INPLASY PROTOCOL

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Review Stage at time of this submission: Preliminary searches.

Influencing factors and barriers to retention among regional and remote undergraduate nursing students in Australia: A systematic review of current research evidence

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Review question / Objective: To explore the attrition problems, influencing factors and barriers to retention among regional and remote nursing students who enrolled in the undergraduate programs in Australia.

Condition being studied: Student retention concerns an individual's commitment to an learning goal. Low student retention has been a long-standing issue for nursing programs and it is an important threat to the future nursing workforce. Attrition is measured by the number of students enrolled in the first year who do not complete their study in the following year. With the growth of online programs, the issue of high attrition raises concern for students enrolled in these programs. Moreover, the social context of students may influence positive motivation and affect their decision to stay in their nursing programs.

INTRODUCTION

Review question / Objective: To explore the attrition problems, influencing factors and barriers to retention among regional and remote nursing students who enrolled in the undergraduate programs in Australia.

Rationale: In a country as vast as Australia, regional and remote nursing students' locations may mean that they face unique challenges undertaking university studies. This systematic review aims to explore the attrition problems, influencing factors and barriers to retention in regional and remote undergraduate nursing students. This review will provide essential information to design tailored strategies to support regional and remote undergraduate nursing students in Australia.

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METHODS

Search strategy: Comprehensive search strategies will be developed by using Medical Subject Headings terms with related keywords. The search terms that will be used in this systematic review are "attrition", "retention", "undergraduate student*", "nursing", "regional", "remote", "influencing factor*", "barrier*" and "Australia*". Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL); Embase; Journals@Ovid; Medline; PsycoINFO; PubMed, Web of Science, A+ Education, ERIC - Education Resources Information Center (EBSCOhost version) and ProQuest Education Database will be searched to locate eligible English publications from June 2017 through June 2022. Reference lists of included studies will be reviewed.

Participant or population: Regional and remote nursing students who enrolled in the undergraduate programs.

Intervention: N/A.

Comparator: N/A.

Study designs to be included: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods studies.

Eligibility criteria: (1) Population: Regional and remote undergraduate nursing students. (2) Interest: Influencing factors and barriers to retention. (3) Context: The high education sector in Australia. (4)

Qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods, original studies published in English in the last five years (June 2017 to June 2022).

Information sources: Ten electronic databases (CINAHL, Embase, Journals@Ovid, Medline, PsycoINFO, PubMed, Web of Science, A+ Education, ERIC - Education Resources Information Center (EBSCOhost version) and ProQuest Education Database) and reference lists of included studies.

Main outcome(s): Attrition problems, influencing factors and barriers to retention.

Additional outcome(s): N/A.

Data management: EndNote Software will be used for data management in this systematic review.

Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis: The methodological quality will be assessed for each of the included studies using the JBI critical appraisal tools (https://jbi.global/critical-appraisal-tools).

Strategy of data synthesis: The authors will use a data extraction form to extract data from included publications. Descriptive analysis will be used for the synthesis of results from the included studies.

Subgroup analysis: N/A.

Sensitivity analysis: N/A.

Language: English.

Country(ies) involved: Australia.

Other relevant information: No.

Keywords: Retention; Remote; Undergraduate nursing students; Influencing factors; Barriers.

Dissemination plans: This systematic review will be published in a peer-review journal.

Contributions of each author:

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