I`m my own expert: Evidence synthesis and decision making

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Evidence-based decision making processes are depending on targeted scientific information, whereas the presented format should provide a precise and reliable answer to a question under debate. In case evidence pertinent to the post question does exist in form of published studies, it might be synthesized by the performance of a literature review. Reviews of the scientific literature vary considerably in how they are conducted and if they do not follow an *a priori* defined and documented procedure that employs explicit means to identify, critically appraise, and evaluate included studies they are usually referred to as "traditional" or "narrative" reviews. In contrast, systematic reviews represent powerful tools to identify, collect, synthesize, and evaluate primary research data on specific research questions in a highly standardized and reproducible manner. They enable the defensible synthesis of outcomes by increasing precision and minimizing bias whilst ensuring transparency of the methods used. Although seen as a "gold standard" for synthesizing primary research data, systematic reviews are not without limitations as they are often cost, labor and time intensive. In order to increase the efficiency of systematic review performance, an online-tool called CADIMA was developed at JKI to 1) guide review authors through the evidence synthesis process, 2) ease steps with a considerable workload and 3) assure for its thorough documentation.