

## Effect of Palliative Care on Quality of Life and Survival after Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation: Common Mistakes in Reporting of Systematic Reviews

Dear Editor,

We have read very carefully the interesting review article in *Int J Prev Med* 2019.<sup>[1]</sup>

In fact, it seems that this review article, as many other studies published on the topic of systematic reviews and meta-analyses, has not paid proper attention to the research methods and reporting. We have the following reporting concerns:

1. The authors have stated that they searched Google Scholar, MagIran, MedLib, IranMedex, SID, and PubMed. First, only one database is international and the others are national. To identify all relevant studies in one topic, using only one international database is inadequate and it could cause missing the results. PubMed is known as one of the most comprehensive sources but its coverage is not complete. Second, if the purpose of the study is to investigate the effect of palliative care on outcomes in the world scale, why only one international database is used and the others are national ones? Third, as a matter of fact, Google scholar should be considered as a “search engine” and not a database. Authors should also present the search strategy, for at least one major database<sup>[2]</sup>
2. The authors stated that the quality of articles was assessed using the STROBE checklist. STROBE is the checklist only for assessing the quality of reporting of observational studies, while diverse studies (clinical trial, cohort study, etc.) have been assessed in this article. The methodological quality of each study should be assessed using its specific approach (such as Cochrane Collaboration’s tool). Besides, the use of STROBE improves reports of observational studies, it is not meant to appraise the methodological quality of a study. Also, the authors did not present the results of quality assessment of the included studies<sup>[2]</sup>
3. All systematic reviews should be presented in an orderly manner. Presenting the total number of records identified from sources, records excluded after preliminary screening by title and abstract, retrieved records that did not meet inclusion criteria and the final studies included in the “Methods” is incorrect; they are parts of the “Results.” Also, the flow diagram is a part of “Results” of a systematic review, and it should depict clearly the process of studied selection throughout the review.<sup>[3,4]</sup>

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### Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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