**Additional file 1: PRISMA-P and NMA checklist items**

**PRISMA-P 2015 Checklist**

# **This checklist has been adapted for use with systematic review protocol submissions to BioMed Central journals from Table 3 in Moher D et al:** Preferred reporting items for systematic review and meta-analysis protocols (PRISMA-P) 2015 statement. *Systematic Reviews* 2015 **4**:1

# An Editorial from the Editors-in-Chief of *Systematic Reviews* details why this checklist was adapted - **Moher D, Stewart L & Shekelle P:** Implementing PRISMA-P: recommendations for prospective authors. *Systematic Reviews* 2016 **5**:15

| **Section/topic** | **#** | **Checklist item** | **Information reported** | | **Page number(s)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Yes** | **No** |
| **ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION** | | | | | |
| **Title** | | | | | |
| Identification | 1a | Identify the report as a protocol of a systematic review |  |  | 1 |
| Update | 1b | If the protocol is for an update of a previous systematic review, identify as such |  |  | n/a |
| **Registration** | 2 | If registered, provide the name of the registry (e.g., PROSPERO) and registration number in the Abstract |  |  | 4,8 |
| **Authors** | | | | | |
| Contact | 3a | Provide name, institutional affiliation, and e-mail address of all protocol authors; provide physical mailing address of corresponding author |  |  | 1 |
| Contributions | 3b | Describe contributions of protocol authors and identify the guarantor of the review |  |  | 22 |
| **Amendments** | 4 | If the protocol represents an amendment of a previously completed or published protocol, identify as such and list changes; otherwise, state plan for documenting important protocol amendments |  |  | n/a |
| **Support** | | | | | |
| Sources | 5a | Indicate sources of financial or other support for the review |  |  | 21 |
| Sponsor | 5b | Provide name for the review funder and/or sponsor |  |  | n/a |
| Role of sponsor/funder | 5c | Describe roles of funder(s), sponsor(s), and/or institution(s), if any, in developing the protocol |  |  | n/a |
| **INTRODUCTION** | | | | | |
| **Rationale** | 6 | Describe the rationale for the review in the context of what is already known |  |  | 5-7 |
| **Objectives** | 7 | Provide an explicit statement of the question(s) the review will address with reference to participants, interventions, comparators, and outcomes (PICO) |  |  | 7 |
| **METHODS** | | | | | |
| **Eligibility criteria** | 8 | Specify the study characteristics (e.g., PICO, study design, setting, time frame) and report characteristics (e.g., years considered, language, publication status) to be used as criteria for eligibility for the review |  |  | 7-8 |
| **Information sources** | 9 | Describe all intended information sources (e.g., electronic databases, contact with study authors, trial registers, or other grey literature sources) with planned dates of coverage |  |  | 13, Additional File 2 |
| **Search strategy** | 10 | Present draft of search strategy to be used for at least one electronic database, including planned limits, such that it could be repeated |  |  | Additional File 2 |
| ***STUDY RECORDS*** | | | | | |
| Data management | 11a | Describe the mechanism(s) that will be used to manage records and data throughout the review |  |  | 13 |
| Selection process | 11b | State the process that will be used for selecting studies (e.g., two independent reviewers) through each phase of the review (i.e., screening, eligibility, and inclusion in meta-analysis) |  |  | 13 |
| Data collection process | 11c | Describe planned method of extracting data from reports (e.g., piloting forms, done independently, in duplicate), any processes for obtaining and confirming data from investigators |  |  | 14 |
| **Data items** | 12 | List and define all variables for which data will be sought (e.g., PICO items, funding sources), any pre-planned data assumptions and simplifications |  |  | 14 |
| **Outcomes and prioritization** | 13 | List and define all outcomes for which data will be sought, including prioritization of main and additional outcomes, with rationale |  |  | 11-13 |
| **Risk of bias in individual studies** | 14 | Describe anticipated methods for assessing risk of bias of individual studies, including whether this will be done at the outcome or study level, or both; state how this information will be used in data synthesis |  |  | 16 |
| ***DATA*** | | | | | |
| **Synthesis** | 15a | Describe criteria under which study data will be quantitatively synthesized |  |  | 17-20 |
| 15b | If data are appropriate for quantitative synthesis, describe planned summary measures, methods of handling data, and methods of combining data from studies, including any planned exploration of consistency (e.g., *I* 2, Kendall’s tau) |  |  | 17-20 |
| 15c | Describe any proposed additional analyses (e.g., sensitivity or subgroup analyses, meta-regression) |  |  | 17-20 |
| 15d | If quantitative synthesis is not appropriate, describe the type of summary planned |  |  | n/a |
| **Meta-bias(es)** | 16 | Specify any planned assessment of meta-bias(es) (e.g., publication bias across studies, selective reporting within studies) |  |  | 19-20 |
| **Confidence in cumulative evidence** | 17 | Describe how the strength of the body of evidence will be assessed (e.g., GRADE) |  |  | 17 |

**Additional items of relevance for NMA protocols:**

**PRISMA NMA Checklist of Items to Include When Reporting A Systematic Review Involving a Network Meta-analysis**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section/Topic** | **Item #** | **Checklist Item** | **Reported on Page #** |
| **Geometry of the network** | **S1** | Describe methods used to explore the geometry of the treatment network under study and potential biases related to it. This should include how the evidence base has been graphically summarized for presentation, and what characteristics were compiled and used to describe the evidence base to readers. | ***10-11 (Figure), 16-17*** |
| Risk of bias within individual studies | 12 | Describe methods used for assessing risk of bias of individual studies (including specification of whether this was done at the study or outcome level), and how this information is to be used in any data synthesis. | 16,19 |
| Summary measures | 13 | State the principal summary measures (e.g., risk ratio, difference in means). *Also describe the use of additional summary measures assessed, such as treatment rankings and surface under the cumulative ranking curve (SUCRA) values, as well as modified approaches used to present summary findings from meta-analyses.* | 12, 14, 20 |
| Planned methods of analysis | 14 | Describe the methods of handling data and combining results of studies for each network meta-analysis. This should include, but not be limited to:   * *Handling of multi-arm trials;* * *Selection of variance structure;* * *Selection of prior distributions in Bayesian analyses; and* * *Assessment of model fit.* | 14-20 |
| **Assessment of Inconsistency** | **S2** | Describe the statistical methods used to evaluate the agreement of direct and indirect evidence in the treatment network(s) studied. Describe efforts taken to address its presence when found. | 19 |
|  |  |  |  |
| **RESULTS†** |  |  |  |
| **Presentation of network structure** | **S3** | Provide a network graph of the included studies to enable visualization of the geometry of the treatment network. | ***11, Figure*** |
|  |  |  |  |