

Nursing workload in Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy Day units: a scoping review and gap analysis

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ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**Support** - University of Surrey.**Review Stage at time of this submission** - Data analysis.**Conflicts of interest** - None declared.**INPLASY registration number:** INPLASY202550032**Amendments** - This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 13 May 2025 and was last updated on 13 May 2025.**INTRODUCTION**

Review question / Objective How has the nursing workload been measured in Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy (SACT) day units?

Background The distinctive nature of nursing work significantly shapes both the quality and the level of care delivered to patients across various healthcare settings. Across all healthcare systems, nursing constitutes the largest healthcare profession and serves as the primary provider of patient care. Beyond administering treatments, nurses actively work to optimise patient outcomes by addressing patients' needs. However, persistent inadequate nurse staffing has been strongly associated with poorer patient outcomes.

Rationale In the United Kingdom, alongside many countries internationally, increasing numbers of cancer patients have further intensified the demands placed on nursing staff. Most cancer patients are now treated in Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy (SACT) day units (elsewhere known

variously as Infusion Clinics, Oncology or Chemotherapy Day Units), where nurses spend most of their time providing direct patient care. While various definitions of nursing workload exist and different methods have been developed to measure it, there remains a limited understanding of nursing workload specific to SACT day units.

METHODS

Strategy of data synthesis The included studies were systematically summarised and organised into thematic categories guided by their relevance to the review's aim. The Rainio, Fagerström, and Rauhala (RAFAELA) workload system was used as the analytical framework to structure the findings.

Eligibility criteria Inclusion criteria: The inclusion criteria specified that studies must be published in English or translated into English and fall within the time frame of January 2000 to December 2024. Studies were included if they focused on participants who were SACT nurses working in day unit settings. The review specifically targeted SACT

day unit settings, focusing on oncology and/or haematology units.

Source of evidence screening and selection

Electronic databases, including MEDLINE®, CINAHL®, PsycINFO®, EMBASE (Elsevier), ASSIA (ProQuest), Web of Science, Cochrane Library and Global Index Medicus (WHO), were selected based on their relevance and coverage of healthcare and nursing research.

Data management Search results were imported into EndNote to remove duplicates, after which the remaining studies were transferred to Covidence for title, abstract, and full-text screening by two independent reviewers.

Reporting results / Analysis of the evidence

Reporting results will follow the RAFAELA workload system.

Presentation of the results Two tables named "Overview of elements included in nursing workload within SACT day units" and "Measures based on patient dependency for workload " will be used to present the results.

Language restriction English.

Country(ies) involved United Kingdom.

Keywords SACT, nursing workload, nurse workforce, day units.

Contributions of each author

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