

# Systematic Reviews in Neurosurgery - The Ongoing Quest for Quality

## *Nörocerrahide Sistemik Derlemeler - Kalite için Devam Eden Uğraşı*

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### INTRODUCTION

Sir,

Systematic Reviews (SR) provide a rapid overview of evidence on a specific topic. They identify all relevant studies, assess their quality, and summarize their results based on scientific methodology (3).

During the last two decades many SR have been written in all medical fields including Neurosurgery (2). However, their quality greatly varies mainly due to limited literature analysis, data manipulation and meta-analysis (1,2,3).

To address these issues, the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies (USA) has recently released a consensus report entitled "Finding What Works in Health Care: Standards for Systematic Reviews" (1). Herein researchers may retrieve standards for conducting SR collected by the most famous SR-producing organizations such as the Cochrane Collaboration, and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

These rigorous standards are implemented for rendering SR objective and scientifically sound. They are incorporated not only in picking out the appropriate papers for review and amalgamating the results, but also in accumulation of high-quality evidence and preparation of the actual review study (1).

So, what's so interesting to keep a Neurosurgeon's attention? Well, if Neurosurgery is considered as solely a Discipline of applying previously assimilated knowledge, there is really nothing much in it. Per contra, if Neurosurgery is seen as a Specialty deeply devoted to pursuing excellence both in academic and clinical arena, then sticking to recently published standards is of utmost importance for conducting

meaningful and methodologically accurate research (3). This would be of benefit to all stakeholders of health care; patients, physicians, hospitals, and insurance funds.

The quality quest is an ever-lasting dynamic process. Neurosurgery needs to establish a collaborative methodologic research infrastructure with the active involvement of European and American organizations working in SR production (1). To this end, experienced and well-trained researchers along with young enthusiastic fellows are believed to achieve a more productive team. After all, it's teamwork that makes excellence a reality.

Sincerely,

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