11.2 Development of a scoping review protocol

As with all well conducted systematic reviews, an *a priori* protocol must be developed before undertaking the scoping review. A scoping review protocol is important as it pre-defines the objectives, methods and reporting of the review and allows for transparency of process. The protocol should detail the criteria that the reviewers intend to use to include and exclude studies and to identify what data is relevant, and how the data will be extracted and presented. The protocol provides the plan for the scoping review and is important in limiting the occurrence of reporting bias. Any deviations of the scoping review report from the protocol should be clearly highlighted and explained in the scoping review report.

Prospective scoping reviewers should be aware that an extension of the PRISMA statement called the PRISMA-ScR is currently under development and registered with the Enhancing the Quality and Transparency Of health Research (EQUATOR) Network (Tricco et al., 2015). Led by Tricco, Strauss and Moher, this reporting checklist is being developed with the involvement of international experts on scoping review methodology and evidence synthesis, including authors of the JBI methodological guidance described in this chapter. The JBI approach to conducting and reporting scoping reviews described here and in Peters et al. (2015) will be congruent with the PRISMA-ScR checklist which will assist in standardizing the conduct and reporting of scoping reviews. Reviewers should also be aware that PROSPERO (the international prospective register of systematic reviews administered by the University of York’s Centre for Reviews and Dissemination) states that scoping reviews (and literature reviews) are currently ineligible for registration in the database (Centre for Reviews and Dissemination, n. d. ‘inclusion criteria’, para. 5).