

## EDITORIAL

### The Development of a GRADE approach for JBI Qualitative Reviews

As discussed in the last editorial, the Joanna Briggs Institute and Collaboration have recently made the decision to endorse the use of the GRADE approach for systematic reviews addressing questions of effectiveness. We hope that using the GRADE process will increase the rigor, conduct and reporting of our systematic reviews.

However, there is no currently endorsed GRADE approach for qualitative reviews. As you will be aware, the JBI approach to evidence-based health care is unique. We acknowledge that global health care needs, as identified by clinicians or patients/consumers, are addressed through the generation of research evidence regarding effectiveness, but also feasibility, appropriateness and meaningfulness. In line with this broader view of evidence, the Institute has developed theories, methodologies and rigorous processes for the critical appraisal and synthesis of these diverse forms of evidence in order to aid in clinical decision-making in health care. These processes relate to the synthesis of quantitative evidence, qualitative evidence, the results of economic analyses and expert opinion and text.

In 2012 a working group was established to determine whether an approach similar to GRADE could be developed for authors conducting qualitative reviews. I am pleased to state that after a long process of development and consultation, we have now finalized this approach and recently published on this methodology (ConQual).<sup>1</sup> Authors submitting qualitative systematic reviews to the JBI Database of Systematic Reviews and Implementation Reports are now able to use this methodology to establish the confidence in the output of their meta-aggregative synthesis. This methodology can also be used to create a Summary of Findings table similar to the tables found in quantitative reviews.

The Institute has a long history of being a leading organization in pioneering systematic review methodology. The ConQual approach is the latest in a long line of innovative systematic review methods that have been developed by JBI. We would like to encourage all contributors to begin using this methodology during the conduct of their qualitative systematic reviews.

Dr Zachary Munn

Senior Research Fellow, The Joanna Briggs Institute

Acting Editor-In-Chief, The JBI Database of Systematic Reviews and Implementation Reports

## Reference

1. Munn Z, Porritt K, Lockwood C, Aromataris E, Pearson A. Establishing confidence in the output of qualitative research synthesis: the ConQual approach. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*. 2014, 14:108. doi:10.1186/1471-2288-14-108