

Tool to assess methodological limitations of qualitative evidence synthesis*

Author(s): _____

Year: _____

Title: _____

Reviewed by: _____

SUMMARY Minor concern ☐ Moderate concern ☐ High concern ☐

INTRODUCTION	YES	NO	NO INFO
1. AIM: Was the research question clearly stated?	☐	☐	☐
2. SEARCH APPROACH: Was the approach to searching for the literature appropriate for the research question?	☐	☐	☐
3. INCLUSION CRITERIA: Were the inclusion/exclusion criteria clearly described?	☐	☐	☐
4. COMPETENCE: Were there a sufficient number of researchers involved in the synthesis who had adequate competence?	☐	☐	☐

COMMENT: _____

LITERATURE SEARCH AND SELECTION OF STUDIES	YES	NO	NO INFO
5. SEARCH STRATEGY: Was the search strategy sufficient to capture the relevant literature?	☐	☐	☐
6. STUDY SCREENING: Was the selection of relevant studies conducted independently by more than one reviewer and with consensus?	☐	☐	☐

COMMENT: _____

APPRAISAL AND SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS	YES	NO	NO INFO
7. APPRAISAL: Was risk of bias (or methodological quality) formally assessed using appropriate criteria?	☐	☐	☐
8. APPRAISAL PROCESS: Was the appraisal conducted independently by more than one reviewer and with consensus?	☐	☐	☐
9. SYNTHESIS: Was the synthesis method appropriate for the research question?	☐	☐	☐
10. SYNTHESIS: Was the synthesis conducted appropriately?	☐	☐	☐
11. SYNTHESIS OUTPUT: Were findings clearly grounded in the primary studies?	☐	☐	☐

COMMENT: _____

SUMMARIZE THE CONCERNS IDENTIFIED DURING THE ASSESSMENT
 Minor concern ☐ Moderate concern ☐ High concern ☐
 Reason for concern _____

IF APPLICABLE...	YES	NO	NO INFO
A. SYNTHESIS OUTPUT: Did the synthesized result go beyond a summary of results from the included studies?	☐	☐	☐
B. CONFIDENCE IN FINDING: Was the confidence in the findings assessed with GRADE-CERQual in an appropriate way?	☐	☐	☐

* Tong A, Flemming K, McInnes E, Oliver S, Craig J. Enhancing transparency in reporting the synthesis of qualitative research: ENTREQ. BMC Med Res Methodol 2012;12:181.

