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## Supplementary Material 1 – AMSTAR2 – Narrative and Table

The methodological quality of the reviews reporting either randomised or non-randomised studies of interventions was assessed using AMSTAR2. The sixteen questions included are discussed below:

1. Did the research questions include the components of PICO? Nine of the 15 reviews were not judged to have met this question, largely due to incomplete reporting of comparator interventions (as these were not applicable for a number of reviews) and a priori outcomes.

2. Did the report contain a statement that review methods were ‘a priori’ and deviations explained? There was limited evidence of protocols being registered (3/15 reviews) and risk of bias plans were not described in 4/15 reviews. There was no evidence of deviations from protocol (either reported or not reported).

3. Study design selection decisions? Due to the heterogeneous study designs included in the reviews there was limited reporting of study design decisions, apart from in the case of the four reviews which included some form of either attempted or successful meta-analysis.

4. Literature search strategy? All of the reviews were either partial yes or no – this was due to the lack of searching of trial registries (which is an appropriate methodological decision in this topic area) and the limited evidence of grey literature searching.

5. Did the review authors perform study selection in duplicate? Nine of the 18 reviews demonstrated that they had used this approach to study selection, although this was inconsistently reported.

6. Duplicate data extraction? There was evidence of duplicate data extraction, particularly in the reviews that contained meta-analysis or numerical data synthesis. However, there was limited evidence of agreement between reviewers and how consensus was reached.

7. Evidence of reasons for excluded studies – reporting of excluded studies was limited – this is however unsurprising in a research area which is not clearly bounded and where there is limited consensus around the description of populations and interventions.

8. Description of included studies - the majority of reviews were assessed as either partial yes or no. The incomplete descriptions within the reviews however are as likely to reflect the reporting in the primary studies as the conduct and reporting of the reviews.

9. Use of satisfactory technique for risk of bias assessment – three of the reviews did not undertake risk of bias/quality assessment/critical appraisal and therefore were assessed as ‘no’. A diverse selection of tools were used amongst the remaining reviews. These were chosen according to the study designs that were included in the reviews.

10. Reporting of source of funding – these were not reported and there was no evidence of authors looking for this information. This may be a reflection of the types of studies that are included in the reviews which are less likely to be at risk of bias from interference by funders.

11 and 12. Where meta-analysis was undertaken, this was generally not reported according to the standards required by AMSTAR2

13 and 14. Inclusion of studies at high risk of bias and discussion of heterogeneity – reviews tended to report that all studies were included – there was evidence from one review of high ROB studies being excluded and the use of meta-analysis in some studies determined the inclusion of RCTs only. Heterogeneity was not widely reported.

15 Reporting of publication bias – only three reviews included meta-analysis and of these three, only one (Conroy 2011) assessed the impact of publication bias on study findings.

16. Funding and conflicts of interest – these were inconsistently reported across the studies – this may have reflected journal submission requirements in addition to review methods and processes.

		Conroy (2011)	Fan (2015)	Fealy (2009)	Graf (2011)	Hastings (2005)	Hughes (2019)	Jay (2017)	Karam (2015)	Lowthian (2015)	Malik (2018)	McCuske (2006)	Parke (2011)	Pearce (2011)	Schnitker (2013)	Sinha (2011)
1. Did the research questions and inclusion criteria for the review include the components of PICO? For Yes, all should be ticked.	Population	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Intervention	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Comparator	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
	Outcome	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
2. Did the report of the review contain an explicit statement that the review methods were established prior to the conduct of the review and did the report justify any significant deviations from the protocol? For partial yes, criteria 1-4, for yes, criteria 1-8.	Review Question	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
	Search Strategy	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
	Inclusion/exclusion criteria	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
	ROB assessment	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	Protocol registered	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Meta-analysis plan (if appropriate)	Yes	n/a	No	No	n/a	Yes	n/a	No	Yes	No	N/A	N/a	No	N/A	N/A
	Causes of heterogeneity plan	Yes	n/a	No	No	n/a	Yes	n/a	No	Yes	No	N/A	n/a	No	N/A	N/A



		Conroy (2011)	Fan (2015)	Fealy (2009)	Graf (2011)	Hastings (2005)	Hughes (2019)	Jay (2017)	Karam (2015)	Lowthian (2015)	Malik (2018)	McCuske (2006)	Parke (2011)	Pearce (2011)	Schnitker (2013)	Sinha (2011)
yes, criteria 1-3, for yes, criteria 1-8.	Provided key word and/or search strategy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Justified publication restrictions (e.g. language)	Yes	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
	Searched the reference lists / bibliographies of included studies	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Searched trial/study registries	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
	Included/consulted content experts in the field	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
	Where relevant, searched for grey literature	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	N/A	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
	Conducted search within 24 months of	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not reported	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not reported	Not reported

		Conroy (2011)	Fan (2015)	Fealy (2009)	Graf (2011)	Hastings (2005)	Hughes (2019)	Jay (2017)	Karam (2015)	Lowthian (2015)	Malik (2018)	McCuske (2006)	Parke (2011)	Pearce (2011)	Schnitker (2013)	Sinha (2011)
	completion of the review															
	<b>Yes/Partial Yes/No</b>	<b>Partial Yes</b>	<b>Partial yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Partial yes</b>	<b>Partial yes</b>	<b>Partial yes</b>	<b>Partial yes</b>	<b>Partial yes</b>	<b>Partial yes</b>	<b>Partial yes</b>	<b>Partial yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
5. Did the review authors perform study selection in duplicate? For yes, ONE of the following	At least two reviewers independently agreed on selection of eligible studies and achieved consensus on which studies to include	No	Not known	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
	Two reviewers selected a sample of eligible studies and achieved good agreement (at least 80 percent), with the remainder selected by one reviewer.	No	Not known				Not reporter	No			No	No			No	No

		Conroy (2011)	Fan (2015)	Fealy (2009)	Graf (2011)	Hastings (2005)	Hughes (2019)	Jay (2017)	Karam (2015)	Lowthian (2015)	Malik (2018)	McCuske (2006)	Parke (2011)	Pearce (2011)	Schnitker (2013)	Sinha (2011)
	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not known</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
6. Did the review authors perform data extraction in duplicate? For yes, ONE of the following	At least two reviewers achieved consensus on which data to extract from included studies	No	Yes	Yes	No		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
	Two reviewers extracted data from a sample of eligible studies and achieved good agreement (at least 80 percent), with the remainder extracted by one reviewer.	No						No			No	No			No	
	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not known</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>





		Conroy (2011)	Fan (2015)	Fealy (2009)	Graf (2011)	Hastings (2005)	Hughes (2019)	Jay (2017)	Karam (2015)	Lowthian (2015)	Malik (2018)	McCuske (2006)	Parke (2011)	Pearce (2011)	Schnitker (2013)	Sinha (2011)
	Described research designs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	yes	Yes	No	Yes
	Described population in detail	Yes	??	No	No	No	Yes	yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
	Described intervention in detail (including doses where relevant)	Yes	??	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	Described comparator in detail (including doses where relevant)	Yes	??	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	Described study's setting	Yes	??	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Timeframe for follow up	Yes	??	Yes	Yes	Sometimes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
	<b>Yes/Partial Yes/No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>??</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Partial yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Partial yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>

		Conroy (2011)	Fan (2015)	Fealy (2009)	Graf (2011)	Hastings (2005)	Hughes (2019)	Jay (2017)	Karam (2015)	Lowthian (2015)	Malik (2018)	McCuske (2006)	Parke (2011)	Pearce (2011)	Schnitker (2013)	Sinha (2011)
9. Did the review authors use a satisfactory technique for assessing the risk of bias (RoB) in individual studies that were included in the review?	Name	Van Tulder	EPHPP	Grimshaw checklist	None	Bespoke tool	Cochrane ROB	RoBANS	None	Cochrane Risk of Bias & Newcastle-Ottawa	Cochrane Risk of Bias & EBL	None	CASP	JBI	NHMRCLevels of evidence	Cochrane Risk of Bias & MOOSE
RCTs, For partial yes, criteria 1 and 2, for yes, criteria 1-4.	Unconcealed allocation	No	N/A	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	n/a	No	Yes	Yes	No	??	No	n/a	n/a
	lack of blinding of patients and assessors when assessing outcomes (unnecessary for objective outcomes such as all cause mortality)	No	N/A	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	n/a	No	Yes	Yes	No	??	No	n/a	n/a
	allocation sequence that was not truly random,	No	N/A	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	n/a	No	Yes	Yes	No	??	No	n/a	n/a

		Conroy (2011)	Fan (2015)	Fealy (2009)	Graf (2011)	Hastings (2005)	Hughes (2019)	Jay (2017)	Karam (2015)	Lowthian (2015)	Malik (2018)	McCuske (2006)	Parke (2011)	Pearce (2011)	Schnitker (2013)	Sinha (2011)
	selection of the reported result from among multiple measurements or analyses of a specified outcome	No	N/A	No	No	N/A	Yes	n/a	No	Yes	Yes	No	??	No	n/a	n/a
	<b>Yes/Partial Yes/No/Includes only NRSI</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No includes only NRSI</b>	<b>Partial yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
NRSI For partial yes, criteria 1 and 2, for yes, criteria 1-4.	from confounding	Not applicable	No	N/A	N/A	??	??	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	n/a	n/a
	from selection bias	Not applicable	No	N/A	N/A	??	??	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	n/a	n/a
	methods used to ascertain exposures and outcomes	Not applicable	No	N/A	N/A	N/A		Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	n/a	n/a



		Conroy (2011)	Fan (2015)	Fealy (2009)	Graf (2011)	Hastings (2005)	Hughes (2019)	Jay (2017)	Karam (2015)	Lowthian (2015)	Malik (2018)	McCuske (2006)	Parke (2011)	Pearce (2011)	Schnitker (2013)	Sinha (2011)
11. If meta-analysis was performed did the review authors use appropriate methods for statistical combination of results?																
RCTs, for yes, criteria 1-3	The authors justified combining the data in a meta-analysis	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	n/a	Yes	n/a	N/A	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AND they used an appropriate weighted technique to combine study results and adjusted for heterogeneity if present.	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	n/a		n/a	N/A	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AND investigated the causes of any heterogeneity	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	n/a	Yes	n/a	N/A	Yes	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>Yes/No/No meta-analysis conducted</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No meta analysis con</b>	<b>No meta analysis con</b>	<b>No meta analysis con</b>	<b>No meta analysis con</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No meta analysis con</b>	<b>No meta analysis con</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No meta analysis con</b>	<b>No meta analysis con</b>	<b>No meta analysis con</b>	<b>No meta analysis con</b>	<b>No meta analysis con</b>



		Conroy (2011)	Fan (2015)	Fealy (2009)	Graf (2011)	Hastings (2005)	Hughes (2019)	Jay (2017)	Karam (2015)	Lowthian (2015)	Malik (2018)	McCuske (2006)	Parke (2011)	Pearce (2011)	Schnitker (2013)	Sinha (2011)
	data when adjusted effect estimates were not available															
	AND they reported separate summary estimates for RCTs and NRSI separately when both were included in the review	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	<b>Yes/No/No meta-analysis conducted</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
12. If meta-analysis was performed, did the review authors assess	Included only low risk of bias RCTs	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	N/A	N/A	Yes	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A



		Conroy (2011)	Fan (2015)	Fealy (2009)	Graf (2011)	Hastings (2005)	Hughes (2019)	Jay (2017)	Karam (2015)	Lowthian (2015)	Malik (2018)	McCuske (2006)	Parke (2011)	Pearce (2011)	Schnitker (2013)	Sinha (2011)
the potential impact of RoB in individual studies on the results of the meta-analysis or other evidence synthesis? For yes, criteria 1 OR 2	OR, if the pooled estimate was based on RCTs and/or NRSI at variable RoB, the authors performed analyses to investigate possible impact of RoB on summary estimates of effect.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	n/a	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Yes	No meta analysis	No meta analysis	No meta analysis	No meta analysis	No	Yes	No	No meta analysis	No meta analysis	No meta analysis	No meta analysis	No meta analysis	No meta analysis	No meta analysis
13. Did the review authors account for RoB in individual studies when interpreting/discussing the results of the review? For yes, criteria 1 OR 2	included only low risk of bias RCTs	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	N/A	N/A	Yes	No	No	N/A	No	N/A	N/A
	OR, if RCTs with moderate or high RoB, or NRSI were included the	N/A	No	No	N/A	No	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A	No	No	N/A	No	N/A	N/A

		Conroy (2011)	Fan (2015)	Fealy (2009)	Graf (2011)	Hastings (2005)	Hughes (2019)	Jay (2017)	Karam (2015)	Lowthian (2015)	Malik (2018)	McCuske (2006)	Parke (2011)	Pearce (2011)	Schnitker (2013)	Sinha (2011)
	review provided a discussion of the likely impact of RoB on the results															
	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>		
14. Did the review authors provide a satisfactory explanation for, and discussion of, any heterogeneity observed in the results of the review? For yes, criteria 1 or 2	There was no significant heterogeneity in the results	No	No			No	Yes	No			Yes	No	No		No	N/A
	OR if heterogeneity was present the authors performed an investigation of sources of any heterogeneity in the results and discussed the impact of this on the results of the review	No	No			No		No	Yes	Yes		No	No	No		N/A
	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	

		Conroy (2011)	Fan (2015)	Fealy (2009)	Graf (2011)	Hastings (2005)	Hughes (2019)	Jay (2017)	Karam (2015)	Lowthian (2015)	Malik (2018)	McCuske (2006)	Parke (2011)	Pearce (2011)	Schnitker (2013)	Sinha (2011)
				anal ysis												
15. If they performed quantitative synthesis did the review authors carry out an adequate investigation of publication bias (small study bias) and discuss its likely impact on the results of the review?	Performed graphical or statistical tests for publication bias and discussed the likelihood and magnitude of impact of publication bias	Yes			No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No		No	No	No
	<b>Yes/No/No meta-analysis conducted</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No met a-analysis</b>	<b>No met a-analysis</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No met a-analysis</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No met a-analysis</b>	<b>No met a-analysis</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No met a-analysis</b>	<b>No met a-analysis</b>	<b>No met a-analysis</b>	<b>No met a-analysis</b>	<b>No met a-analysis</b>
16. Did the review authors report any potential sources of conflict of interest, including any funding they received for conducting the review? For yes, criteria 1 OR 2	The authors reported no competing interests OR	No	Yes	Yes	No		No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	The authors described their funding sources and how they managed potential	Yes		Yes	No		No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes		

	conflicts of interest		
	Yes/No	Yes	Conroy (2011)
		Yes	Fan (2015)
		Yes	Fealy (2009)
		No	Graf (2011)
	No information		Hastings (2005)
	No		Hughes (2019)
	Yes		Jay (2017)
	Yes		Karam (2015)
	Yes		Lowthian (2015)
	Yes		Malik (2018)
	Yes		McCuske (2006)
	Yes		Parke (2011)
	Yes		Pearce (2011)
	Yes		Schnitker (2013)
	Yes		Sinha (2011)

## Supplementary Material 2 – Medline Search Strategy

- 1 \*Emergency Service, Hospital/
- 2 \*Emergency Medical Services/
- 3 \*Emergency Medicine/
- 4 (emergency adj2 service\$.ti,ab.
- 5 emergency care.ti,ab.
- 6 urgent care.ti,ab.
- 7 emergency department\*.ti,ab.
- 8 (accident adj2 emergency).ti,ab.
- 9 casualty.ti,ab.
- 10 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9
- 11 \*"Aged, 80 and over"/ or \*Health Services for the Aged/
- 12 \*Frail Elderly/
- 13 \*Aged/ or \*Aging/ )
- 14 (ageing or elderly or geriatric or frail or aged or old or older).ti.
- 15 11 or 12 or 13 or 14
- 16 10 and 15
- 17 meta analysis.mp,pt. or review.pt. or search:.tw.
- 18 16 and 17
- 19 limit 18 to (english language and yr="2000 -Current")

## Supplementary Material 3 – Inclusion and reporting standards criteria

- Publication details - Published 2000 onwards. At least 50% of primary studies published 2000 onwards. Peer reviewed journal articles. Published in English.
- Population - People aged 65 or older and/or people with frailty as defined by a published frailty scale or clinical judgement.
- Interventions - Any care, model of care or management strategy. Interventions focused on patient care or changes to the wider ED, targeted at older people or to a wider ED attending population. Interventions either initiated or completed within the ED. Reviews focusing solely on methods for identification of frail or high risk older people were excluded. Where studies focusing on identification were included as part of a larger review, the review was included but data relating to these identification studies was excluded.
- Outcomes - Any patient, health service or staff outcome.
- Study type - Evidence reviews, systematic reviews and meta-analyses including RCTs, observational studies, case-controlled or other quasi-experimental studies. Qualitative reviews and mixed method reviews.
- Other – comparators could be usual care, no intervention or other interventions. We did not include or exclude studies based on length of follow up.
- Reporting standards
  - Inclusion and exclusion criteria developed a priori and included studies screened against these criteria.
  - Systematic search, described in sufficient detail to identify studies that would have met the inclusion criteria.
  - Quality assessment of individual studies included in the review, using a named tool – to assess risk of bias or reporting standards.
  - List of included studies, linked to findings of the review and/or summary statements produced.

