

Recommendations for finding the gold Optimizing efforts to identify the Grey Literature on Public Health Effectiveness

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Objective & methods

- Develop a methodology to
 - identify
 - retrieve
 - selecthigh quality research syntheses of public health (PH) effectiveness
- Lit search
- Key informants (65)
 - Interviews (6)
- Pilot test
- Recommended search strategy

Results

Literature search + interviews

The grey & PH

- Impact unknown (Howes, 2003)
- Evidence re effective PH interventions (Turner et al., 2005)
 - diverse formats, content, & audiences
 - largely grey
- Frequently sought/used
 - sharing ‘best practices’
 - decision making
 - first/only source of PH effectiveness evidence

Results

Literature search + interviews

The grey & PH

- Few systematic review (SR) organizations with a Canadian PH focus
- Need for increased capacity
 - effective efficient searching
 - critical consumption of information
 - assessing evidence quality relevance
 - adapting evidence for local use
 - use of syntheses in evidence-informed decision making (EIDM)
- International interest

Results

Literature search + interviews

Grey lit access

- Not all worth collecting but much missed
- No Canadian grey literature database
- Centralized documentation centres emerging
- Search protocols
 - vary in process, precision, outcomes
 - none specific to SRs
- Resource implications (technological, \$, human)
- Information specialists can help

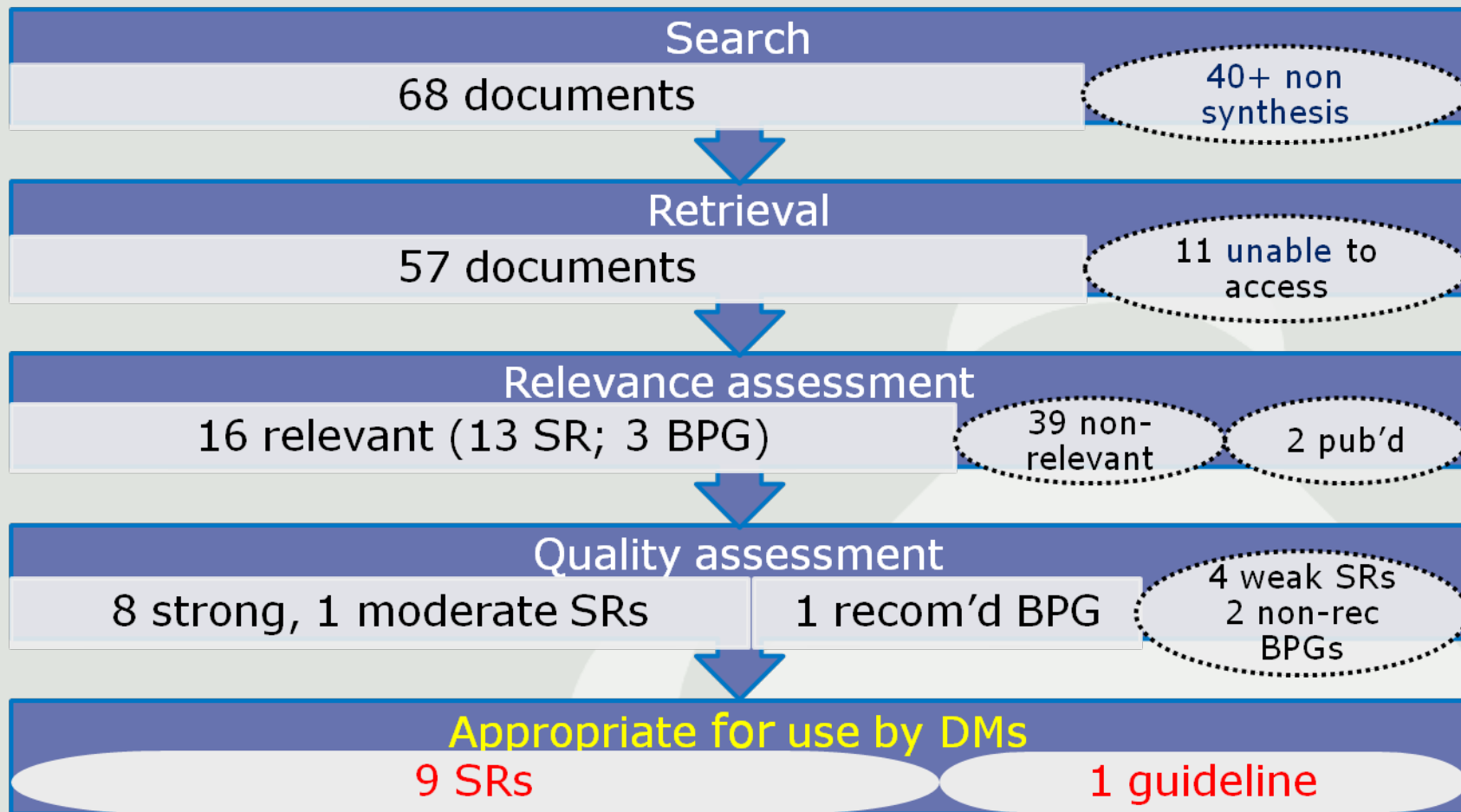
Results

Initial proposed methodology

- Reference lists of published studies
- SR & guideline organizations
- Internet search engines
- Websites of & key contacts in
 - issue-specific & funding organizations
 - governments & agencies
 - academic/research organizations
- Content experts
 - organizations
 - networks

Results

Initial search



Final proposed methodology

- Systematic review-producing/housing orgs
- Guideline-producing/housing orgs
- Contact with experts and issue-specific orgs in the content area
- Government websites
 - national
 - provincial/territorial/state

Highlights

- Very time consuming
- Difficulties with access
- Strategies recommended
 - SR-producing/housing orgs
 - guideline-producing/housing orgs
 - content experts
 - government agencies
 - collaboration with health information specialist
- Caution required - inadequate quality

Implications

- International interest
 - PH grey lit search strategy
 - collaboration
- Value creation/use of grey lit for EIDM in PH
- Perceived need for one-stop shop for effectiveness evidence
 - published
 - grey

Additional recommendations

- Further testing & refinements
- Improvements in accessibility
 - model to describe PH interventions (Turner et al., 2005)
 - public health grey literature database
 - inclusions of grey in existing databases (e.g., health-evidence.ca)
 - use of technology (e.g., RSS, SDI, collaboration software, KM systems)