

## OSH EVIDENCE - CLEARINGHOUSE OF SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS ON OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH TOPICS

### BACKGROUND

Evidence from scientific research is increasingly used to support evidence-based policy making. This is not possible without good summaries of the available evidence in the form of systematic reviews of the literature. Therefore, better coordination of systematic review production in the occupational health and safety field is essential in developing evidence-based policy. Basically, this is not new approach. Examples of successful international research collaboration are the International Agency on Cancer Research and the Cochrane Collaboration. However, these organisations cover only part of the field of Occupational Safety and Health. There are many more questions and policy topics that would need underpinning with evidence and for which there are currently no collaborative efforts. Some of these other topics are: causes and diagnosis of occupational diseases other than cancer and of injuries, economic evaluation and prognosis of occupational diseases.

### OBJECTIVES

OSH Evidence - Clearinghouse of Systematic Reviews aims at answering important policy questions by presenting the results of good OSH systematic reviews. We go beyond systematic reviews of intervention studies and also include systematic reviews of etiological studies, prognostic, diagnostic and prevalence studies.

The first objective is to facilitate knowledge transfer from scientific research into OSH policy making. By making systematic reviews available from many different sources and presenting them in a systematic way, the knowledge is more easily accessible. On request we will also summarise the contents in the form of an overview of reviews on a specific topic

The second objective is to coordinate the conducting of systematic reviews in the field of occupational health and safety to prevent duplication of work.

The third objective is to bring together expertise in this area to improve the quality and the usability of systematic reviews.

### DELIVERABLES

The results are presented in a table at the Perosh OSH Evidence website: <http://www.perosh.eu/research-projects/perosh-projects/occupational-safety-and-health-evidence-clearinghouse/>

### RESEARCH METHODS

A rigorous methodology and quality criteria are used to perform the systematic search for identifying the reviews according to their topic. The literature search comprises several predefined steps such as defining a specific and clear question, identifying all relevant records in electronic databases by using a specific terminology, assessing the study quality and selecting the eligible studies. In order to ensure high quality, the entire process for study selection requires the involvement of at least two reviewers. In addition, the quality of the reviews is assessed.

**SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE**

Currently there is a lack of methods for knowledge transfer in OSH. Increasing the availability of systematic reviews is thus far not well developed. The methodology for overviews of reviews is still in its infancy. The quality of OSH systematic reviews should be improved.

**PRACTICAL/SOCIETAL RELEVANCE**

To increase the transparency of OSH policy, it is very important that scientific evidence on OSH topics is more readily accessible to policy makers, practitioners and researchers. This OSH Evidence website is one of the few places that offers this possibility

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