



Knowledge and Library Services (KLS)

COVID-19 Impact stories

Title: In April 2020, establishment of a member of KLS within the COVID-19 Evidence team enhanced the production of a series of rapid evidence reviews to inform PHE's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

User testimonial:

"We often receive urgent requests from other COVID-19 teams to produce rapid reviews with very quick turnaround. This would not have been possible without having Nicola from KLS in the team, her expertise and input were paramount in producing high quality reviews within such short timeframe. Her expert knowledge was also invaluable in setting up our rapid review processes." **Daphne Duval, Evidence reviewer, Nutrition science (SACN and Research), seconded to PHE COVID-19 evidence team**

Challenge: The evidence available on all aspects of COVID-19 was originally very small, but then began to increase exponentially. As more research was published, it became necessary to reduce duplication of reviews and concentrate instead on producing reviews that had not already been covered. As reviewers joined and left the team, it also became necessary to conduct training for new, less experienced reviewers.

Solution: A flow chart was designed by KLS to outline the stages of the COVID-19 evidence team rapid review process. Each time a question or request for a rapid review was received, the flow chart was followed – a scoping search of COVID-19 review repositories was undertaken by KLS to check for reviews on a similar topic, which were then summarised and assessed for quality and relevance. A decision was then made as to whether it was of value for the COVID-19 evidence team to conduct a new rapid review (or to update an existing review). If so, a protocol would then be written, a search strategy developed, including use of COVID-19 search terms that had been adapted from NICE, and the rapid review undertaken. Rayyan, a free online screening tool was also suggested by KLS as a quick and simple method of improving screening of citations by more than one reviewer. KLS staff also provided induction sessions to train reviewers on the rapid review process.

Impact: This process reduced the duplication of similar reviews, which saved time and effort, and allowed the COVID-19 team to concentrate on producing rapid reviews on questions that had not been covered before and to prioritise review topics. The COVID-19 evidence

