Reviewer’s report

Title: The Association Between Mental Health Nursing and Hospital Admissions For People With Serious Mental Illness: A Protocol For a Systematic Review

Version: 1 Date: 11 Oct 2017

Reviewer: Justin Clark

Reviewer’s report:

COMMENT #2: The list of databases is quite extensive, which can be a good thing. But it is not usual to search both Ovid Medline and PubMed. Unless...

RESPONSE: Whilst we recognize that Ovid Medline and PubMed...

It does not impact on the recall, although it does increase the amount of screening work, it can impact on the face validity of the review. The authors should be prepared for this issue to be raised and the question asked upon publication of the review.

COMMENT #4: Most of the content of the search strategy is good, with the exception of line iv starting on line 108. Limiting to publication type...

RESPONSE: We acknowledge the reviewer's suggestion to use standardised filters in place of publication search terms. Whilst there are good reasons to use standardised filters for reviews...

Much work has been done on the use of filters to identify specific study designs, such as by the SIGN group http://www.sign.ac.uk/search-filters.html McMaster University https://hiru.mcmaster.ca/hiru/HIRU_Hedges_MEDLINE_Strategies.aspx#Etiology and the InterTASC Information Specialists SubGroup and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) https://sites.google.com/a/york.ac.uk/issg-search-filters-resource/filters-to-identify-observational-studies.

Although I acknowledge that there are not filters for all of the databases listed it would be advisable to use filters for those databases where there is one available. Limiting by publication type does have a potential impact on recall as a search of PubMed using publication type finds 444,198 results while using the Cochrane RCT filter finds 3,567,330 results. If the decision is made to stay with using the publication type limits, rather than adopting a search filter, then the authors should be prepared for this issue to be raised upon publication of the review.

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

Acceptable

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