



Prioritizing topics for Systematic Reviews

Facilitators

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Objectives

The workshop covers the following learning objectives:

1. To familiarize the participants with the different published approaches for prioritizing topics for systematic reviews.
2. To introduce participants to the SPARK tool, including the user manual that provides guidance on how to use it.
3. To discuss the applicability of the SPARK tool to various health fields, explore the successes and challenges of running a SPARK priority setting exercise, and share learning resources.
4. To apply the SPARK tool to a real-world example of priority setting practice.

Brief description of content

Systematic reviews of evidence represent a significant resource for decision-makers, as they constitute a reliable and robust source of evidence. Groups or institutions funding or conducting systematic reviews need to prioritize topics according to the needs of policymakers and other stakeholders. The Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research (2009) defined the priority-setting process as “a program to generate consensus about a core set of research issues that urgently require attention in order to facilitate policy development.”



The workshop will start with an overview of published approaches for the prioritization of systematic review topics. This will be followed by a presentation on one of the approaches, the SPARK tool, and participants will have a hands-on exercise to apply the tool to a real-world example by playing the roles of different key stakeholders and coming out with a set of prioritized topics.

Reading Resources:

Akl, E. A., Fadlallah, R., Ghandour, L., Kdouh, O., Langlois, E., Lavis, J. N., et al. (2017). The SPARK Tool to prioritise questions for systematic reviews in health policy and systems research: development and initial validation. *Health research policy and systems*, 15(1), 77.