Author’s response to reviews

Title: Mapping evidence on the distribution of Human Papillomavirus related cancers in sub-Saharan Africa: Scoping Review Protocol

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RESPONSES TO REVIEWERS

REFERENCE: SYSR-D-17-00134

MANUSCRIPT TITLE: Mapping evidence on the distribution of Human Papillomavirus related cancers in sub-Saharan Africa: Systematic Scoping Review

--comment 1

Even if you have undertaken the search, the current description of the target question as framed is incomplete and uninformative. PICOS is not an appropriate heuristic to use when the question is epidemiological, as yours is. Please reframe the question using a more appropriate format than PICOS.

Response

PEO format (population, exposure/outcome) has been used in the protocol. Page 5 lines 93-94

--comment 2

The abstract still refers to undertaking a search on EBSCO as a platform. What is important is not the platform; it is the databases you intend to search.
Response

The error was corrected on page 2, line 21-23

--comment 3

You have not qualified the role of qualitative research in the text of the protocol. How will you synthesize that research alongside research about the distribution of HPV-related cancers? How can qualitative research describe 'prevalence, incidence, mortality, risk factors and trends', as described in your protocol?

Response

Qualitative research studies will not be included in the review. This information was included in the exclusion criteria. Page 6, line 128 and Page 9, line 185-186

--comment 4

You still refer to calculating a summary score or percentage in the appraisal tool despite describing that this was removed in your response to reviewers.

Response

Corrections made on page 8, lines 158-165