
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No

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