

INPLASY

To examine the effectiveness of “scope of practice regulation” of healthcare practitioners in improving patient outcomes in the aged care sector

INPLASY202510020

doi: 10.37766/inplasy2025.1.0020

Received: 6 January 2025

Published: 6 January 2025

Sumeet, P; Balasubramanian, M; Scheibner, J; Andrews, JJT.

Corresponding author:
PRASHANT SUMEET

prashant.sumeet@flinders.edu.au

Author Affiliation:
Flinders University, South Australia.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Support - Not Applicable.

Review Stage at time of this submission - Preliminary searches.

Conflicts of interest - None declared.

INPLASY registration number: INPLASY202510020

Amendments - This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 6 January 2025 and was last updated on 6 January 2025.

INTRODUCTION

Review question / Objective How does the effectiveness of “scope of practice regulation” of healthcare practitioners in improving patient outcomes in the aged care sector?

Rationale In care facilities like nursing homes, residential care homes and homes services, a wide variety of professional services are offered by health care professionals to support individuals who are at the risk of a significant loss of intrinsic capacity to maintain a level of functional ability. A wide range of services are included in long-term care, such as continued nursing care to address the health, social, or personal care of the elderly, rehabilitation, and restorative care. In order to provide the delivery of quality care to residents it is utmost critical to adhere to standards and ensure that the caregiving professionals are adequately trained to adhere to set criteria. (Kalideen, 2022).

The effectiveness of "scope of practice regulation" for healthcare practitioners in improving patient outcomes in the aged care sector is a critical area of investigation, particularly as the population ages and healthcare demands evolves around the world in view of technological advancement and dynamic nature of service require. Healthcare practitioner regulation is one approach used to maintain standards and improve quality of care.

Various literature reviews indicates that scope of practice regulation is a complex and diverse concept and is affected by many factors. (M.M. Feringa, 2018) The regulation of healthcare practitioners in the aged care sector plays a crucial role in ensuring high-quality care for older adults and supporting positive outcomes for both patients and providers. As the population ages and demand for aged care services increases, effective regulation becomes increasingly important to maintain standards, protect vulnerable residents, and support the workforce.

In a systematic review by (Braithwaite J, 2017) a positive association was found between organizational and workplace cultures and patient outcomes. This finding suggests that regulatory frameworks facilitating supportive workplace cultures may enhance the quality of care delivered by healthcare practitioners, including those in aged care facilities. Regulations and the boundaries within which a fully qualified practitioner with substantial and appropriate training, knowledge, and experience may practice in a field of medicine or surgery, or other specifically defined field. Such practice is also governed by requirements for continuing education and professional accountability.

There are inefficiencies such as under and over skilling exist in health care sector across the world and this led to higher health care costs and lower access to care for patients as per one study done by OECD. Under-skilling could lead to health care professionals providing care outside of their training and expertise and endangering patient safety; however, over-skilling can also negatively impact patient care by creating unnecessary barriers to access to care.

Effective regulation not only safeguards patient safety but also enhances the quality of care and supports workforce sustainability. Effective regulation encompasses both legal and professional systems, which work together to maintain standards and protect elderly and vulnerable populations. The regulation of healthcare practitioners operates through legal frameworks (legislative, executive, and judicial branches) and professional systems (professional societies) that establish standards and practices.

While regulation is crucial, challenges remain, such as the need for more evidence on the effectiveness of these systems and their impact on patient outcomes. By analysing existing data and gathering insights from them this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship between scope of practice regulation and patient care quality. This review aims to synthesize existing research findings on the effectiveness of such regulations and to find a deeper understanding of the relationship between scope of practice regulations and patient care quality. The findings may guide regulatory bodies, aged care providers, and policymakers in designing and implementing evidence-based approaches to healthcare practitioner regulation that optimize outcomes for patients in the aged care sector.

Condition being studied There are a range of health care practitioners involved in aged care setting and every set of Health care Practitioners have their own scope of practices regulations that influence on the outcomes on the patients' wellbeing. The purpose of this review is to examine the effectiveness of various scope of practices regulations of healthcare practitioners in aged care sector on the improvement of patient's outcomes.

METHODS

Search strategy The search strategy will aim to identify published scientific papers in English language across the world from January 2014 to the present. A three-stage approach will be adopted in this review. First, an initial limited search will be conducted on select databases mainly on MEDLINE (OVID) to identify key articles on the topic. The text and keywords terms identified in these articles will be developed further for the main search. The preliminary key words for the search will include scope of practice regulations, healthcare practitioners, patient outcomes and aged care

Second, a detailed search strategy will be developed in consultation with the supervisors and University Librarian. The detailed search strategy will accommodate published academic literature from databases MEDLINE, Web of Science SCOPUS, CINAHL as well as hand searchers on Google Scholar search engine for policies/guidelines.

Third, the reference list of all identified reports and articles will be searched for additional studies. The time of publication will include from the period of Jan 2014 onward and will continue up to the present year. INPLASY will be searched for ongoing as well as recently completed reviews.

Participant or population The population for this study is older adults who are 60 years and above, and require services in relation to home, community or residential care-based settings.

Intervention In the research study we would like to examine the effectiveness of scope of practice regulations like activities, procedures, and decision-making that a healthcare practitioner is permitted to undertake within their professional practice in aged care settings through pre identified appropriate metrics to evaluate their impact on patients' outcomes. Furthermore, through SLR we would like to compare studies where outcomes before and after the implementations of the scope of practice

regulations or between regions/jurisdictions with different scope of practice regulations took place or examined.

Moreover, we would like to study researches on the perspectives and experiences of key stakeholders, such as healthcare practitioners, patients, policymakers, and healthcare organizations, to understand the impacts and perceptions of the scope of practice regulations. In the end we would like to examine the effect of contextual factors, such as the healthcare system structure, workforce dynamics, and socioeconomic considerations, that may influence the effectiveness of the scope of practice regulation.

Comparator Variations in regulatory models, or absence of specific scope of practice regulations.

Study designs to be included Original research articles including quantitative, qualitative and mixed method studies. Reviews, commentaries, editorials and grey literature will be excluded. The components of this review will consider studies that evaluate the various dimensions of scope of practices regulations related to HCPs in aged care sector like- Scope of practice regulations, aged care practice guidelines and standards, Compliance, Legal and Ethical Boundaries, Professional Standards and constraints, Education and training, Legal Regulations, Autonomy, Standards of Practice Legislations, regulations and Laws.

Eligibility criteria The review will consider studies focussing on the effectiveness of healthcare practitioner regulation in improving patient outcomes in the aged care sector. The quantitative and qualitative components of this review will consider any studies related to qualified Health care practitioners of any grade/level in the aged care sector and will, therefore, exclude those working in hospitals /emergency department settings. Studies will focus solely on HCP populations and any other stakeholders' study in aged care shall be excluded.

Our focus would be on the systematic reviews, scientific papers and other research articles only including reviews, commentaries, dissertations/ thesis. Information on whether the study designs are qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods will be recorded; as well as information on data collection methods (e.g. interviews, questionnaires, and observations). This will help understand the range of methods employed within these research designs.

- Publication date- since 2014 onwards
- Language - English Only
- Study types- systematic reviews, scientific papers

Document the search process, including

- Databases searched
 - Date of search
 - Number of results from each database
 - Any modifications made to the search strategy
- Types of participants

Health practitioner will be defined as any professional with a certificate IV or higher currently employed in an aged care sector and providing services to elderly residents including medical practitioners such as doctors, Nurses, PCWs etc. This will also include practitioners such as physiotherapists, psychologists and occupational therapists. The review will exclude those who are health practitioners that are still in training, tertiary education students on placements, Kitchen staff and non-allied health services providers.

Types of interventions

All studies in which the interventions are described by the author/s for health practitioner's scope of practices with matching skills to responsibilities, that might have potential impact on patient outcomes will be considered for this review.

Information sources We shall use the detailed search strategy to identify published academic literature from databases of MEDLINE, Web of Science SCOPUS, CINAHL as well as hand searchers on Google scholar search engine for policies/guidelines. Our focus would be on published research from 2014 onwards in English Language and limited to scientific papers/guidelines/ policies only excluding grey literature.

Main outcome(s) Our review will examine the impact of SoP regulations of HCP on patients through various identified metrics like Health-Related Outcomes, Quality of Life Measures, Patient Safety Metrics, Patient and Family Satisfaction and Care Process Indicators.

Additional outcome(s) N/A.

Data management Covidence systematic review software will be used for screening, full text review and data extraction.

Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis To ensure that systematic reviews screening is reliable, two reviewers will be included in the title abstract screening and full text screening process

and for any doubt /clarification will seek guidance from third reviewer.

Strategy of data synthesis The scoping review will be guided by six-staged scoping review methodology framework described in Arksey and O'Malley (2005) <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1364557032000119616#d1e267>: (1) identifying the research question, (2) identifying relevant studies, (3) selecting studies, (4) charting the data, (5) collating, summarising, and reporting the results, and (6) consultation, which is an optional stage. The reporting of the scoping review will follow the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR). The search strategy was developed and refined in consultation with supervisors cum faculty members of College of Business, Governance and Law at Flinders University. The PRESS Checklist (2015) https://www.cda-amc.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/CP0015_PRESS_Update_Report_2016.pdf was used to assist in developing the search strategy. Electronic databases (Medline, Web of science, CINAHL and Scopus), reference list of included articles and scoping or systematic reviews identified from the search.

Subgroup analysis Analysis Analyses will be conducted based on healthcare practitioner types, regulatory models, and geographic regions.

Sensitivity analysis Sensitivity analyses will be performed to assess the impact of study quality on the overall findings.

Language restriction English only.

Country(ies) involved Australia - Flinders University, South Australia.

Keywords scope of practice regulations, healthcare practitioners, patient outcomes and aged care sector.

Contributions of each author

Author 1 - PRASHANT SUMEET - Conception, Methodology, Data extraction and writing initial draft.

Email: prashant.sumeet@flinders.edu.au

Author 2 - Madhan Balasubramanian - Supervision, Development of the selection criteria, Revision of the draft and approval of the final manuscript.

Email: madhan.balasubramanian@flinders.edu.au

Author 3 - James Scheibner - Supervision, Development of the selection criteria, Revision of the draft and approval of the final manuscript.

Email: james.scheibner@flinders.edu.au

Author 4 - Teddy Andrews J J - Supervision, Development of the selection criteria, Revision of the draft and approval of the final manuscript.

Email: teddy.andrews@manipal.edu

References

Jenny L. Newlon, E. Michael Murphy, Rami Ahmed, Kimberly S. Illingworth, Determining and regulating scope of practice for health care professionals: A participatory, multiple stakeholder approach, *Research in Social and Administrative Pharmacy*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sapharm.2022.11.005>. (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1551741122003941>)

Leslie, Kathleen & Bourgeault, Ivy & Carlton, Anne-Louise & Balasubramanian, Madhan & Mirshahi, Raha & Short, Stephanie & Care, Jenny & Lin, Vivian. (2022).

Design, operation and strengthening of health practitioner regulation systems: A rapid integrative review. doi :10.21203/rs.3.rs-2370701/v1.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/366447676_Design_operation_and_strengthening_of_health_practitioner_regulation_systems_A_rapid_integrative_review

M.M. Feringa, H.C. De Swardt, Y. Havenga, Registered nurses' knowledge, attitude, practice and regulation regarding their scope of practice: A literature review, *International Journal of Africa Nursing Sciences*, Volume 8,2018

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijans.2018.04.001>.

(<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2214139117300835>)

Kalideen L, Govender P, van Wyk JM.

Standards and quality of care for older persons in long term care facilities: a scoping review. *BMC Geriatr.* 2022 Mar 19;22(1):226. doi: 10.1186/s12877-022-02892-0. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35303830/>

Braithwaite J, Herkes J, Ludlow K, Testa L, Lamprell G.

Association between organisational and workplace cultures, and patient outcomes: systematic review. *BMJ Open.* 2017 Nov 8;7(11):e017708. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2017-017708.

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29122796/>

Regulating Australia's nurses and midwives

Nurse practitioner standards for practice-Aphra

<https://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines-Statements/Professional-standards.aspx>

Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC). Scope of Practice. HCPC; 2021. <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/meeting-our-standards/scope-of-practice/>

Carla Jomaa, Carl-Ardy Dubois, Isabelle Caron, Alexandre Prud'Homme: Staffing, teamwork and scope of practice: Analysis of the association with patient safety in the context of rehabilitation: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9300032/>

Balasubramanian, M., Keuskamp, D., Amarasena, N., & Brennan: Predictors for oral and general health outcomes and quality of life among older people attending general practice clinics in South Australia. *Gerodontology*, ger.12534. D. D. (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1111/ger.12534>

Wiggins, D., Downie, A., Engel, R.M. et al. Factors that influence scope of practice of the five largest health care professions in Australia: a scoping review. *Hum Resour Health* 20, 87 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12960-022-00783-4>
<https://human-resources-health.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12960-022-00783-4/tables/2>

Foong HY, Siette J, Jorgensen M. Quality indicators for home- and community-based aged care: A critical literature review to inform policy directions. *Australas J Ageing*. 2022 Sep;41(3):383-395. doi: 10.1111/ajag.13103. Epub 2022 Jul 3. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/ggi.14231?saml_referrer

Regulation of the global orthotist/prosthetist workforce, and what we might learn from allied health professions with international-level regulatory support: a narrative review https://journals.lww.com/nursingresearchonline/fulltext/2013/09000/licensed_practical_nurse_scope_of_practice_and.4.aspx

PricewaterhouseCoopers: Development of quality indicators for in-home aged care: https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-02/development-of-quality-indicators-for-in-home-aged-care-evidence-review-summary-report_0.pdf

Residential Aged Care Quality Indicators – April to June 2024: The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare: <https://www.gen-agedcaredata.gov.au/>

[topics/quality-in-aged-care/residential-aged-care-quality-indicators-latest-release](https://www.health.gov.au/topics/quality-in-aged-care/residential-aged-care-quality-indicators-latest-release)

GOVERNANCE TOOLKIT: A GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE IN AGED CARE: <https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/sites/default/files/media/topic-guide-11-monitoring-provider-performance.pdf>

Lynch, M., Kodate, N., Hickey, C. et al. Bridging the gap between healthcare professions' regulation and practice: the "lived experience" of community pharmacists in Ireland following regulatory change. *J of Pharm Policy and Pract* 15, 74 (2022).: <https://jopp.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40545-022-00465-5/tables/1>

Corazzini KN, Anderson RA, Mueller C, Thorpe JM, McConnell ES. Licensed practical nurse scope of practice and quality of nursing home care. *Nurs Res*. 2013 Sep-Oct;62(5):315-24. doi: 10.1097/NNR.0b013e31829eba00. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23995465/>
Patient-reported outcome measures Stakeholder interviews: Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care: <https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/sites/default/files/migrated/PROMs-stakeholder-interviews-report-2018.pdf>

Foong HY, Siette J, Jorgensen M. Quality indicators for home- and community-based aged care: A critical literature review to inform policy directions. *Australas J Ageing*. 2022 Sep;41(3):383-395. doi: 10.1111/ajag.13103. Epub 2022 Jul 3. PMID: 35781753; PMCID: PMC9542125. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9542125/>

Health Professions Regulation in the US: <https://www.healthworkforceta.org/health-professions-regulation-in-the-us/>

Allied Health Assistant Framework Queensland: https://www.health.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/147500/AHAFramework.pdf

Improving the Quality of Care in Nursing Homes Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on Nursing Home Regulation, Washington (DC): <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK217560/>

Unleashing the Potential of our Health Workforce – Scope of Practice Review, Govt of Australia: <https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/scope-of-practice-review>

Siette J, Knaggs GT, Zurynski Y, et al Systematic review of 29 self-report instruments for assessing quality of life in older adults receiving aged care services *BMJ Open* 2021;11:e050892. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2021-050892: <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/11/11/e050892.abstract>

Navneet Aujla, Helen Frost, Bruce Guthrie, Barbara Hanratty, Eileen Kaner, Amy O'Donnell, Margaret E. Ogden, Helen G. Pain, Susan D. Shenkin, Stewart W. Mercer, A comparative overview of health and social care policy for older people in England and Scotland, United Kingdom (UK),<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthpol.2023.104814>: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0168851023000994>

Kathleen Leslie, Jean Moore, Chris Robertson, Douglas Bilton, Kristine Hirschhorn, Margaret H. Langelier and Ivy Lynn Bourgeault

Regulating health professional scopes of practice: comparing institutional arrangements and approaches in the US, Canada, Australia and the UK

Leslie et al. *Hum Resour Health* (2021) <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12960-020-00550-3>