

ABSTRACTS FOR ORAL PRESENTATIONS

## Intervention to Reduce Childhood Undernutrition: A Systematic Review

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**Background:** Childhood undernutrition while being a preventable condition remains a major public health issue because it contributes to the mortality and morbidity of children globally. Intervention to improve the nutritional status of children includes supplementary feeding, fortified foods, cash transfers and nutritional education. **Objective:** To review the effects of various nutritional interventions in addressing undernutrition in children. **Methods:** Comprehensive search of literature in electronic databases were conducted in PubMed, MEDLINE, ScienceDirect, Cochrane Library and Scopus. Unpublished research was also identified by internet search and manual search was conducted to identify any additional papers that was based on the bibliographies of the published studies. Studies conducted on children aged up to 18 years old were also included. **Results:** Of the 1349 studies that were identified, 24 studies matched the inclusion criteria and were reviewed. All the studies were conducted in developing countries with a large majority were randomized controlled trial. Food supplementation was an integral part of nutritional interventions in majority of the studies along with cash transfers. The most consistent outcome in most of the studies was improvement in the nutritional status which subsequently reduced undernutrition in children. **Conclusion:** Ready-To-Use-Therapeutic-Food (RUTF) and Conditional Cash Transfer yielded the best outcome in alleviating undernutrition in developing countries. The role of lady health worker in

nutritional intervention is crucial in improving the accessibility of healthcare to vulnerable population. Nutritional education is more effective in improving nutritional status if

complemented with nutritional supplements. Community-based and cultural-appropriate nutritional education can improve the dietary intake and reduce undernutrition in children.