Appendix A
Narrative Overview Rating Scale

Circle the number that you feel is appropriate for the paper that you are reading:
1 = Absent 2 = Present but not complete 3 = Present and complete

Initial Impression

1 2 3 Does the review appear to be relevant to an issue of interest (18, 30)?

Abstract

1 2 3 Is the specific purpose of the review stated (3, 15)?
1 2 3 Is context for the overview provided?
1 2 3 Is the type of research design stated?
1 2 3 Are the search methods clearly summarized?
1 2 3 Are the important findings clearly discussed?
1 2 3 Are the major conclusions and recommendations clearly outlined?

Introduction

1 2 3 Is the specific purpose of the review clearly stated based upon a brief review of the literature (1, 3, 18, 24)?
1 2 3 Is the need/importance and context of this study established (2, 11, 24)?
1 2 3 Are novel terms defined (10, 29)?

Methods

1 2 3 Were the electronic databases used to conduct the literature searches identified (MEDLINE, CINAHL, etc.) (3, 13, 17)?
1 2 3 Were the search years stated?
1 2 3 Were the search terms stated (3)?
1 2 3 Were standard terms used as search terms, including Medical Subject Headings (17)?
1 2 3 Were the guidelines for including and excluding articles in the literature review clearly identified (10, 18, 22)?

Discussion

1 2 3 Were the results summarized in a comprehensible manner (3, 10)?
1 2 3 Was the critical appraisal of each study the same and reproducible (11, 13, 22)?
1 2 3 Was the quality of the included articles assessed objectively (3, 11, 13)?
1 2 3 Was the variation in the findings of the studies critically analyzed (1, 10, 13, 22)?
1 2 3 Were the meaning of the results addressed (3)?
1 2 3 Do the authors tie in the results of the study with previous research in a meaningful manner (1, 3, 10)?
1 2 3 Were the weak points and untoward events that occurred during the course of the study addressed by the authors (1, 3)?

Conclusions

1 2 3 Was a clear summary of pertinent findings provided (10)?
1 2 3 Were the authors’ conclusions supported by the evidence provided (1, 3, 13, 18)?
1 2 3 Were specific directives for new research initiatives proposed?
1 2 3 Specific implications to the practice environment are addressed (3).
References

Are references relevant, current and appropriate in number (11)?
Are all papers reviewed cited in the references (1)?

Overall Impressions

Do the merits of this review of the literature outweigh the flaws?
Were the authors unbiased in their approach to the review (11, 18)?
Will the results of the paper help me in my philosophical or evidence based approach to patient care (18, 22)?

Comments & Notes: