Dear editor,

We read with great interest the review entitled ‘Paracetamol vs other analgesia in adult patients with minor musculoskeletal injuries: a systematic review’1 published in the Emergency Medicine Journal. Although the authors have stated that they followed Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses guidelines, there is a methodological issue regarding the study discussed in this letter, which need to be addressed by the authors.

Selection of eligible studies is the cornerstone of systematic reviews that ensure homogeneous and reliability, while the inclusion and exclusion criteria have not been clearly defined in detail. In order to retrieve all eligible studies, every aspect of the research question must be clearly defined in the eligibility criteria.2 This will determine what the authors want to focus on. Systematic review findings are more valid than other types of reviews because they provide the best evidence available for a particular question to researchers.3 4 Running a systematic review without complete knowledge of the inclusion criteria can lead to problems in evaluating the validity, applicability and completeness of the systematic review.5 6 Hence, depending on the subject, it is strongly recommended that researchers use population, intervention, comparison, results and study design or PICOS.3 7 We believe that this issue can help researchers in their future research and improve the quality of studies.

Mehrdad Amir-Behghadami •,1,2 Ali Janati1,3
1Iranian Center of Excellence in Health Management (IceHM), Department of Health Service Management, School of Management and Medical Informatics, Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz, East Azerbaijan, Iran (the Islamic Republic of)
2Student Research Committee (SRC), Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz, Iran
3Tabriz Health Services Management Research Center, Health Management and Safety Promotion Research Institute, Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz, Iran (the Islamic Republic of)

Correspondence to Mehrdad Amir-Behghadami, Iranian Center of Excellence in Health Management (IceHM), Department of Health Service Management, School of Management and Medical Informatics, Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz, East Azerbaijan, Iran (the Islamic Republic of); Behghadami.m@gmail.com

Collaborators Mehrdad Amir-Behghadami; Ali Janti (or M Amir-Behghadami; A Janati)

Contributors MA-B and AJ conceptualised and designed the study, MA-B and AJ contributed to the writing of the first draft of the manuscript, reviewed the revisions and approved the final manuscript as submitted.

Funding The authors have not declared a specific grant for this research from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

Competing interests None declared.

Patient consent for publication Not required.

Provenance and peer review Not commissioned; internally peer reviewed.

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