COVID-END’s Past Achievements and Current Priorities

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Background – COVID-END’s Focus

- COVID-END is a time-limited network that has come together in response to an ‘exogenous shock’ (COVID-19) to collaboratively advance the evidence (synthesis) ecosystem in a way that
  - Makes the most of an explosion of interest in and demand for evidence synthesis (in part by reducing the noise-to-signal ratio)
  - Makes the evidence (synthesis) ecosystem even more robust and resilient in future
  - Strengthens existing institutions and processes
- COVID-END’s work can also help to make the most of investments in primary research as well as in methodological research and infrastructure
Seven Achievements (https://www.covid-end.org)

1) Regularly updated guide to key COVID-19 evidences sources, which can be used to quickly review high-yield, high-quality sources of evidence to respond to decision-makers’ urgent questions.

2) Living hub of COVID-19 knowledge hubs, which can be used to identify organizations that are already supporting decision-making with a specific topic or sectoral focus, with a specific type of resource (e.g., recommendations, evidence syntheses or data), and/or with a specific geographic or linguistic scope [searchable version coming soon].

3) Taxonomy of decisions where evidence will be needed, which spans public-health measures, clinical management of COVID-19 and pandemic-related health issues, health-system arrangements, and economic & social responses.
Seven Achievements (https://www.covid-end.org)

4) Principles and resources to support evidence packaging for decision-makers

5) Description of an evidence-support model that can provide responses to decision-makers questions – both what’s known and who’s doing what – in timelines as short as 3-4 hours

6) Tips and tools for those supporting decision-makers

7) Resources to support researchers considering or conducting an evidence synthesis (with an interactive flow diagram)
Priorities: 1) Inventory

- Inventory of ‘best evidence syntheses’ for all types of decisions being faced by those who are part of the COVID-19 pandemic response, which will save time and avoid duplication for those providing ‘front-line’ decision support in government (who can then focus on what the evidence means for their context)
  - Evidence syntheses harvested from sources in COVID-END guide
  - Filters applied for all parts of the COVID-END taxonomy of decisions (COVID-focused for all parts and often COVID-relevant too for health-system arrangements and economic & social responses)
  - ‘Best evidence syntheses’ rank-ordered within any given ‘row’ in taxonomy, based on
    - Date of search (e.g., 2020-07-01)
    - Quality (AMSTAR) rating (e.g., 8/11)
    - Evidence profile available (e.g., yes, with hyperlink)
  - Re-worded title with details to support relevance assessment (e.g., participants, exposure / intervention / phenomenon, and outcomes)
Priorities: 1) Inventory (and Sharing)

- Inventory (continued)
  - Additional decision-relevant information profiled
    - *Living* evidence document (e.g., yes)
    - Type of synthesis (e.g., full review, rapid review, protocol)
    - Type of question (e.g., benefits & harms, costs, views and experiences, how & why it works)

- COVID-END’s ‘improve my RIS file service’ will enable value-added data sharing across different group’s workflows (e.g., Cochrane, Norwegian Institute of Public Health, UNCOVER)
# Priorities: 1) Inventory [Under Construction]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad and specific decisions</th>
<th>Criteria for 'best evidence synthesis'</th>
<th>Details to support relevance assessment</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Date of last search</td>
<td>Quality (AMSTAR) rating</td>
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<td>7/10</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2020-05-03</td>
<td>9/11</td>
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Priorities: 2) Horizon Scanning

- Global horizon-scanning panel, comprised of diverse strategic and ‘out-of-the-box’ thinkers and doers, to proactively identify both long-term and emergent issues that need to be prioritized in efforts to synthesize the best available research evidence to support decision-making about COVID-19
  - Diverse in their coverage across the parts of the taxonomy and the four key target audiences (citizens, providers, policymakers and researchers)
  - Diverse in terms of WHO region and primary language
- Main focus is to identify priorities for living reviews on recurring priorities (and full or rapid reviews on one-off priorities) as we transition from a sprint to a marathon
Priorities: 3) Living Systematic Reviews

- In the short-term
  - Create a list of priority topics where living systematic reviews are needed (based upon our inventory and horizon-scanning activities)

- In the medium-term
  - Cajole, encourage and nudge groups to collectively take responsibility for a full set of living reviews addressing all priority issues related to the pandemic and pandemic response
Priorities: 4) COVID-END Community Listserv

- Targets individuals with the following attributes
  - Creating and/or using evidence syntheses, technology assessments, and/or guidelines as the focus of their support to decision-making about COVID-19
  - Engaging with decision-making about COVID-19 by citizens/service users, providers, and/or health- and social-system policymakers
  - Keen to learn from others about how to support decision-making about COVID-19 and willing to explore challenges and/or share experiences through online discussions
  - Share the values of the COVID-END partnership

- 250+ members from around the globe, and counting
- Vibrant list discussion topics and facilitators
- Complemented by a soon-to-launch webinar series
- Plan to summarize and share the insights from both organized topic discussions and ad hoc interactions
Keep Up To Date and/or Share Your Insights

- Website – [https://www.covid-end.org](https://www.covid-end.org)
  - Resources to support researchers
  - Guide → Inventory [under construction]
  - Horizon-scanning panel’s monthly briefing notes and panels summaries → List of gaps in living systematic reviews
  - COVID-END Community listserv – [https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?SUBED1=COVIDEND&A=1](https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?SUBED1=COVIDEND&A=1)
- Email – c/o covid-end@mcmaster.ca
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