**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** Definition of a systematic review used in overviews of systematic reviews, meta-epidemiological studies and textbooks

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 17 Jun 2019

**Reviewer:** Becky Skidmore

**Reviewer's report:**

**General comments**
I believe the manuscript has been significantly improved from the original version, particularly regarding the additional details pertaining to the methods.

**Background**
The information pertaining to the number of systematic reviews indexed in MEDLINE is somewhat out of date and should be updated. Since MEDLINE added the systematic review tag this year and applied it retrospectively, you can search for this information (now ~12500 records for 2018):

systematic review[sp] Filters: Publication date from 2018/01/01 to 2018/12/31 12489

**Methods**
The Google scholar search could have been improved, particularly with use of a librarian with strong language skills. Google used to include details for searching the advanced interface and although no longer available, this info is available from other sites (mostly libraries). This could be mentioned as a limitation, i.e., the info that was not known at the time of the searches (currently the discussion states that no recommended strategy).

**Results**
P. 9, lines 22-31 - seems to rather unnecessarily repeat the phrases used to search Google Scholar. Perhaps just provide total.
P. 10, lines 5-12 - The results re: impact factors seem counter intuitive and different than your hypothesis. Suggest mentioning this in the discussion.

**Discussion**
P. 17, lines 5-18 - "we don't really think" - Without undertaking the work, it seems inappropriate to offer an opinion only that no new work would have changed the results. I do believe the study would have been improved greatly by at least updating the search that was done earlier and showing due diligence. Suggest offering an explanation for this.

**Readability:**
The English is still a bit rough despite having been professionally reviewed by a proof-reading service. Articles have still been missed (or included when not necessary) and the language is a bit colloquial in places, making reading a bit awkward although still comprehensible. I have
made a list of some of the problems but suggest a close reading before publication as there are more instances than recorded below.
P. 3, line 15 - The EBM
P. 3, line 28 - Delete "a lot of" and use "some"
P. 5, Line 35 - "retrieving" should be "retrieval"
P. 7, Line 43 - delete "but there were not many"
P. 10, Line 35 - need "the" in front of PRISMA
P. 12, Line 1 - correct verb is "was"
p. 15, line 25 - "specified" should be "specific"
p. 16, line 5 - "limitations" should be singular after one
Some phrases are extraneous and can be deleted:
P. 5, Line 40 - "as it was performed for other sources"
P. 9, line 14 - delete "language" after Chinese
p. 16, line 20 - delete "from our included manuscripts"
Very minor comment but as mentioned before, be consistent in how numbers are expressed - either as words or as Arabic numbers (10 and under - or under 10 - as words, above 10 - or 10 and above - as numbers). This has not been applied consistently in the text.

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?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I recommend additional statistical review

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published
**Declaration of competing interests**

Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

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