

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form (<http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/resources/checklist.pdf>) and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

ARTICLE DETAILS

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| TITLE (PROVISIONAL) | Barriers to HIV care among Francophone African Caribbean and Black immigrant people living with HIV in Canada: a protocol for a scoping systematic review |
| AUTHORS | Djadeu, Pascal; Nguemo, Joseph; Mukandoli, Chantal; Odhiambo, Apondi; Lightfoot, David; Mbuagbaw, Lawrence; Nelson, LaRon |

VERSION 1 – REVIEW

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| REVIEWER | Reviewer name: Qiang Xia Institution and Country: New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, New York, NY, USA Competing interests: None declared. |
| REVIEW RETURNED | 08-Nov-2018 |

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| GENERAL COMMENTS | <p>This is a protocol for a scoping review to assess barriers to HIV care among Francophone African Caribbean and Black immigrant people living with HIV in Canada. Some minor comments are given below to improve the quality of the review.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The date range of the review is inconsistent in the protocol. In the abstract, it says, “between 1986 and 2018,” and in the text, it says, “from 1990 (date that the French Language Service Act was enacted in Ontario) to 2018.”2. More details are needed for outcome measures in the Methods and Analyses section. You may use the sentence in Introduction, “HIV care continuum or cascade includes the following: HIV diagnosis, linkage and retention to care, receipt of antiretroviral therapy (ART) and achievement of viral suppression.” |
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| REVIEWER | Reviewer name: Saul Cobbing Institution and Country: University of KwaZulu-Natal Competing interests: declared |
| REVIEW RETURNED | 22-Nov-2018 |

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| GENERAL COMMENTS | <p>Please see comments and minor edits in attached doc. My main concern is that you use Ontario and Canada interchangeably or sometimes together. Rather focus on Francophone people living in Canada as a whole, not specifically in Ontario - indeed, this is an inclusion criteria for your search. I would also like to see a separate section on the potential significance of your study.</p> <p>Otherwise, this looks like an important and interesting study. Well done.</p> <p>The reviewer also provided a marked copy with additional comments. Please contact the publisher for full details.</p> |
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| REVIEWER | Reviewer name: Sanaz Nosrat, PhD Institution and Country: Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY, USA Competing interests: None declared |
| REVIEW RETURNED | 27-Nov-2018 |

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| GENERAL COMMENTS | <p>This manuscript is the protocol for a scoping review on barriers to HIV care among Francophone African Caribbean and Black immigrant people living with HIV in Canada. There are a few concerns in the manuscript that needs further elaboration.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The review will specifically examine PLWH in Ontario, however it's not clear why Ontario is considered more important than other regions with high prevalence of HIV such as British Columbia, Atlantic Provinces etc...? Please elaborate more on the reason behind this selection. 2. In the objective section, the geographical location of the primary outcome is not clear. 3. In the inclusion criteria, please clarify exactly what provinces will be included or excluded. 4. For the secondary outcome, elaborate on the outcomes instead of just bullet points. It is also important that the rationale for measuring each of these outcomes are provided in more details in the introduction section. 5. There is a mismatch of the search dates in the abstract and the manuscript. |
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VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Reviewer 1

Comments: The date range of the review is inconsistent in the protocol. In the abstract, it says, "between 1986 and 2018," and in the text, it says, "from 1990 (date that the French Language Service Act was enacted in Ontario) to 2018."

Response: The publications between 1990 and 2018 will now be used for this scoping review. See page 3, line 17.

Comments: More details are needed for outcome measures in the Methods and Analyses section. You may use the sentence in Introduction, "HIV care continuum or cascade includes the following: HIV diagnosis, linkage and retention to care, receipt of antiretroviral therapy (ART) and achievement of viral suppression."

Response: We have now provided more details for the outcome measures in the Method and Analyses section. See page 5, lines 6-8 and lines 24-26.

Reviewer 2

Please see comments and minor edits in attached doc.

- The word "About" has been changed with "an estimated". See page 4, line 25
- The ABC acronym has now been used See page 4, line 26.
- We have now used "Canada" instead of "Ontario and Canada". See page 4, line 34, 35, 37 and page 5, line 19, 24 and 36 as well as page 7, line 14.

- The word "systematic" is now removed from the method and analyses section. See page 5, line 2.
- In the sub section Data collection and analyses we have now replaced "we'll" by "we will", page 6, line 12.
- In the sub-section Assessment of methodological quality of included studies we have now replaced "review" by "reviews", page 6, line 43
- In the reference section, 'Canada Census 2016' has been updated and any duplicate removed. See page 11, line 7.

Comments: My main concern is that you use Ontario and Canada interchangeably or sometimes together. Rather focus on Francophone people living in Canada as a whole, not specifically in Ontario - indeed, this is an inclusion criteria for your search.

Response: We have now revised the manuscript and the study is now focused on Francophone's people in Canada as a whole.

Comments: I would also like to see a separate section on the potential significance of your study.

Response: There is now a section for the potential significance of the study. See page 2, lines 5-11.

Comments: Otherwise, this looks like an important and interesting study. Well done.

Response: Thank you.

Reviewer 3

This manuscript is the protocol for a scoping review on barriers to HIV care among Francophone African Caribbean and Black immigrant people living with HIV in Canada. There are a few concerns in the manuscript that needs further elaboration.

1. The review will specifically examine PLWH in Ontario, however it's not clear why Ontario is considered more important than other regions with high prevalence of HIV such as British Columbia, Atlantic Provinces etc...? Please elaborate more on the reason behind this selection.

Response: Although Ontario was primarily our focus because 52% of Canada ACB live in the province of Ontario, we have now revised the manuscript to focus on Canada as a whole.

2. In the objective section, the geographical location of the primary outcome is not clear.

Response: The geographical location in the objectives section is now clarified. See page 4, line 34-37.

3. In the inclusion criteria, please clarify exactly what provinces will be included or excluded. We have now clarified that all Canadian provinces will be included in the study except the province of Quebec. See page 5, line 19 and 20.

4.

4.1 For the secondary outcome, elaborate on the outcomes instead of just bullet points.

Response: We have now elaborated more on the secondary outcomes of the study. See page 5, line 28-32.

4.2 It is also important that the rationale for measuring each of these outcomes are provided in more details in the introduction section.

Response: We have now provided in the introduction section and in more details the rationale for measuring each of these outcomes. See page 4, line 29-31.

5. There is a mismatch of the search dates in the abstract and the manuscript. The search date has now been harmonized between the abstract and the manuscript. See page 3 line 17.

VERSION 2 – REVIEW

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| REVIEWER | Reviewer name: Saul Cobbing Institution and Country: University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa Competing interests: None declared |
| REVIEW RETURNED | 13-Dec-2018 |

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| GENERAL COMMENTS | My previous queries have been satisfactorily attended to. |
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