

JBI ADELAIDE GRADE CENTRE

2023 Annual Report

MESSAGE FROM THE CENTRE DIRECTOR

As the Director of the JBI Adelaide GRADE Centre, I am delighted to present our 2023 Annual Report. This year has been a testament to our commitment to promoting, disseminating, and supporting the use of the GRADE approach both in Australia and globally. Our work has focused on fostering a robust community of members dedicated to advancing the GRADE methodology for systematic reviews and guideline development. Through our expert consultancy services, research contracts, workshops, and tailored training sessions, we have made significant strides in connecting our region with the global GRADE community. These efforts have enhanced collaboration and promoted the widespread adoption of GRADE methods.

MISSION

Our mission is to train, promote, disseminate, and implement the GRADE approach within the systematic review and guideline development community in Australia and New Zealand, and across the global JBI Collaboration.

OVERARCHING AIMS

1. Training and Promotion within Australia:

- We have successfully conducted numerous workshops and training sessions throughout Australia, reaching out to guideline developers and systematic reviewers.
- Our promotional efforts have included webinars, conference presentation, and publications aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of GRADE methods.

2. Global Training and Promotion:

 Our Centre has actively participated in the global JBI Collaboration, conducting training sessions and workshops to people internationally.

3. Central Hub for GRADE Expertise:

 As a central hub for GRADE expertise in Australia and New Zealand, we have built capacity through mentorship programs and membership of the centre, providing ongoing support to emerging leaders in the field.
 We have collaborated with regional and international partners has been strengthened, enhancing the overall impact of our work.

4. Contributing to GRADE Development:

 Our active participation in GRADE project groups has enabled us to contribute to the ongoing development and refinement of GRADE methods. Our staff attended three in-person meetings for GRADE in 2023 in Glasgow, Split and London. We have published research articles and presented at international conferences, sharing our insights and advancements in GRADE methodology.

In conclusion, 2023 has been a year of growth and achievement for the JBI Adelaide GRADE Centre. Our dedication to promoting, disseminating, and supporting the use of the GRADE approach remains unwavering. We look forward to continuing our mission and making even greater strides in the coming years. I would like to extend my gratitude to our dedicated team, members, partners, and the global GRADE community for their unwavering support and collaboration. Together, we are making a significant impact in the field of systematic reviews and guideline development.

Thank you.



Zachary Munn *Director, JBI Adelaide GRADE Centre*

CONTENTS

- 3 MESSAGE FROM THE CENTRE DIRECTOR
- 5 INTRODUCTION
- 6 CENTRE LEADERSHIP AND STAFF
 - **6 PROF ZACHARY MUNN**
 - 6 ASSOC PROF EDOARDO AROMATARIS
 - 6 DR TIM BARKER
- 7 USING GRADE IN GUIDELINES, SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS
 - 7 GUIDELINES
 - 7 SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS
 - 7 THE IMPACT OF USING CANNABIS DURING PREGNANCY ON THE INFANT AND THE MOTHER
 - 8 CONTEXTUAL FACTORS
 ASSOCIATED AND MALARIA
 PREVENTION CONSIDERATIONS
- 9 THE EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS TAXONOMY INITIATIVE (ESTI)
- 10 TEACHING AND EDUCATION REPORT
 - 10 TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS
 - 11 INGUIDE
- 12 WHO GUIDELINE CONTEXTUALIZATION MEETING IN COPENHAGEN
- 15 GRADE GIN ANZ WEBINAR
- 15 NECA KOREA
- 16 METHODOLOGICAL AND SCHOLARLY PROJECT WORK
- 17 SELECTED TEAM PUBLICATIONS FROM 2023
- 21 JBI ADELAIDE GRADE CENTRE MEMBERS
- 22 PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING THE USE OF GRADE WITHIN AUSTRALIA AND THE JBC
 - 22 AUSTRALIAN GRADE NEWSLETTER
 - 22 SOCIAL MEDIA

INTRODUCTION

The JBI Adelaide GRADE Centre was the first GRADE Centre in Australia and New Zealand. Established in November 2016, it has acted as a central hub of GRADE-related research and teaching in the region that continues to inspire and promote good evidence till this day. It was also the first GRADE Centre to be established within the JBI Collaboration, and as such supports and promotes the use of GRADE amongst this group. The centre offers training in GRADE methods, supports systematic review and guideline development using GRADE, and the methodological review of guidelines following GRADE methods. It further contributes to the scientific development of GRADE methods, focusing on promoting the use of GRADE for systematic reviews and guideline development. For more information, visit https://jbi.global/grade.

This report outlines the activities of the centre during its seventh full year of operation in 2023.





GRADE Centre members pictured with co-chair of the GRADE Working Group Professor Holger Schünemann at the GRADE Working Group Meeting in London, September 2023.

Left to right: Assoc Prof Ed Aromataris, Prof Holger Schünemann, Dr Kylie Porritt, Dr Cindy Stern, Dr Danielle Pollock, Dr Tim Barker, Dr Jennifer Stone, Prof Zachary Munn, Prof Heather Loveday



CENTRE LEADERSHIP AND STAFF

The JBI Adelaide GRADE Centre is managed by centre Director Professor Zachary Munn, and co-deputy directors Assoc Prof Edoardo Aromataris and Dr Timothy Barker.

PROF ZACHARY MUNN

Prof Munn is a systematic review, evidence implementation and guideline development methodologist with an extensive history of methodology and guideline work, advocating for evidence-based healthcare in policy and practice. As well as leading the JBI Adelaide GRADE Centre, he directs Health Evidence Synthesis, Recommendations and Impact (HESRI) in the School of Public Health at the University of Adelaide, is Past Chair of the Guidelines International Network (GIN) and a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Investigator.



ASSOC PROF EDOARDO AROMATARIS

Assoc Prof Aromataris is the Director of Synthesis Science at JBI, lead of the contract and consultant research program for JBI in the School of Public Health at The University of Adelaide, as well as the founding Editor-in-Chief of the journal JBI Evidence Synthesis. He has significant experience in systematic reviews, methodology research, and health translation.



DR TIMOTHY BARKER

Dr Barker is a research methodologist, clinical epidemiologist and animal welfare researcher with significant experience in systematic review and clinical guideline conduct and development. He was previously the lead researcher of the JBI Adelaide GRADE Centre, and currently works as a research fellow within Health Evidence Synthesis, Recommendations and Impact (HESRI).





USING GRADE IN GUIDELINES AND SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS

GRADE methods are actively applied in guidelines and systematic reviews by GRADE Centre members. Selected highlights from 2023 include projects for various guideline groups, including the Society of Obstetric Medicine of Australia and New Zealand, as well as collaborations developing guidelines for foetal alcohol spectrum disorder, diabetes, and whiplash, amongst others.

GUIDELINES

We continue to consult as methodologists and advisors for several guideline development projects. Below is a list of selected projects we are currently supporting with guideline development:

- Australian Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation Guidelines
- Australian Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Diagnostic Criteria Guidelines
- Society of Obstetric Medicine of Australia and New Zealand Hypertension in Pregnancy Guidelines (SOMANZ)
- Australian Recommendations for Older Adults' Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour During Hospitalisation for an Acute Medical Illness
- Australian Whiplash Guidelines
- BRain Injury: Developing Guidelines for physical activitiES (BRIDGES)
- Australian Physical Activity Guidelines for Adults
- Canadian Guidelines on Post-COVID-19 Conditions
- Australian ECMO Guideline Development Group
- National Guidelines for Assessment and Diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- Management of psychosocial difficulties following moderate-to-severe Traumatic Brain Injury

We are also involved in the Canadian Institutes for Health Research–funded project: COVID-19 Living Evidence and Recommendations (co-investigator, Zachary Munn).

SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS

The impact of using cannabis during pregnancy on the infant and the mother

This year we conducted a rapid evidence check review brokered by the Sax Institute for NSW Health. This review aimed to provide a comprehensive overview of the impact of prenatal cannabis exposure on fetal growth, neonatal, later life, and maternal outcomes. An overview of systematic reviews, an evidence and gap map, targeted updates of previous reviews, and de novo evidence synthesis was conducted. The certainty in the evidence was assessed using GRADE and we created GRADE evidence profiles using GRADEpro GDT for each comparison for prognostic factors. This review found cannabis to be potentially harmful for both pregnant women and their offspring. The findings from this review will help inform expectant mothers, healthcare providers, and policymakers make informed decisions regarding cannabis intake during pregnancy.

Contextual factors associated and malaria prevention considerations

In 2023 we continued our collaboration with the Global Malaria Programme of the World Health Organization by partnering to conduct two scoping reviews and evidence and gap maps (EGMs). These scoping reviews and EGMs were interested in discovering and mapping the existing knowledge regarding the contextual factors that are important for consideration as part of the GRADE Evidence to Decision framework (EtDf) and 1) vector control interventions to prevent malaria, and 2) G6PD diagnostic testing in malaria treatment. The aim of this scoping review was to provide relevant WHO guideline development groups information regarding specific vector-control interventions/G6PD diagnostic tests, to better inform their decision-making processes regarding these important contextual factors.





The ESTI workshop in London.

THE EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS TAXONOMY INITIATIVE (ESTI)

Professor Zachary Munn was awarded a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Investigator Grant of \$645,205 over five years. This work begun in 2021, in line with our focus on scholarly work and development in evidence-based healthcare. This project is a collaborative initiative with key stakeholders across many scientific fields to advance the science of evidence synthesis through establishing an online, interactive, and scalable evidence synthesis taxonomy in the form of an online wiki.

A scoping review to determine the current approaches, methodologies and methods in the field of evidence synthesis was a significant portion of the work conducted in 2023, that is still underway. Prior to this, two important publications have arisen from this work that relate to the needs for rigorous evidence synthesis and the use of GRADE: The Pandora's Box of Evidence Synthesis and The Dark side of Rapid Reviews. A significant amount of further work and meta-research is planned for this initiative, including surveys, validation studies and Delphi approaches.



TEACHING AND EDUCATION REPORT

The JBI Adelaide GRADE Centre deliver high quality training and workshops using materials developed by centre staff. These teaching and training activities take place locally in Australia and New Zealand, and across the JBI Collaboration to promote the use of GRADE. These materials are regularly reviewed and updated by centre members.

A brief summary of our training activities during 2023, including the number of participants registered, is included below.

TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

- 2 external one-day workshops by remote attendance (17 participants total)
- 1 internal workshop for JBI/The University of Adelaide students, Adelaide, SA, Australia (13 participants)
- Pre-conference workshop before the HTAi Annual Conference in Adelaide, Australia.
- GRADE workshop at Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, Scotland.



Attendees at the GRADE workshop for JBI HDR students in Adelaide

INGUIDE

INGUIDE is a comprehensive, evidence-based training program for guideline recommendation and development. It is the product of a joint partnership between leaders in the field of guideline development: Guidelines International Network (GIN), a global network of guideline-producing organisations and guideline participants, and world-renowned experts in guideline research, development and implementation at McMaster University's Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence, and Impact.

JBI Adelaide GRADE Centre staff, Dr Timothy Barker and Dr Jennifer Stone, have completed up to level 3 of the INGUIDE training program, and Prof Zachary Munn was involved in recording some for the narration for the course.



Dr Barker presenting at the GRADE workshop for JBI HDR students in Adelaide



WHO GUIDELINE CONTEXTUALIZATION MEETING IN COPENHAGEN

Prof Munn was invited to present at the World Health Organization Guideline Contextualization meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark, In August 2023. Prof Munn said the following about the event: "It was a true privilege to speak at the WHO Regional Office for Europe recently to discuss how we can strengthen capacity to adopt and adapt evidencebased guidelines across different countries. It was a great opportunity to discuss challenges and solutions, to network, share information and begin planning for the future. It was also an honour to meet with and present alongside inspirational colleagues Marge Reinap, Holger Schünemann, Elie Akl, Miloslav Klugar, Kaja-Triin Laisaar, Kidist Kebede, Tamara Lotfi, Natasha Azzopardi Muscat, Rebekah Thomas and Yasaman Vali."

This event included the launch of the 'Strengthening countries' capacities to adopt and adapt evidence-based guidelines: a handbook for guideline contextualization.' For more information: https://bit.ly/3KU09T8. In this presentation, Prof Munn outlined the importance of using trustworthy methods in guideline development and the use of GRADE.





Prof Munn was an invited speaker for the Evidence-based Nursing Online Symposium on Dec 9 2024 with the theme of "Facilitating evidence-informed decision making in nursing practice". This was hosted by the JBIC Fudan EBN Centre and attended by over 3000 participants across China.



OTHER PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

Aberdeen, Scotland

Professor Munn was the keynote speaker at the Robert Gordon University Health & Wellbeing Theme event on evidence synthesis in September 2023. Following this, Prof Munn gave a 2-day workshop on GRADE methods to members of JBIC in the United Kingdom.

Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network

Dr Barker was an invited speaker for the above conference held in Bangkok, Thailand. The theme of this conference was Malaria Elimination: Emerging Challenges and Opportunities and Dr Barker was invited to present on the work that he led in 2022, regarding dual-active ingredient insecticide treated nets for the prevention of malaria.

Australian Epidemiological Association Webinar

Professor Munn presented a webinar on GRADE methods to the Australian Epidemiological Association. This was titled 'Why GRADE? Establishing certainty in the evidence from systematic reviews to inform trustworthy guidelines', presented by Professor Zachary Munn and available to all AEA members.

Discipline of General Practice, University of Adelaide

Prof Munn was invited to present to the Discipline of General Practice at the University of Adelaide. His presentation provided an overview of guideline development along with using GRADE in guidelines.

International Conference on Cooperation in Traditional Medicines

Prof Munn was an invited speaker International Conference on Cooperation in Traditional Medicines, where he presented on 'Challenges and Solutions in Guideline Development and the Guidelines International Network' to 600 participants.

National Healthcare Forum: Joint Conference of Taiwan Evidence-Based Healthcare Organizations.

Prof Munn was an invited speaker for the above conference held in Kaohsiung Veterans General Hospital (KSVGH). This event was a Taiwan Evidence-based Medicine Association and Taiwan Evidence-based Nursing Association coalition annual meeting. The theme of the meeting was Evidence-based medicine, past, present, and future.

University of South Australia

Professor Munn was invited to present to the Clinical and Health Sciences Academic Unit (CHS) at UniSA. The title of the presentation was 'The past and present of guideline development: from expert opinion to trustworthy recommendations.'





GRADE GIN ANZ WEBINAR

An informative webinar on using GRADE in guidelines to improve their reliability and quality was presented by Prof Munn and Dr Sue Brennan. GRADE is widely used in professional societies such as WHO, NICE, CDC, AHRQ, JBI, amongst many others. The large-scale impact of GRADE was discussed, as well as how GRADE is utilised in the guideline development process to develop trustworthy recommendations (called the GRADE Evidence to Decision (EtD) process). This webinar is available on YouTube.





GRADE in Guidelines

Dr Sue Brennan Professor Zachary Munn

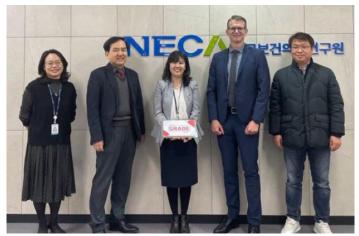




Prof Munn presenting a webinar for GIN ANZ

NECA KOREA

Prof Munn travelled to Seoul, Korea, to provide workshops about GRADE. He visited the National Evidence-based Healthcare Collaborating Agency GRADE Centre and provided an invited presentation on guideline development to NECA staff.



Prof Munn at NECA, Korea, where he presented a GRADE workshop.





METHODOLOGICAL AND SCHOLARALY PROJECT WORK

The JBI Adelaide GRADE Centre actively engages in various methodological and scholarly endeavours pertaining to GRADE. This involves participation in methodological development within GRADE project groups, as well as the implementation and utilisation of GRADE within other JBI-related projects. Our members are deeply involved in projects focusing on the refinement of GRADE methods, the assessment of GRADE's effectiveness, experiences with its application, and other GRADE-related scholarly works. Additionally, our members generate their own projects for scholarly consideration, which are then discussed within the GRADE Centre and, where appropriate, with the broader GRADE Working Group.



The staff of the JBI Adelaide GRADE Centre contribute to, and are integral members of, various GRADE working groups including Overviews, CERQual, Training and Credentialing, Prognosis, Stakeholders, Wording of Recommendations, Rapid Guidelines, Implementation, Technology, Evidence to Decisions, Public Health, GRADE NRS, and GRADE Multiple Comparisons.

Over the past year, our team has significantly expanded its involvement in research and methodological advancements. Noteworthy areas of expertise within our team include evidence synthesis, guideline development methodologies, GRADE methodology, education in Evidence-Based Health Care (EBHC), evidence implementation strategies, and combating predatory publishing practices.

For a comprehensive list of scholarly publications and research work completed by our team, please refer to page 12.



SELECTED TEAM PUBLICATIONS FROM 2023

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C Andrews, A Pade, V Flenady, J Moore, K Tindal, B Farrant, S Stewart ... D Pollock. Improving the capacity of researchers and bereaved parents to co-design and translate stillbirth research together. Women and Birth.

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H Khalil, Z Munn. Guidance on conducting methodological studiesan overview. Current Opinion in Epidemiology and Public Health 2

I Semendric, D Pollock, OJ Haller, RP George, LE Collins-Praino, et al. "Chemobrain" in childhood cancer survivors—the impact on social, academic, and daily living skills: a qualitative systematic review. Supportive Care in Cancer 31 (9), 532.

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J Kaur, L Thomas, A Bhat, TH Barker. Effectiveness of perioperative anticoagulation interruption without heparin bridging on thromboembolic events in patients with atrial fibrillation undergoing elective invasive procedures: a systematic review protocol. JBI Evidence Synthesis, 10.11124

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JC Stone, K Glass, M Ritskes-Hoitinga, Z Munn, P Tugwell, SAR Doi. Methodological quality assessment should move beyond design specificity. JBI Evidence Synthesis 21 (3), 507-519.

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N Hayes, K Bagley, N Hewlett, EJ Elliott, CF Pestell, MJ Gullo, Z Munn, et al. Lived experiences of the diagnostic assessment process for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder: A systematic review of qualitative evidence. Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research.

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P Sekhar, V Thiruvenkatarajan, V Sekhar, R van Wijk, T Barker. Effectiveness of high-flow nasal cannula oxygen in apneic oxygenation during intubation in high-risk surgical patients: a systematic review protocol. JBI Evidence Synthesis 21 (9), 1896-1902.

P Tugwell, V Welch, O Magwood, A Todhunter-Brown, EA Akl ... Z Munn ... et al. Protocol for the development of guidance for collaborator and partner engagement in health care evidence syntheses. Systematic Reviews 12 (1), 134.

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R Murray, M Sharp, A Razidan, B Hibbitts, M Ryan, K Mahtani, R Lynch ... Z Munn. Investigating how the GRADE Evidence to Decision (EtD) framework is used in Clinical Guidelines: a scoping review protocol. HRB Open Research 6, 50.

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T Grammatopoulos, JWS Hunter, Z Munn, JC Stone, TH Barker. Reporting quality and risk of bias in JBI systematic reviews evaluating the effectiveness of interventions: a methodological review protocol. JBI Evidence Synthesis 21 (3), 584-591.

TH Barker, D Pollock, JC Stone, M Klugar, AM Scott, C Stern, R Wiechula ... E Aromataris ... Z Munn. How should we handle predatory journals in evidence synthesis? A descriptive surveybased cross-sectional study of evidence synthesis experts. Research Synthesis Methods 14 (3), 370-381.

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Z Munn, D Pollock, C Price, E Aromataris, C Stern, JC Stone, TH Barker, et al. Investigating different typologies for the synthesis of evidence: A scoping review protocol. JBI Evidence Synthesis 21 (3), 592-600.

Z Munn, D Pollock, TH Barker, J Stone, C Stern, E Aromataris, A Pearson, et al. The Dark Side of Rapid Reviews: A Retreat From Systematic Approaches and the Need for Clear Expectations and Reporting. Annals of Internal Medicine 176 (2), 266-267.

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JBI ADELAIDE GRADE CENTRE MEMBERS

- Prof Zachary Munn, Centre Director
- Assoc Prof Edoardo Aromataris, Centre Co-deputy Director
- Dr Timothy Barker, Centre Co-deputy Director
- Dr Adel Aref
- Dr Patraporn Bhataraskoon
- Dr Nagendra Dudi-Venkata
- Ms Victoria Freeman
- Dr Judith Gomersall
- Dr Sasja Jul Hakonsen
- Ms Sabira Hasanoff
- Dr Rasika Jayasekara
- Dr Denny John
- Prof Zoe Jordan
- Dr Hanan Khalil
- Adj Assoc Prof Dr Miloslav Klugar
- Adj Assoc Prof Dr Jiktra Klugarová
- Dr Kate Kynoch
- Mrs Alexa McArthur
- · Assoc Prof Motohide Miyahara
- Adj Prof Kim Moretti
- Dr Clifford Mwita
- Ms Bronwyn Overall
- Mr Robin Pap
- Dr Micah Peters
- Dr Danielle Pollock
- Dr Kylie Porritt
- Dr Mary-Anne Ramis
- Dr Emily Reeve
- Assoc Prof Dru Riddle
- Ms Melanie Rosella
- Dr Wendell Santos
- Dr Praba Sekhar
- Dr Matthew Stephenson
- Dr Cindy Stern
- Dr Jennifer Stone
- Dr Annalise Synnot
- Ms Chelsea Valenzuela
- Dr Nilakshi Waidyatillake
- Dr Ashley Whitehorn
- Dr Nahal Habibi
- Ms Grace McBride
- Dr Mafalda Dias
- Dr Raju Kanukula
- Dr Anneka Bowman





PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING THE USE OF **GRADE WITHIN AUSTRALIA AND THE JBC**

The JBI Adelaide GRADE Centre aims to promote and support the use of GRADE throughout Australia, New Zealand and the JBI Collaboration. Since its launch, the centre has received numerous inquiries regarding GRADE work. Meetings and teleconferences have been held with various guideline developers and professional societies to introduce them to GRADE and to highlight the benefits of this approach. We regularly receive emails asking for help or clarification, which we respond to and, when needed, have meetings with various groups to provide direction.

Australian GRADE Newsletter

We have established a newsletter for our GRADE Centre in collaboration with the Melbourne GRADE Centre. This work has been led by Sabira Hasanoff, Dr Danielle Pollock and Dr Timothy Barker, JBI Adelaide GRADE Centre members. Subscribe



The Australian **GRADE** Newsletter: Sign up here

SOCIAL MEDIA

The number of GRADE centre members over the last year has risen, which has increased our X follower count to 965 followers (@ JBI GRADE). We were also featured in reels on JBI social media accounts.



X profile of JBI Adelaide GRADE Centre.







FOR FURTHER ENQUIRIES

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twitter.com/JBI_GRADE

GRADE Australia Newsletter

youtube.com/JBIEBHC

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