



Evidence Aid: Translating systematic reviews into plain language summaries

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Why summarise systematic reviews?

- Clear need for research evidence to drive policymaking and emergency responses = lives are saved, and resources are not wasted.
- The need for evidence support for health and humanitarian crisis is even more pertinent because of the time and practical constraints that decision-makers in these settings face.
- To improve the use of research evidence in policy and practice, it is important to provide evidence resources tailored to the target audience.

How do we know the summaries are useful?

- Study published in 2023 (lead author: Firas Khalid)
- 26 decision-makers interviewed (health and humanitarian emergencies).
- Challenges decision-makers face include:
 - insufficient time and increased burden of responsibilities during crises,
 - limited access to reliable internet connection,
 - large volume of data not translated into user friendly summaries, and
 - little information available on preparedness and response measures.
- Decision-makers like to see:
 - title,
 - target audience,
 - presentation of key findings in an actionable checklist or infographic format,
 - implementation considerations,
 - assessment of the quality of evidence presented,
 - citation and hyperlink to the full review,
 - funding sources,
 - language of full review, and
 - other sources of information on the topic.
- Study developed an evidence summary template with accompanying training material to inform real-time decision-making in crisis-settings.

“If you’re reading something on Cochrane or Evidence-Aid website, you would expect that is something of good quality and that you can trust the evidence presented”

How do we summarise systematic reviews?

1. Decide on what should be included in the summary (along with client and others).
2. Develop writing guidance (a 'template').
3. Obtain feedback from others.
4. Continuous feedback loop, improving and amending as required.
5. Ensure policy makers like the products!



What next?

1. Identify the systematic review.
2. Allocate a 'writer'.
3. Allocate a 'checker'
4. 'Writer' drafts summary.
5. Sends to 'checker' to ensure (a) consistency with template and (b) accuracy of content.
6. Categories are assigned.
7. Draft sent to 'finalizer' (Senior Researcher) who then sends it to the Operations Manager for publication within the collection (freely available to all).



We're going to demonstrate translation
of systematic reviews into plain
language summaries using the Resilient
Health Systems evidence collection as
our example...

<https://evidenceaid.org/evidence/resilient-health-systems/>

Improving **access** to reliable, curated information for well-informed decisions on disasters and health emergencies.

Summarising complex systematic reviews to lay writing for people across various languages.

01

Priorities

Implementing and coordination end-user input

02

Research

High-quality research that is relevant to health emergencies.

03

Reviews

Systematic reviews of such research provide a reliable and robust evidence base.

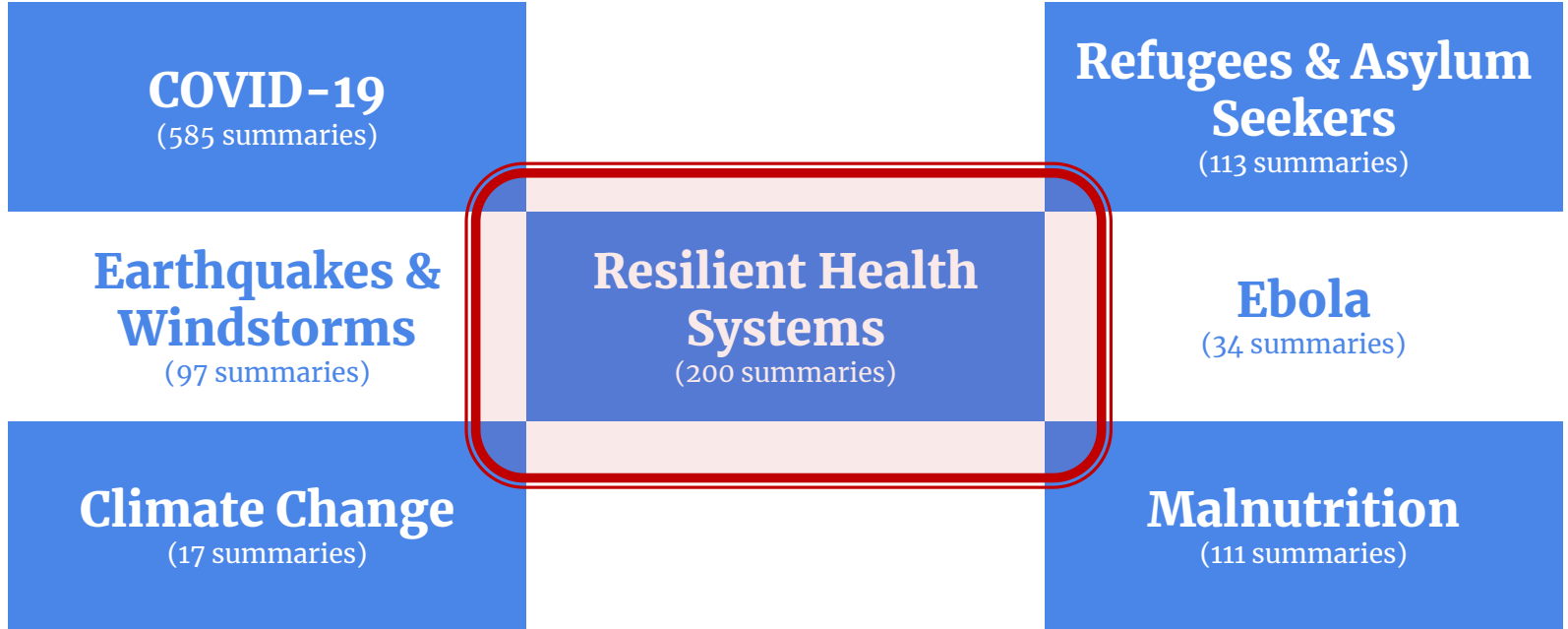
04

Summaries

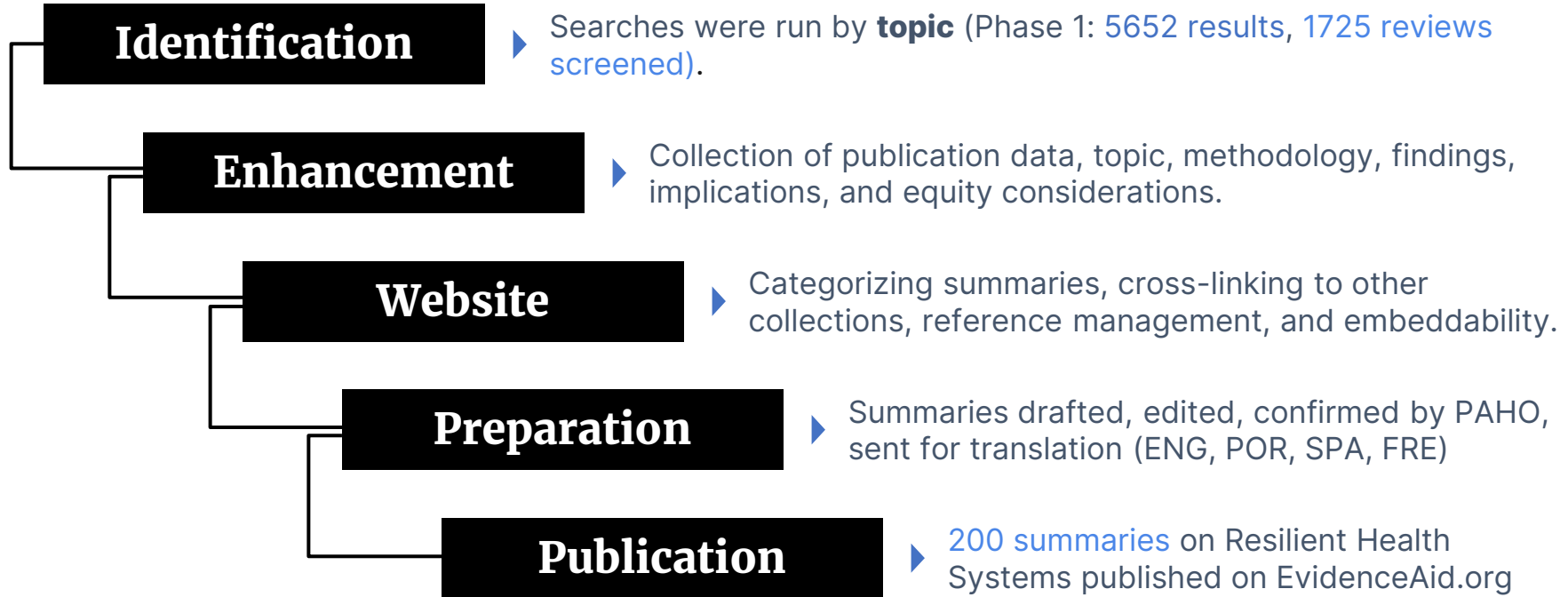
Accessible summaries of this evidence to decision-makers at different levels of health emergency response and preparedness



7 Interconnected Collections



Resilient Health Systems



Resilient Health Systems

Read this introduction in [Français](#), [Português](#) and [Español](#). Watch the launch of the collection here in [English](#), [Français](#) and [Español](#).

The Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization and Evidence Aid have been working together for several years and, in June 2021, started work on an Evidence Aid collection relevant to the development of resilient health systems in the context of disasters and other health emergencies. This collection of summaries for relevant systematic reviews will support preparedness, response and recovery, thereby sustaining and protecting public health gains. The partnership will further advance the Policy on Resilient Health Systems and the Plan of Action for Disaster Risk Reduction that were approved by Ministries of Health of the Americas and the Caribbean in 2016, the Strategy to Build Resilient Health Systems which was presented in 2021 and the Policy on Research for Health endorsed by the countries of the Americas in 2009.

This collection of summaries of systematic reviews is available in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish. The summaries will inform policies, programs and plans to achieve universal health coverage and support the achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. The collection was first published on 16 August 2021.

Select a category

Search

Add all results to my selections

Apps to reduce burnout, depression and stress in health professionals
Added October 12, 2022
Add to my selections **read more**

Telehealth interventions for older adults in rural settings
Added September 28, 2022
Add to my selections **read more**

Police-related triage interventions for mental health-related incidents
Added September 27, 2022
Add to my selections **read more**

Communication with the public about chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) terrorism (search done in November 2011)
Added September 26, 2022
read more

Arabic (العربية)

Chinese (simplified) 中文 (简体)

Chinese (traditional) 中文 (繁体)

✓ English

French (Français)

German (Deutsch)

Italian (Italian)

Japanese (日本)

Portuguese (Português)

Spanish (Español)

Date Added **Descending**

Search all resources

Select a collection

English

Date Added

Descending

[Add all results to my selections](#)**Apps to reduce burnout, depression and suicidality among healthcare students and professionals**[read more](#)

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Phase 1 & Phase 2



Next Phase



PAHO

Expand PAHO
priorities
(e.g., migration,
climate change).
Advisory Board



Expansion

Phase 3 of the RHS
collection and its
topics
and broader use and
communication



Analysis

Implications for field
implementation beyond
what is stated in
reviews, and evidence
(gap)maps

Usage Data



Draft summary *template*

Citation: [insert Vancouver style citation – see below for examples - and check that this is complete (e.g. that it includes the page details or article number). For Cochrane Reviews, you should put the CD number at the end of the citation].

Examples are given in the template. If you are unsure of the correct citation, please check other citations in our evidence collections and most importantly, the article itself (<https://evidenceaid.org/evidence/>).

DOI: [insert DOI alone, not the url for the DOI]

URL: [insert link that will take people to the online version of the article (where available, link to a free to view version such as a PubMedCentral version if the article is not free to view on the journal’s website)]

Free to view: [insert Yes or No]

Funding sources: [insert the funding sources for the review, if reported. If not reported, write “Nothing noted”]. If the authors reported that they had no funding please write [The authors reported that they had no external funding for this review.]

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Citation: Dowlati M, Seyedin H, Moslehi S. [Hospital Preparedness Measures for Biological Hazards: A Systematic Review and Meta-Synthesis](#). Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness. 2021;15(6):790-803.

Language: Abstract and full text available in EN.

Free to view: No.

Funding sources: Iran University of Medical Sciences.

What is this? Being prepared to adequately handle biological hazards is an important aspect of hospital preparedness for emergencies and disasters.

In this systematic review, the authors searched for studies of hospital preparedness for disasters that had considered at least one type of biological hazard. They restricted their searches to articles published in English and did the search in June 2019. They included 23 studies.

What was found: Hospital preparedness measures for biological hazards include administrative and management, specialized and logistical measures (see below), but the included studies found that hospitals were generally not prepared to manage biological hazards or protect victims and personnel.

Administrative and management measures include planning for hospital preparedness, development of HICS, collaboration with external agencies, risk communications, effective education and practical exercises and risk assessment.

Specialized measures include early detection and surveillance, diagnostic laboratories, psychological management, infection control, personnel protection, decontamination and specialized biological teams.

Logistical measures include increasing capability, supplies and equipment, physical space, personnel organization, volunteers and hospital security.

Implications: The authors of the review concluded that hospital preparedness plans are crucial for being able to respond to a biological hazard, and that hospital managers need to be better prepared to respond to such hazards.

Other considerations: The authors of the review discussed their findings in the context of occupation.

This summary was prepared by Jeremy Scudder, checked by Yasmeen Saeed and Cristián Mansilla, and finalized by Mike Clarke.

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Language: [If Abstract and Full text are in the same languages write “Abstract and full text available in [insert code(s) from list below]. [If Abstract and Full text are in different languages, write “Abstract available in [insert code(s) from list below. Full text available in [insert code(s) from list below]. [Audio podcast (only applicable to Cochrane reviews) available in [insert code(s) from list below].

If there is only one language, please write “Abstract and full text available in XX”.

Deutsch	German	DE
English	English	EN
Español	Spanish	ES
فارسی	Persian	FA
Français	French	FR
Hrvatski	Croatian	HR
日本語	Japanese	JA
한국어	Korean	HO
Bahasa Malaysia	Malay	MS
Polski	Polish	PL
Português	Portuguese	PT
Русский	Russian	RU
தமிழ்	Tamil	TA
ภาษาไทย	Thai	TH
繁體中文	Chinese (traditional)	ZH
简体中文	Chinese (simplified)	ZH

If there is a language which is not in the list above please consult: https://www.loc.gov/standards/iso639-2/php/code_list.php and use the code from the column headed ‘ISO 639_1 Code’.



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What is this? [Opening sentences (something along the lines of)]:

- Building a resilient health system will improve its ability to continue to function during and after health emergencies and disasters.
- Health emergencies and disasters can place a great strain on health systems, and they might need to introduce new models of service delivery to ensure equitable provision of health care.
- Being ready and responsive to health emergencies are key factors of a resilient health system.
- A sentence on the relevance of the topic for the review to this Special Collection.



In this [systematic or Cochrane or Campbell or rapid or scoping] review, the authors searched for [insert type of studies if one or two specific study designs are used, if more than two are used then use a more generic term] of [insert focus of study] in [insert setting]. They restricted their searches to articles published in [insert language of searched studies] [also insert any other restrictions, such as for the date or type of publication] [or “They did not restrict their searches by [date], [type] or [language] of publication”] and did the search on [day (*if rapid or living review conducted in 2020 or 2021*) month and year of search] or [between month year and day (*if rapid or living review conducted in 2020 or 2021*) and month year]. They included [insert number, types of study, and countries (if applicable) of included studies]. They also identified an additional [insert number] ongoing studies and [insert number] articles, which are awaiting assessment (*if applicable*).

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What works/was found: [use “works” for reviews of the effects of interventions and “was found” for other reviews/descriptive reviews] [insert one sentence answering the main objective of the study].

[insert any additional sentences stemming from results/conclusions of the review that are important, and note any trade-offs (e.g. harms) from an otherwise beneficial intervention]

What doesn't work: [use this subheading for reviews of the effects of interventions or delete it for other reviews where you have used “What was found” above] [insert sentences describing interventions included the review that do not work] [if not applicable, write “Nothing noted”].

Only include an intervention here if there is evidence of no effect or evidence of harm that outweighs benefits, rather than a lack of evidence for benefits or harms.

What is uncertain: [use this subheading for reviews of the effects of interventions or delete it for other reviews where you have used “What was found” above] [insert sentences describing interventions or setting where the effects are uncertain].

[If the evidence in the review is insufficient to conclude that something is beneficial, include it here rather than under What doesn't work.]

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Claire Allen

callen@evidenceaid.org

Thank you for listening!