

Background:

Assessing the methodological quality is a central component of systematic reviews and evidence synthesis and is a resource-intensive process within rapid reviews of intervention effects. These reviews often include diverse study designs, posing challenges when using various design-specific assessment tools, including identifying the correct study descriptor for selecting the appropriate tool, interpreting outputs with different scoring systems and applying assessments to overall findings. Significant time is required for training and pilot testing to ensure inter-rater reliability that adds complexity and delay to the review process. To optimise rapid review processes, careful selection of tools for assessing methodological quality is crucial, balancing the need for rigorous assessment with time constraints. Unified tools to assess methodological quality across both randomised and non-randomised studies offer a promising solution.

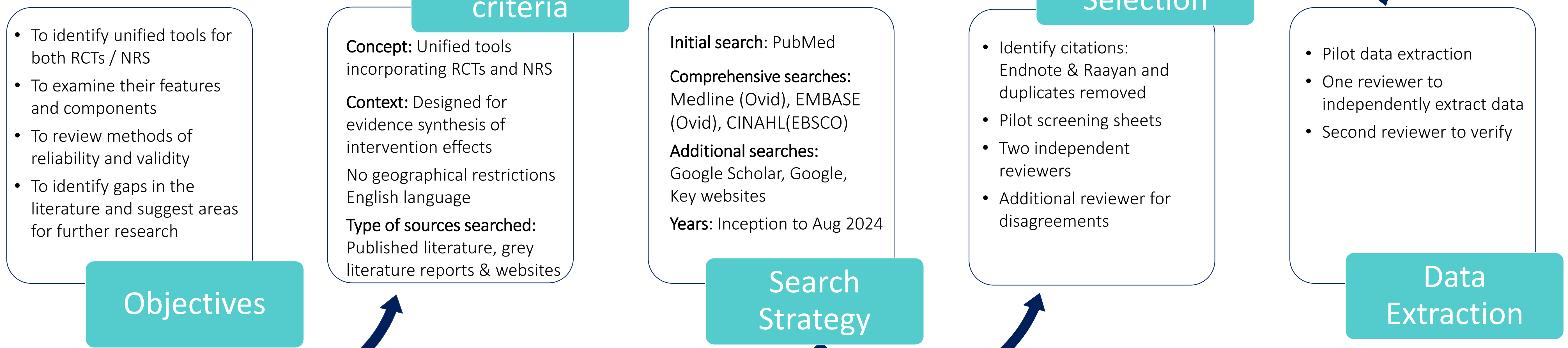
Current Phase: Scoping Review

What is the extent of the literature on unified tools for assessing the methodological quality of both randomised (RCTs) and non-randomised studies (NRS) of interventions?

Next Phase: Study Within A Review (SWAR)

What is the utility and consistency of different unified tools for assessing methodological quality of both randomised (RCT) and non-randomized studies (NRS) within rapid reviews of intervention effects?

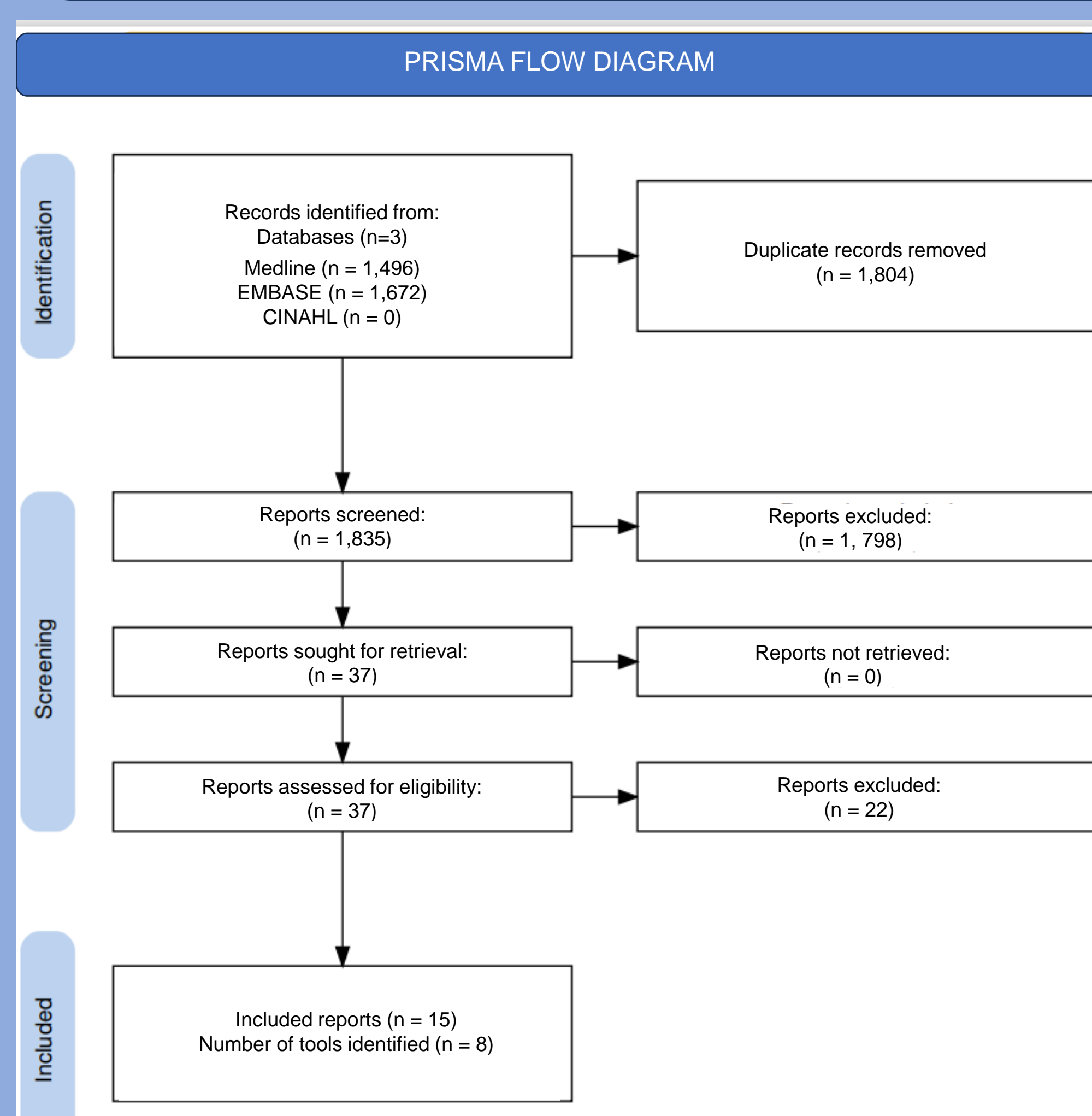
Scoping Review Methods:



Results: Tools identified to date

The study is ongoing. We have undertaken full text screening and so far, we have identified the following tools – the Crowe Critical Appraisal Tool; the Downs and Black Checklist; the **Quality Assessment with Diverse Studies (QuADS)**; the Evidence Project risk of bias tool; the **Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT)**, the **MethodologicAl STandards for Epidemiological Research scale (MASTER)**, the Quality Assessment tool (QATSDD), and the Integrated Quality Criteria for Review of Multiple Study Designs (ICROMS).

Further details from a selection of these tools can be seen in the table below.



Name of tool	Type of tool	Study designs evaluated	Items / Domains	Validity reported?
Downs & Black Checklist	Checklist with judgement	RCT and NRS	27 items within 4 domains	Yes
QUADS	Scale	Quantitative and qualitative studies	13 items	Yes
MASTER	Scale	Quantitative analytic designs	40 items within 7 domains	No
ICROMS	Checklist with judgement	RCT, NRS and qualitative studies	33 items within 7 domains	Yes

How can you help?

If you know of or have used any unified tools to assess the methodological quality of both randomised and non-randomised studies of interventions not included here, then please let us know by completing the attached form.



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