Study-based registers
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Background
- Reviewers invest considerable effort sorting all relevant publications into distinct studies within their reviews. Study-based registers can store and enhance these groupings.
- Now, at least 12 CRGs also use study-based registers and maintain these within MeerKat, ProCite, Reference Manager or RefTrak (TSC survey 2005).

This type of register
- Contains the same information as reference-based registers but links references reporting the same study.
- Has the capacity to have references neatly grouped into studies.

Already some study-based registers can supply fully linked data – i.e., references, ii. full text records of references, filed by study group, and iii. a study report with details of reviews in which this study already appears. Systems are evolving to include data seen within reviews in study search results.

Study coding
- Study-based registers store links to references, and perhaps reviewers, reviews, reports, full text records, and to data describing the study – including RevMan data.

This study coding is
- Conducted incrementally, and
- Stored in either user defined fields of reference records (reference-based study register) or unique study records which link to the related references (study-based register).

Benefits I. For authors of reviews
- Hugely reduces duplication of effort
  - Search results show references grouped into studies. For example, studies with 10, 20, 30 or even 100 citations, already reliably grouped by study are supplied, pre-packaged, to the authors.

Benefits II. For TSCs + Collaboration
- Hugely reduces duplication of effort
  - More efficient coding (for TSCs who code). Data are coded once per study, multiple reports are scanned for any further study data. In reference-based registers study coding is often repeated for each reference.
  - Authors value TSCs for producing study searches
  - Numbers of studies in a given area can be accurately assessed, rather than the number of references.
  - Efficient removal of references, once a non-RCT/CCT study is identified the study and linked reference records are removed together.
  - Planned and ongoing trials can be more easily tracked to full publication.
  - Organisation and linking of references to studies is consistent with RevMan.

Challenges
- For TSCs aiming to increase sophistication of information retrieval and supply.
- For software designers working on RevMan and register softwares.

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