CAM Use and Prevalence

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Presentation

Place

CAMbrella's Final Conference

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CAM Use and Prevalence

Susan Eardley

Meike Jong

Felicity L. Bishop

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CAM use in the EU

• Is variable

• Is widespread

• Is poorly researched in many countries

Research objectives

- **Identify EU CAM prevalence**

- **Which CAMs and for what?**

- **Why do people choose CAM?**

- **Is this data rigorous and good quality?**

Methods

- Using NCCAM CAM definition.

- All relevant databases (Ovid MEDLINE (R) (1948-09/10), Cochrane Library. (1989-09/10), CINAHL (1989-09/10), EMBASE (1980-09/10), PsychINFO including PsychARTICLES (1989-09/10), Web of Science (1989-09/10), AMED (1985-09/10), CISCOM (1989-09/10).

- All general population peer reviewed cross-sectional and population-based cohort studies in all ages in all languages.

- Dual review.

Quality assessment

- STROBE criteria.

- Bishop F, Chan YK, Lewith G, Prescott P. A systematic review of epidemiological studies on the prevalence of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) use by paediatric cancer patients. European Journal of Integrative Medicine. 2008; Supplement 1, 1-2. doi: 10.1016/j.eujim.2008.08.082.
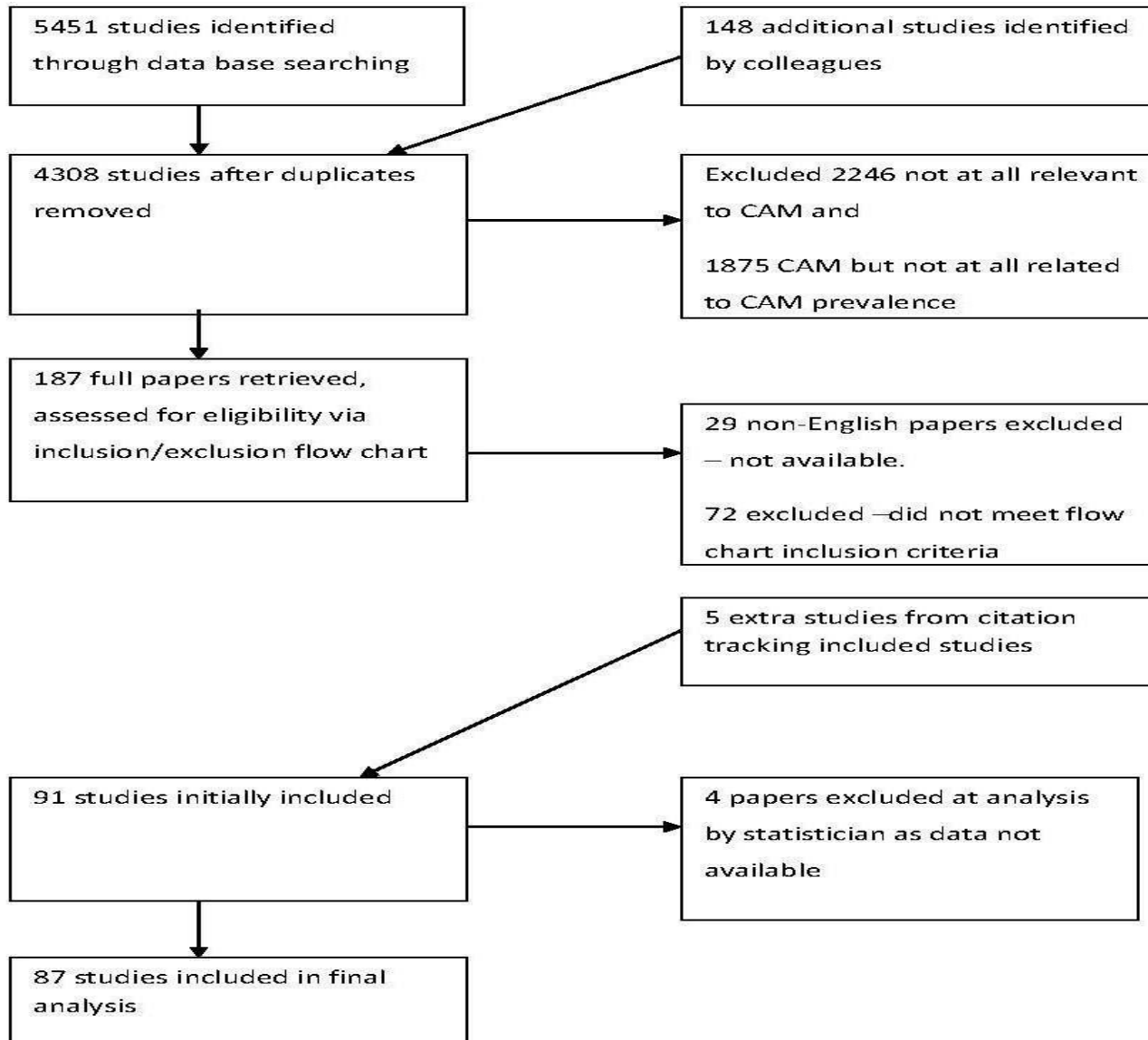
**Figure 1
Flow of information through the different phases of the systematic review.**

Outcomes

- **87 studies included**

- **Methodology and reporting poor, e.g. no definition of CAM**

- **CAM prevalence varied widely (0.3 – 86%)**

- **CAM users mainly women**

- **Dissatisfaction with conventional care**

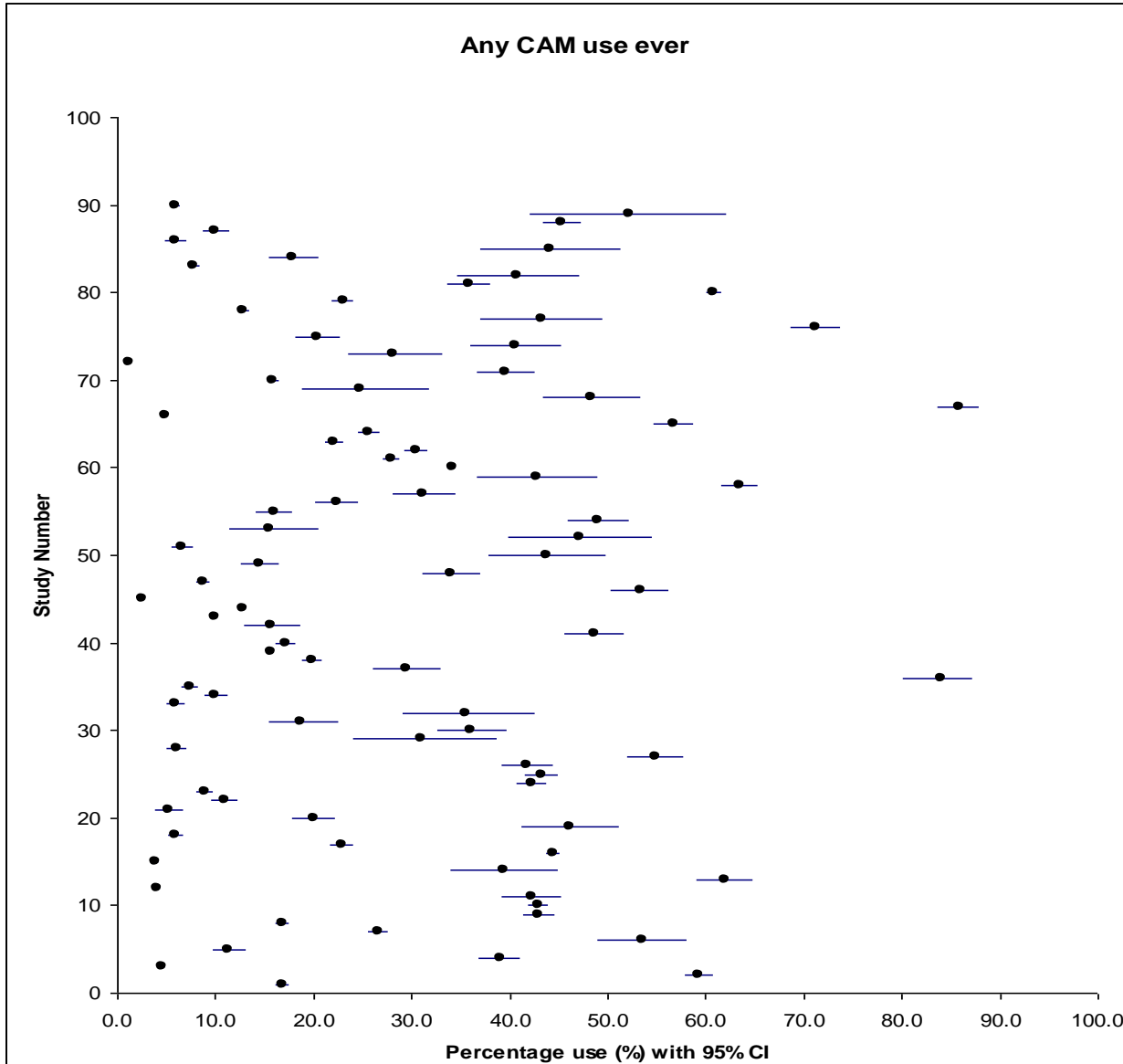- **Musculoskeletal problems**

- **The OTC versus consultation issue**

**Figure 2
Prevalence of any CAM use at any time.**

Therapy	No of Studies	EU Prevalence
Herbal medicine	31	5.9 – 48.3%
Homeopathy	25	2 – 27%
Chiropractic	17	0.4 -20.8%
Acupuncture	14	0.44 – 23%
Reflexology	11	0.4 – 21%
Nutritional Supplements	28	Unclear

Conclusions

- **Poor data quality**

- **Data available from less than ½ EU States**

- **Comprehensive data from 5 or 6 States**

- **What is CAM?**

- **Some therapies widely used**

- **Need for coherent, comprehensive and rigorous prospective data collection**