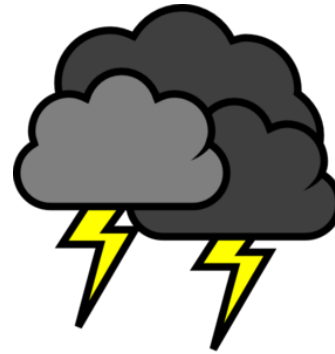


What Constitutes 'Good' Evidence

@PEG_Exeter

What is evidence?

- ▶ An available body of facts or information indicating whether a belief or proposition is true or valid.
 - *For example, the study finds little evidence of overt discrimination*



What does evidence look like in your line of work?

Evidence-based policing

- ▶ “Evidence-based policing is a method of making decisions about ‘what works’ in policing: which practices and strategies accomplish police missions most cost-effectively.
- ▶ In contrast to basing decisions on theory, assumptions, tradition, or convention, an evidence-based approach continuously tests hypotheses with empirical research findings.”

Source: Sherman, Lawrence W. (2013). The Rise of Evidence-Based Policing: Targeting, Testing and Tracking. *Crime and Justice*, 42: 377-451.

You might use evidence to...

- ▶ Generate options or make a case
- ▶ Support the commission of services & products
- ▶ Support the decommission of services & products
- ▶ Develop funding bids
- ▶ Align services with 'customer needs'
- ▶ Develop a workforce
- ▶ Create effective campaigns & communications
- ▶ Design more effective programmes
- ▶ Increase accountability to stakeholders
- ▶ Become more knowledgeable about the field

Source (adapted from): *Using Research Evidence: A practice guide*, by Jonathan Breckon for Nesta's Innovation Skills Team, p. 13.

So, say you have identified...

- ▶ a need for evidence,
- ▶ planned use(s) for the evidence, and
- ▶ research question(s) of interest

NOW WHAT?

- ▶ You search out existing evidence or conduct research yourself, hoping to discover/produce ‘good evidence.’

So, what is 'good' evidence?

- ▶ Broadly speaking, 'good' research evidence is evidence which is **credible**, timely, and focused on what you want to know.
 - From a scientific standpoint, credibility is rooted in the validity and reliability of the research evidence.

Validity

- ▶ Internal validity is a property of scientific studies which reflects the extent to which a causal conclusion based on a study is warranted.
- ▶ The extent to which findings are generalisable beyond the research itself.

Internal Validity

External Validity

Reliability

- ▶ The extent to which something (e.g., a survey, an experiment, etc.) produces consistent results.

For this activity
use the
worksheet in
your binder, as
it is larger



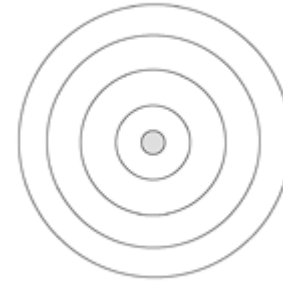
Unreliable & not Valid



Unreliable but Valid



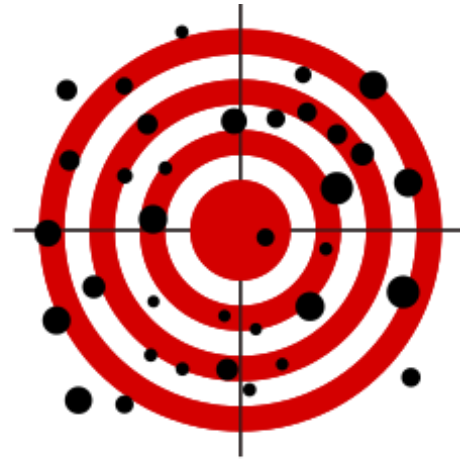
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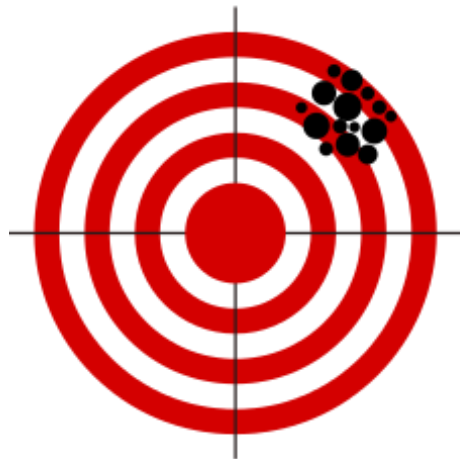
Reliable & Valid



Unreliable & Invalid



Unreliable, But Valid



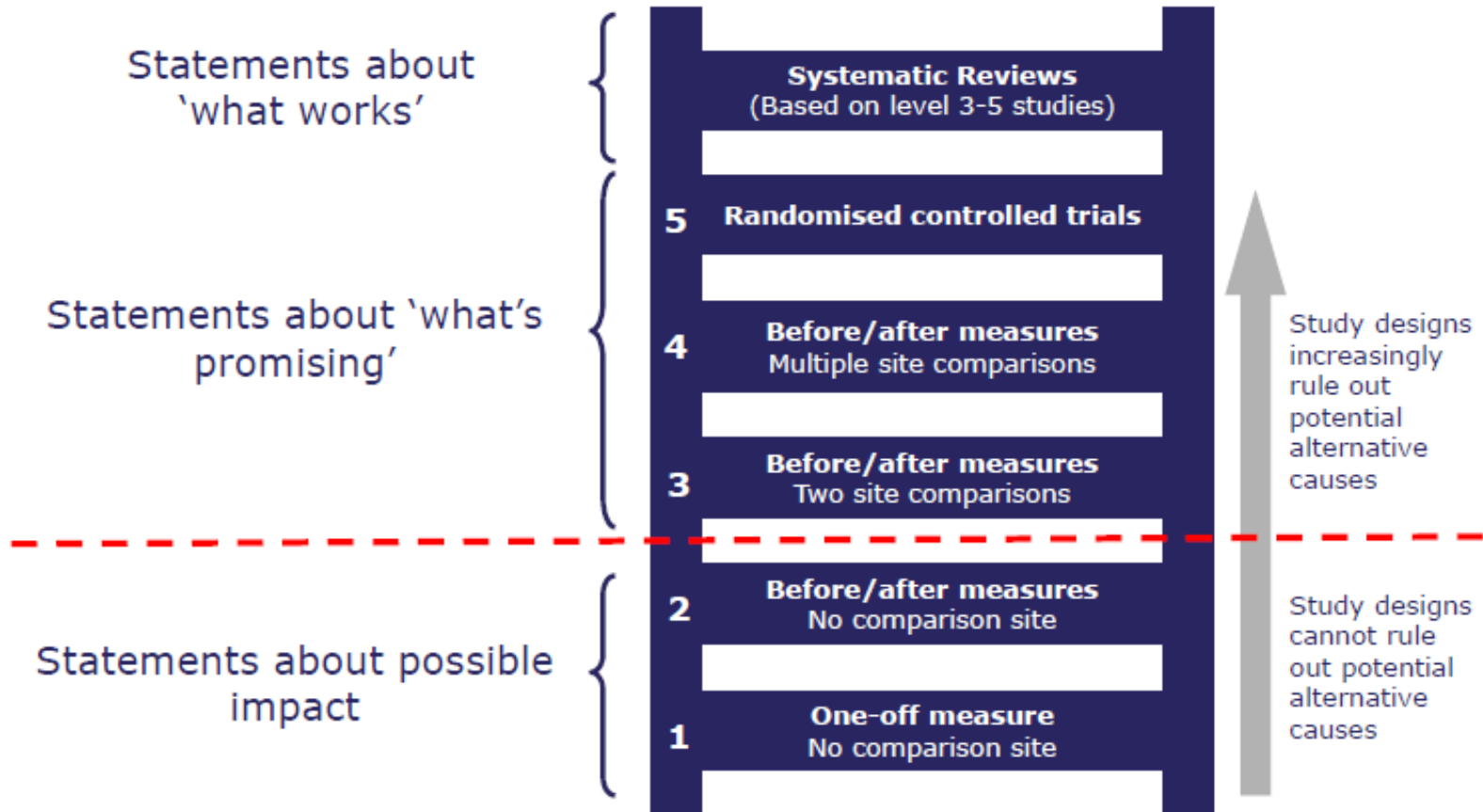
Reliable, Not Valid



Both Reliable & Valid

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What does 'good' evidence look like?



Source: 'What Works for Crime Reduction: Linking Research to Policing' presentation, by Dr. Nicky Miller, College of Policing

A word of caution

- ▶ Remember, evidence is ‘provisional, and always capable of being overturned, modified, refuted or superseded by better evidence’ (Upshur, 2002, p. 114).

Source: Upshur, R.E.G. (2002). If not evidence, then what? Or does medicine really need an evidence base? *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice*, 8(2), 113–119.