Reviewer’s report

Title: Systematic Reviews and Cancer Research: A Suggested Stepwise Approach

Version: 0 Date: 18 Jan 2018

Reviewer: Nicole Skoetz

Reviewer's report:

The overall rationale of this paper is not clear. Should it be published as an original article? Then I miss a methods and results section, both in the paper and the abstract.

Or is it submitted as author experience? Then this should be mentioned in the title and abstract.

The overall number of reviews and overviews of reviews which have been evaluated seems to be very small and only in the field of physical exercise, therefore no general implications for cancer reviews should be given.

There are some mistakes need to be fixed before publication:

AMSTAR is not an instrument to measure risk of bias, neither GRADE is. GRADE is not an instrument to measure quality of a systematic review, but evaluates certainty of the evidence for each pre-specified outcome (so on outcome-base, not review-level base). Moreover, risk of bias for each outcome is one domain to be considered while applying GRADE.

In some cases fixed-effect model is appropriate and no overall guidance to use random-effects model should be given (e.g in case included trials are clinically and methodologically very homogenous). Moreover, only fixed-effect model gives more weight to large trials with many events. So, there are pros and cons for both models.

Quality of written English

Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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