

The FAST and the CURIOUS

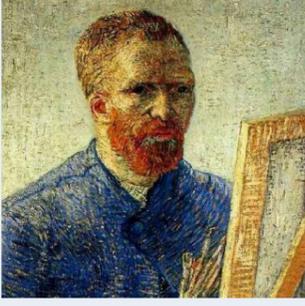
Reflections on a series of rapid reviews in policymaking

Bragge, P¹, Wright, B¹, Borg, K¹, Boulet, M¹, Tull, F¹, Kaufman, J², Smith, L¹

¹ BehaviourWorks Australia, Monash Sustainable Development Institute, Monash University, Australia

² Centre for Health Communication and Participation, College of Science, Health and Engineering, La Trobe University, Australia

Decision makers in policy settings are **time poor** and under pressure to rapidly evaluate effectiveness of interventions. BehaviourWorks Australia (BWA), an applied behavioural research centre that works closely with government and industry partners, have undertaken several commissioned rapid reviews as part of our overarching model of partner engagement.

Snapshot vs. Systematic	RAPID REVIEW¹ 	SYSTEMATIC REVIEW 
Timeframe	2 – 6 weeks	6 months – 2 years
Review question	Broad question; specified a priori	Narrow question; specified a priori
Search Strategy	Comprehensive search strategy; limits applied (e.g. last 5 years)	Comprehensive search strategy; few / no limits
Unit of analysis	Systematic reviews / reviews	Primary studies
Appraisal	Rigorous critical appraisal	Rigorous critical appraisal
Synthesis	Descriptive thematic synthesis	Descriptive + / – meta-analysis
Pros and cons	Pros: Rapid, quality appraised overview of key messages to inform policy Cons: Limited depth of information, difficult if no reviews	Pros: More granular detail, meta-analysis, comprehensive coverage of primary research Cons: Timelines do not match policy needs

Since mid-2015, BWA has conducted rapid reviews for a range of government and non-government organisations including The Heart Foundation (Victoria)¹, The NSW Environment Protection Authority,² The Victorian Transport Accident Commission³ and WorkSafe Victoria. Feedback underlines their positive influence on policy and practice.



“The literature review ... was the primary source of information used by the Advisory Committee to address this key policy issue”

“We have subsequently used this (review) information in designing and delivering a program”

“The simplicity of pulling out 3 key findings will help us immensely in implementing these findings into existing and future programs and our communication initiatives.”

References

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