Worksheet for Descriptive Studies

Worksheet author(s):	**Date submitted for review:**

Research question:

Is this question addressing:

□ Descriptive Studies

Search strategy:

Resources	**Details (please indicate specific names and keywords)**
□ e-databases (e.g. Medline)	
□ References of relevant articles & reviews	
□ Conference Proceedings	
□ Hand-searching unindexed journals	

Inclusion criteria:

Exclusion criteria:

Number of articles/sources meeting criteria for further review:
(Use Citation List for guidance)

Reviewer's final comments and assessment of the results:

Conclusion:

Consensus on science:

Recommendation (if applicable):

Reviewer's conflicts of interest:

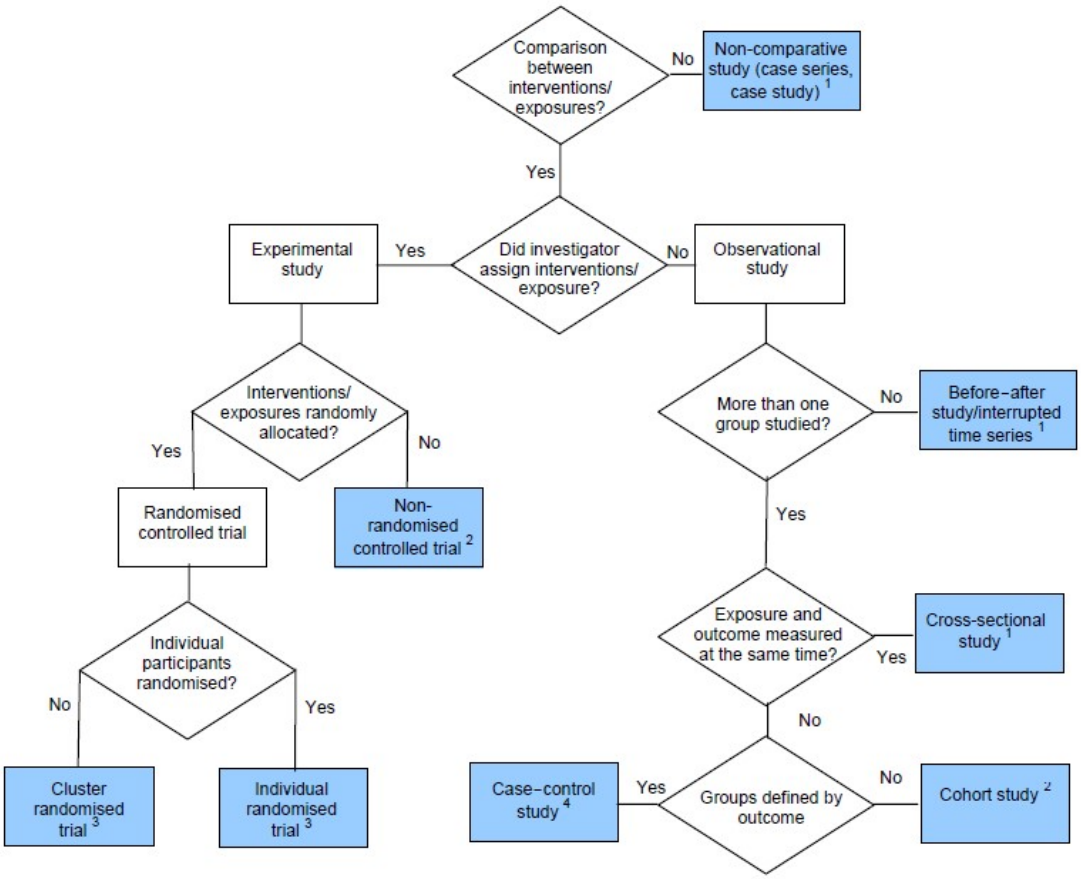
Citation List

Reviewer should select the appropriate columns to fill up as some column(s) may not be applicable to certain types of references.

S/N	Citation	Description of subjects	Methods	Results	Conclusion & Recommendation	Remarks (if any)
	Include date of publication, name of journal & citation	Include disease groups, sub-groups, population type (e.g. adults/paediatrics)	Include exposure, outcomes,	Include key findings	Authors' conclusion, recommendations	

Algorithm for classifying study design for questions of effectiveness

Taken from The Guidelines Manual 7 – Reviewing and grading the evidence by National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (April 2007) (Available at: http://www.nice.org.uk/niceMedia/pdf/GuidelinesManualChapter7.pdf)



Glossary

Adapted from Levels of Evidence used for the review of Resuscitation science for 2010 from C2010 Consensus Process
(Available at: http://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@private/@ecc/documents/downloadable/ucm_308199.pdf)

Case control study:
A case control study involves identifying patients who have the outcome of interest (cases) and patients without the same outcome (controls), and looking back to see if they had the exposure of interest.

Case series:
A single group of people exposed to the intervention (factor under study). Only outcomes after the intervention (factor under study) are recorded in the series of people, so no comparisons can be made.

Clinical Decision Rule
These are algorithms or scoring systems that lead to a prognostic estimation or a diagnostic category. These can be derived, validated using a split-sample only (derived from part of population, and validated on rest of population), or validated using a separate population (single or multiple).

Cohort study
Outcomes for groups of people observed to be exposed to an intervention, or the factor under study, are compared to outcomes for groups of people not exposed.

Diagnostic case-control study:
The index test results for a group of patients already known to have the disease (through the reference standard) are compared to the index test results with a separate group of normal/healthy people known to be free of the disease (through the use of the reference standard). In this situation patients with borderline or mild expressions of the disease, and conditions mimicking the disease are excluded, which can lead to exaggeration of both sensitivity and specificity. This is called spectrum bias because the spectrum of study participants will not be representative of patients seen in practice. (Note: this does not apply to well-designed population based case-control studies.)

Exploratory study:
Collects information and trawls the data (e.g. using a regression analysis) to find which factors are 'significant'.

Inception/prospective cohort studies
At study inception the cohort is either non-diseased or all at the same stage of the disease or where groups of people (cohorts) are observed at a point in time to be exposed or not exposed to an intervention (or the factor under study) and then are followed prospectively with further outcomes recorded as they happen.

Randomised Controlled Trials:
These studies prospectively collect data, and randomly allocate the patients to intervention or control groups.

Retrospective cohort studies
Where the cohorts (groups of people exposed and not exposed) are defined at a point of time in the past and information collected on subsequent outcomes (e.g. the use of medical records to identify a group of women using oral contraceptives five years ago, and a group of women not using oral contraceptives, and then contacting these women or identifying in subsequent medical records the

development of deep vein thrombosis).

Studies using concurrent controls without true randomisation:
These studies can be:

- experimental - having patients that are allocated to intervention or control groups concurrently, but in a non-random fashion (including pseudo-randomisation: e.g. alternate days, day of week etc), or
- observational – including cohort and case control studies

Studies using retrospective controls:
These studies use control patients that have been selected from a previous period in time to the intervention group.

Study of diagnostic yield:
These studies provide the yield of diagnosed patients, as determined by the index test, without confirmation of the accuracy of the diagnosis (ie. whether the patient is actually diseased) by a reference standard test (index test). These may be the only alternative when there is no reliable reference standard.

Validating cohort (prospective, observational) studies:
Test the quality of a specific diagnostic test, based on prior evidence.