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EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Project ID: **21166**

Project title: **An exploration of factors that influence the interface between living systematic reviews and guidelines**

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	Professor Elie Akl	American University of Beirut, Lebanon
	Dr Joshua Vogel	Burnet Institute, Australia
	Dr Stefania Mondello	Department of Biomedical and Dental Sciences and Morphofunctional Imaging, University of Messina, Italy

You are invited to take part in this study. Please read this Explanatory Statement in full before deciding whether or not to participate in this research. If you would like further information regarding any aspect of this project, you are encouraged to contact the research team via the phone number or email address listed above.

What does the research involve?

The aim of this study is to explore perceptions and experiences of barriers and enablers associated with linking living systematic reviews and guidelines.

Participating in this study involves taking part in either a focus group discussion (30 to 45 minutes duration) or an individual interview (20 to 30 minutes duration). Focus groups and interviews will be conducted either face-to-face (in-person) or via voice over internet protocol (VOIP) software (e.g. Zoom, Skype). With your permission, the focus group or interview discussion may be audio-recorded. Before the focus group or interview, we will also ask you to complete a brief Participant Characteristics Form about your role in systematic reviews or guidelines.

If you agree to take part, a member of the research team will contact you to schedule a focus group or interview time that is convenient to you.

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Why were you chosen for this research?

You have been chosen to participate in this research because of your experience or interest in:

- conducting, publishing or funding living systematic reviews
  or
- developing, publishing or funding guidelines.

Your contact details were either known to the investigators or in publicly available sources.

Consenting to participate in the project and withdrawing from the research

By completing and returning the Consent Form to the research team, you agree to participate in the research. You are welcome to cease participating at any stage before the results are analysed, after which it will not be possible to remove your data.

Possible benefits and risks to participants

There are no immediate benefits of the research for participants. We do not foresee any risks of discomfort, harm or side-effects associated with participation in the research.

Confidentiality

Focus group and interview audio-recordings may be transcribed by an external transcription service. When this occurs, files will be transferred using secure file transfer protocols. Most data from transcripts of the focus groups and interviews will be reported as themes that summarise the data. Where direct quotes from participants are used to illustrate the themes, these will be de-identified. Data about participants' characteristics will be reported at a group level.

Storage of data

All study data will be stored on a secure Monash University server, only accessible to members of the research team. Paper-based information will be scanned and stored electronically, and the paper copies destroyed. All study data will be destroyed five years after publication of the results.

Results

A summary of findings will be emailed to participants; distributed to members of the Living Evidence Network; and made available on the Cochrane website. A manuscript describing the study findings will be prepared and submitted to an appropriate scientific journal. The results may be presented at national or international conferences and other scientific meetings.

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Complaints

Should you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of the project, you are welcome to contact the Executive Officer, Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC):

Executive Officer
Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)
Room 111, Chancellery Building D,
26 Sports Walk, Clayton Campus
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Thank you,

Dr Joanne Brooker