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**The benefits of routine data collection in community health work – Findings from a Systematic Review**

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**Objectives/aims**

To inform the development of guidelines on health policy and system support to optimise community based health worker programmes, WHO commissioned multiple systematic reviews to synthesise current best evidence on requirements for pre-service training and ideal employment conditions for community health workers (CHWs). This included their payment, promotion, engagement, and case load. One of these systematic reviews examined whether it is of benefit if CHWs collect, collate, and use health data as part of their work. The findings from this review will be presented and implications for practice discussed.

**Methods**

The systematic review method was applied. Literature was searched and screened in May/June 2017. Studies' risk of bias was assessed using the Cochrane Risk of Bias tool for randomised controlled trials and quasi-experimental studies. For case-control, cohort and cross-sectional studies, the Newcastle-Ottawa scale was employed. PICO-relevant outcomes were assessed using the GRADE methodology. The process of data extraction and analysis was guided by a CHW outcomes framework proposed by Naimoli et al. (2014).

**Main findings**

Fourteen (n=14) studies met the inclusion criteria for data extraction, only three of which used a rigorous, randomised design. The majority of studies was conducted in low- and middle-income countries. Findings from studies point to potential community health service benefits – across a broad range of outputs and outcomes – associated with data collection processes. However, this evidence base is in its infancy still. In particular, evidence on how data collection processes impact recipients of community health services is limited.