Information Scientist & Researcher

Chris Cooper

Chris is an experienced information professional and systematic reviewer. As the former deputy-director of a UK-based, evidence review group (PenTAG), Chris has worked on each of the Health Technology Assessment workstreams under NICE and he has significant experience in other NICE workstreams, such as public health and clinical guidelines. Chris also has extensive experience undertaking Cochrane Reviews. At Stratenym, Chris has conceptualized and executed searches for 10+ systematic literature reviews (SLRs), many of which have been used to support HTA submissions to NICE in the UK, PBAC in Australia, and CADTH in Canada, among others.

Tell us a bit about your area of expertise.

As a researcher with academic, industry, and direct payer experience, my expertise lies in conceptualizing systematic reviews to address the needs of global submissions. I'm particularly interested in building systematic reviews from the ground up—from when a client first approaches us with a new technology, through to submitting the review as part of the reimbursement submission packet. Having the ability to build the evidence foundation early on allows us to see the narrative in the data and illustrate the story of the technology in a compelling way. It also enables us to identify and address any evidence gaps before they become too challenging to overcome.

What has been the highlight of your career so far?

The people I work with and speak to each day.

In your expert opinion, what is the greatest obstacle in your field and what advice would you give to clients to overcome it?

HTA submissions are, in essence, telling the story of a technology and demonstrating its relevance within the treatment landscape. Planning for this—rather than rushing in—leads to stronger submissions, fewer issues arising, and more positive recommendations overall. Paraphrased: Time spent in reconnaissance is rarely wasted. The preparation process must involve a robust review of the literature as early as possible to inform economic models, identify where additional research is required, and to determine the full extent of the unmet need in the population of interest.

Is there something new in the field that you're really excited about?

Yes! One of my academic interests is in the design of information retrieval models. I am working on a new design to separate the stages of identifying trials and to speed up the identification of studies for systematic reviews of technologies and diagnostic tests. The benefits of this model include an earlier than normal preliminary synthesis of studies and a clear map of comparisons. The latter makes it clearer if we need an ITC (and also how it could be planned).