A rapid review process for Evidence Aid: Electric fans for reducing adverse health impacts in heatwaves

Allen C1, Gupta S2, Murray V1, Clarke M1,3, Carmichael C2, Simpson C1, Chan EYY, Gao Y5
Evidence Aid, UK; 1Health Protection Agency, UK; 2All Ireland Hub for Trials Methodology Research, Queen’s University, Belfast, UK; 2Health Canada, Canada; 3CERT-CUHK-Oxford University Centre for Disaster and Medical Humanitarian Response, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China.

Background:
This Cochrane Review was carried out to determine if electric fans have a harmful or protective effect on the general population during heatwaves. It was prepared rapidly through Evidence Aid with the aim to inform the 2012 Heatwave Plan for England.

Objectives:
To complete a rapid review for Evidence Aid by an international review team (members from three continents). None of the authors were working on this review full time.

Results:
More than 4500 records were identified and 120 full text articles were assessed. None met the criteria for the review. The evidence identified does not resolve uncertainties surrounding the health effects of electric fans during heatwaves; continued research is needed to address the ongoing confusion. The review sets out the need for new research, with the design for a randomized trial in the review. It was press-released by the publishers of The Cochrane Library, John Wiley and Sons Limited, on 11 July. Tweeted and added to the Evidence Aid Facebook page the following day. Some of the many media stories of the next few days are included in this poster.

Conclusions:
This process shows that rapid reviewing for Cochrane Reviews is possible with limited resources, and can be used as a model to promote a rapid turnaround of Cochrane Reviews on issues of major, global importance.

Timeline:

Timeline:

Timeline: