

MENTAL HEALTH CASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS IN NORTH-AMERICA

A REALIST REVIEW PROTOCOL

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QUESTIONS THAT INITIATED OUR REVIEW

- ✓ In Mental Health, how can an intervention be improved ?
- ✓ Efficacy aside, what information is available on **how** case management works, with whom and under what circumstances ?
- ✓ How can the **realist approach** be applied to the evaluation of a widely implemented and evaluated intervention ?

KEY WORDS

REALIST REVIEW – CASE MANAGEMENT
 MENTAL HEALTH – NORTH AMERICA –
 PROTOCOL
 THEORY-DRIVEN – CRITICAL REALISM

BACKGROUND

In the last 50 years, different waves of **deinstitutionalization** have greatly changed the mental health services in North America by moving services from psychiatric hospitals to the community. **Case management** is a type of programme that coordinates and provides direct services in response to the needs of people with mental disorders. They are today considered “as a crucial component of the service delivery system” (Davis, 2006, p.131).

RATIONAL

In Canada and the United States, these programmes have been **implemented largely** and loosely (Newton & Smith, 2007; Gélinas, 2009) and they have been the subject of **an impressive number of evaluations**. Although there have been numerous attempts to synthesize these evaluations, there is currently **a lack of understanding regarding the elements that explain their efficacy** (Lauzier-Jobin, Garon & Morin, in press).

RELEVANCY

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED WITH OTHER REVIEWS (k=13)

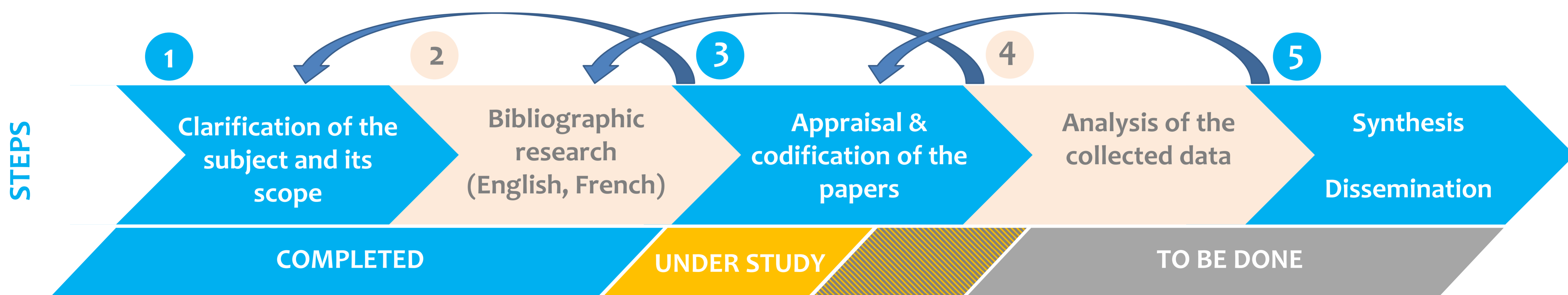
- Variability in the chosen outcomes (eg. hospital utilization)
- Lack of information on processes (only 2 reviews out of 13)
- Excessive rigour (eg. number of papers reviewed: k= 10 versus k=75)

WHAT REALIST REVIEW BRINGS

- Theory-driven approach
- Formative approach
- Emphasis on the usefulness of the produced knowledge

(Lauzier-Jobin, Garon & Morin, in press)

RESEARCH PROCESS (based on Pawson et al., 2005; Pawson, 2006)

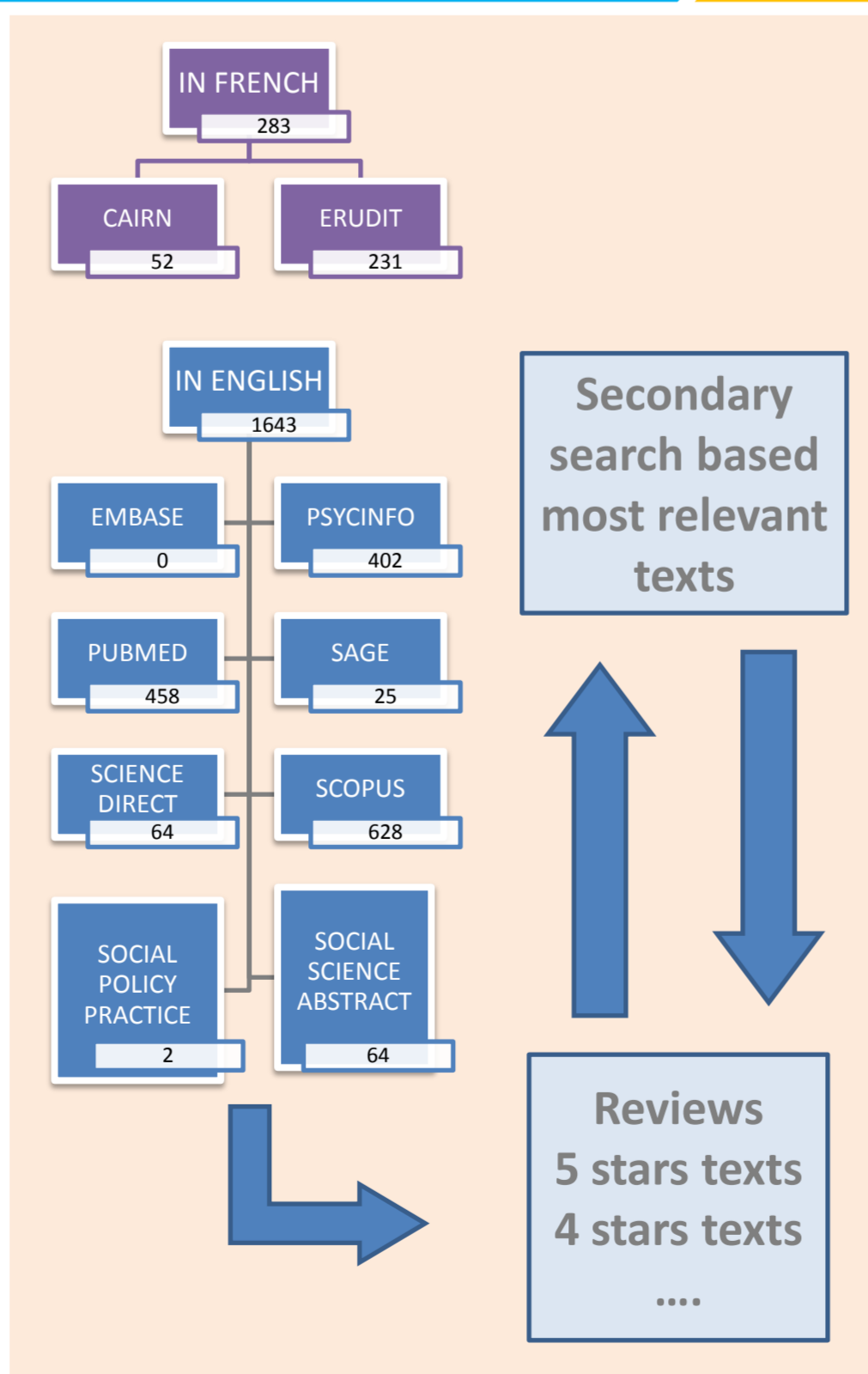


TOOLS & DISCUSSION

The scope of the subject should be clearly specified regarding:

- **the issue** (e.g. severe mental health problems)
- **intervention** (case management)
- **geographical location** (North America)
- **characteristics of the clientele** (e.g. age)

Properly done, this step will ensure the usefulness of the results, as well as the feasibility of the project.



Author	Date	Publication type	Method used	Process - Outcome	Context	Articulation C-M-O	Notes

Based on the work of Saul et al. (2013), we divided the last step into two intertwined parts. A synthesis will be presented at an **advisory panel** composed of potential knowledge users (politician, manager, practitioner and researcher). The comments will be systematically gathered from the experts through a focus group. This will lead to **two articles**:

- the first with an international scope
- the second applied to the Province of Quebec (with the addition of the focus group data and the implications for future policies).

Adapted from Saul, Willis, Bitz & Best (2013)

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