

2009 International Campbell Collaboration (C2) Colloquium

Submitter Information

Janet Clapton
Email: janet.clapton@scie.org.uk

Abstract Information

Abstract Title:

Developing systematic mapping of the social welfare literature: another year's experience!

Format:

Symposium

Themes:

relevant to all themes, examples from social welfare

Authors:

Janet Clapton, (MSc, MCLIP) Project Information Manager Deborah Rutter, (PhD) Senior Research Analyst

Abstract:

Systematic mapping is a transparent technique for gathering and organising research literature on a specific but broad topic. This produces a searchable resource to feed into systematic reviews, or a stand-alone piece of work describing the literature coverage on that topic. The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) has been developing the process of systematic mapping in social welfare for four years, building on previous work in education and health promotion by our advisors, The Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (EPPI-Centre). Systematic mapping provides an opportunity to identify the nature of existing research evidence prior to undertaking specific analytical reviews. Although mapping does not include quality assurance of studies, it does include keywording for study design and method, so is particularly useful for assessing available evidence within social welfare topic areas where policymakers need to draw on more than effectiveness studies. At Campbell Colloquium 2008, we described the method, process and challenges of systematic mapping. For 2009's audience, we would like to explain how we have adapted the mapping process for other SCIE products, such as research briefings and scoping studies. These products can be delivered within a shorter timescale than a full map or systematic review to help support policy and practice. Mapping techniques are particularly suited to the conference theme because they permit exploration of broad topics of urgent social and political concern where there is uncertainty about the scope and quality of research evidence. A map permits a complex area, such as relatively poor educational, social, health and wellbeing outcomes for Looked After Children, to be explored in all its facets. Mapping techniques can accommodate multifaceted evidence of need and inequity, effectiveness of interventions, and different stakeholders' views. The symposium will draw on the experience of SCIE's information scientists and researchers, who will discuss: 1. Uses and advantages of mapping techniques; 2. Technical and management processes; 3. Recent experiments in the scope, application and remit of mapping methodology, including economic material and rapid commissions. SCIE is in the process of publishing a manual of the map process. Topic specific map reports are freely available to download from SCIE's website (www.scie.org.uk). The accompanying keyworded map databases can be made available to the systematic review community on application to SCIE.
