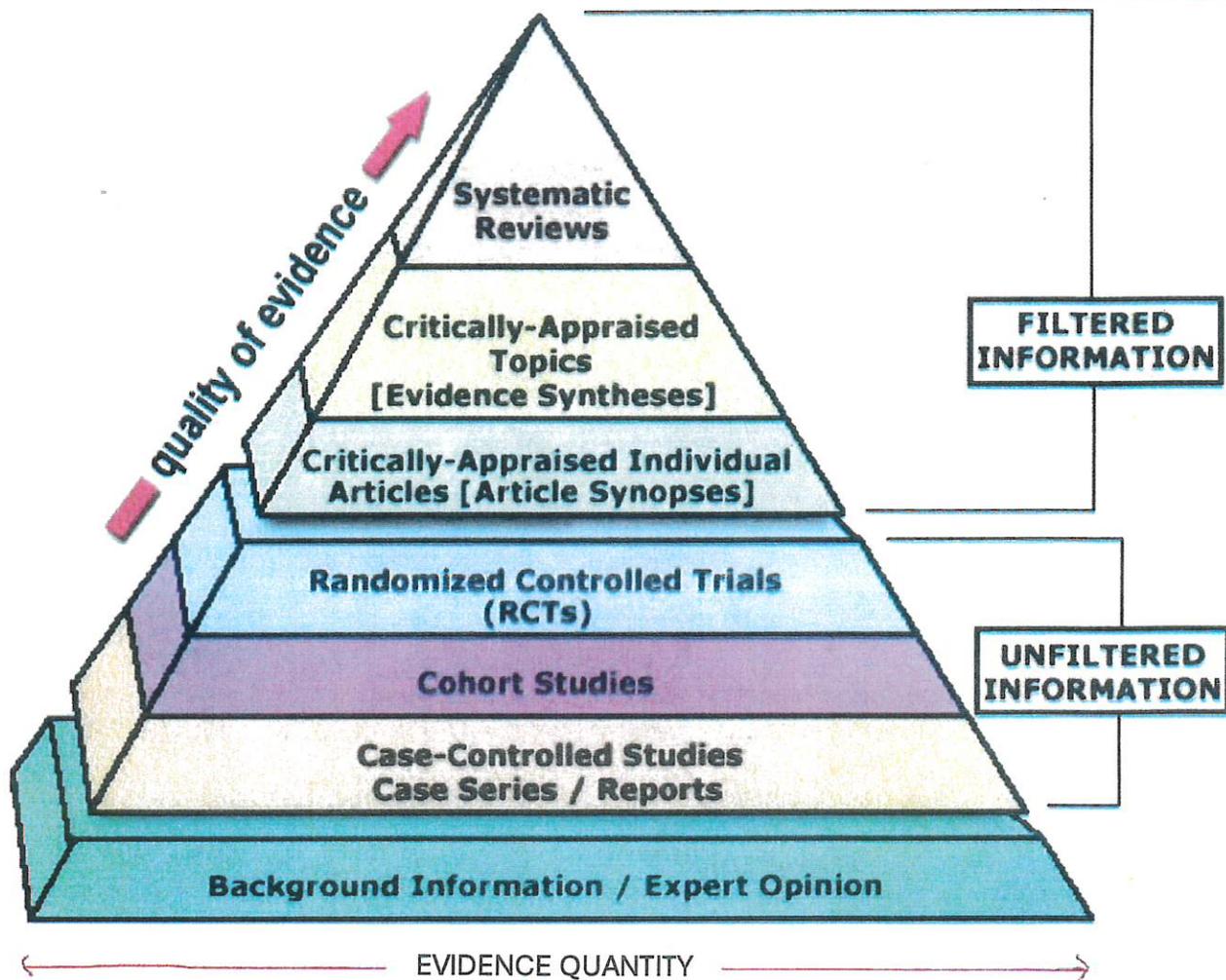


THE EVIDENCE PYRAMID of EVIDENCE BASED MEDICINE



SOURCE: Page et al., 2021 (PRISMA 2020) *British Medical Journal*.

Systematic Reviews: These analyze and critique all the studies below it on the Evidence Pyramid using a detailed 26-step process to determine the reliability, certainty and believability of the overall evidence, rating it as very low, low, moderate or high quality. These reviews are conducted by impartial research analysts in centers that specialize in this process. About 2 dozen of these have been produced regarding gender affirming care (GAC).

Controlled Trials (blue bar): These are of moderately good to high quality study types. To date, there has yet to be published even one single large, long-term (>2-5 years) prospective trial comparing the efficacy and safety of GAC to non-affirming interventions such as “watch and wait,” or biological sex-affirming psycho-social strategies. If even one has been conducted, it hasn’t been published, possibly because of undesirable results.

Background, Expert Opinion, Case Series etc: These lower quality studies are usually retrospective and have little statistical value because of low “n” numbers, lack of controls, and high risk of bias. The green bar includes personal experience which is called ‘anecdotal evidence’ in Evidence Based Medicine. These are plentiful, inexpensive and are the study types that gender clinics produce and rely upon almost exclusively.