

SHORT TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSION (STSM) SCIENTIFIC REPORT

This report is submitted for approval by the STSM applicant to the STSM coordinator

Action number: ECOST-STSM-Request-CA17117-45509

STSM title: Discuss, improve and formulate the process of Evidence-Based Research, and finalize a systematic review of meta-research relevant for Evidence-Based Research

STSM start and end date: March 3rd to March 7th, 2020

Grantee name: Hans Lund

PURPOSE OF THE STSM:

The aim of the short-term scientific mission (STSM) will be to discuss different approaches of how to describe the Evidence-Based Research approach or process and make decisions about which approach to pursue. This will have implications for the EVBRES Training School, the EVBRES Handbook and the systematic reviews of meta-research related to Evidence-Based Research.

DESCRIPTION OF WORK CARRIED OUT DURING THE STSMS

The main focus was to prepare an outline for the EBR Handbook (see Memorandum of Understanding 3.1.1 page 11). In addition to this the three editors (Jane Andreasen (main editor and jhost of the STSM, Ratko Peric and Hans Lund) prepared the principles for writing the EBR Handbook (meant as support for the authors), and prepared the work plan for preparing the EBR Handbook. Related to this work was also the identification of possible authors of the different chapters in the EBR Handbook.

In the preparation of the outline, the three editors of the EBR Handbook discussed different suggestions for how clinical researchers can use an Evidence-Based Research approach when justifying and designing new studies, and when placing new results in the full context of earlier results from similar studies. As the EBR Handbook should be explaining each step in justifying and designing a new study and each step in how to place new results in the context of earlier similar studies, the editors needed to discuss the possible chapters, what should be written where (to avoid overlap) and the degree of details for each section.

When discussing this the editors realized that the process could easily be too detailed described, and thus risk to exclude the reader from being able to fulfil the intentions of the EBR Handbook. This was solved by taking the time to consider how it could be formulated, what should be open for the reader to decide and what should be clear recommendations. As two of the editors also is involved in the preparation of the EBR Training School, and both a series of journal articles describing EBR and three systematic reviews including EBR related meta-research studies, it was possible to make a distinction between the overall presentation in a scientific paper, the level of information possible to deliver during a 3-day Training School and a detailed and systematic presentation of the EBR approach in the EBR Handbook. Thus, even though a lot of time was used in preparing the suggested content of the EBR Handbook, it was possible to formulate a suggestion for how to illustrate and formulate and doable process for clinical researchers.

An important foundation for the EBR Handbook is the meta-research related to EBR, i.e. studies evaluating how researchers have justified, designed new research and how new results has been discussed in the context of earlier similar studies. In order to get hold of all these studies and the different results, a Scoping Review, four Systematic Reviews and a series of three papers is under preparation. As Jane Andreasen and Hans Lund is key authors of these papers, the STSM was also used to discuss and finalize these papers. The outline and content of the EBR Handbook and the content of these papers (not least the almost final second version of the series) are so intertwined that we needed to combine the discussion of both at the same time.

Due to urgent personal reasons, Hans Lund was not able to arrive in Aalborg before Wednesday, but the work on Systematic Reviews / Scoping Reviews / Opinion papers was arranged via Zoom. Thus, the STSM consisted of meetings and independent work before and after the meetings.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MAIN RESULTS OBTAINED

Following the intense work, the editors had:

- An detailed outline for the EBR Handbook
- A list of 71 possible authors for the chapters in the EBR Handbook
- A working plan for preparing and finalizing the EBR Handbook
- The 1st draft of the Introduction chapter (as this would help authors to write there part of the EBR Handbook)
- Items for the author manual

Important adjustments to the scoping review, the systematic reviews and the series were identified and implemented in the manuscript drafts.

FUTURE COLLABORATIONS (if applicable)

The editors agreed to meet again by a virtual meeting tool (Zoom), and face to face in the 3rd Grant Period to continue the work on the EBR Handbook