

# INPLASY

## The Role and Development of the Nurse Practitioner Profession in Israel: A Scoping Review Protocol

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### ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

**Support -** No.

**Review Stage at time of this submission -** Preliminary searches.

**Conflicts of interest -** None declared.

**INPLASY registration number:** INPLASY202620039

**Amendments -** This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 10 February 2026 and was last updated on 10 February 2026.

### INTRODUCTION

**Review question / Objective** Scoping reviews are increasingly popular in order to review health and social research, and are useful for examining and systematically mapping emerging evidence and questions (Peters et al., 2020). This scoping review will be conducted to synthesize and analyse the existing literature regarding the Nurse Practitioner (NP) profession in Israel. The specific objective of this review is to identify and map the available scientific evidence and policy and legal documents on the development and current state of the NP profession in Israel. The specific research question is: What is known from the existing scientific literature about the development, regulation, integration, and outcomes of Nurse Practitioners in the Israeli healthcare system?

**Background** NPs play a pivotal role in delivering comprehensive, patient-centered medical care, leveraging advanced clinical training and a broader scope of authority than Registered Nurses (RNs).

As the highest tier within the spectrum of advanced practice nursing, NPs are uniquely positioned to address growing healthcare demands through diagnostic, therapeutic, and prescribing responsibilities typically associated with physicians (Nissanholtz-Gannot et al., 2025). In Israel, the development of the NP role began in 2009, following policy reforms by the Ministry of Health (MoH) aimed at strengthening primary and specialist care capacities. Since then, NP education and certification have expanded to include various clinical domains including geriatrics, palliative care, diabetes management, surgery, and health management. This expansion reflects both global trends and local imperatives in response to the increasing complexity and aging of the population.

The number of certified NPs in Israel has grown steadily over the past few years: from 275 in 2019, to 453 in 2021, 730 in 2023, and 1,029 by 2025 (Israeli Ministry of Health, 2025). This rapid growth underscores both the demand for advanced nursing roles and the supportive policy environment for expanding the NP workforce.

Despite this progress, Israel lags behind many OECD countries in both the absolute number and relative share of NPs among all nurses. For instance, in 2022, NPs represented 8.4% of all RNs in the United States, and 2.8% in Canada (Brownwood & Lafortune, 2024), and even with recent growth, the percentage of NPs among Israeli RNs remains significantly lower (around 1.2% in 2025), with no comprehensive national data published on this proportion.

Introducing a new professional category into the national healthcare system represents a complex, resource-intensive process involving legislative changes, academic infrastructure, and collaboration among multiple stakeholders. The Israeli NP role requires postgraduate academic training, and NPs operate under a distinct scope of practice, with authorized independent clinical decision-making, marking a significant shift from the traditional RN framework (Nissanholtz-Gannot et al., 2025).

**Rationale** Given this context, a scoping review is warranted to systematically map and analyze the existing scientific literature and policy and legal documents on the NP profession in Israel. While individual studies have begun to explore specific domains there is currently no consolidated overview of the evolution, implementation, and challenges of this profession. Understanding the evidence base is essential for informing policy, guiding workforce planning, and ensuring the effective integration of NPs into the Israeli healthcare system.

Moreover, by examining the types of questions posed by researchers in this domain, this review can help identify which topics are perceived as most critical or problematic within the current system. Such insights may point to the “pain points” in professional practice, policy, or education, and reflect broader challenges faced by stakeholders during the implementation and expansion of the NP role.

Finally, this review also seeks to highlight existing gaps in the literature and propose directions for future research, thereby contributing to the strategic development of advanced nursing roles in Israel and aligning with international best practices.

## METHODS

**Strategy of data synthesis** This scoping review protocol was drafted using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis Protocols (PRISMA ScR) (Tricco et al., 2018), guided by JBI Manual for Evidence Synthesis (Peters et al., 2020).

To identify potentially relevant literature, a comprehensive search strategy will be implemented across selected bibliographic databases, covering publications from 2000 to the date of the final search. The databases to be searched include PubMed, CINAHL (Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature), Scopus, APA PsycINFO, and the Hebrew-language database JSTOR, which provides access to academic publications relevant to healthcare and nursing in Israel.

The search will be conducted in both English and Hebrew, reflecting the bilingual nature of scientific publishing in the Israeli context.

In addition to electronic database searches, manual hand-searching will be conducted in selected professional journals that regularly publish content related to advanced nursing practice. These include “The Journal for Nurse Practitioners”, the “Journal of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners”, and the Hebrew-language journal Guf Eda (“The body of Knowledge”) which focuses on nursing science and practice in Israel.

The date on which each search is conducted will be recorded to ensure transparency and reproducibility. Search terms were selected based on research question, as well as from highly cited publications, and the literature referenced in these publications.

The search strategy was differed for PubMed, CINAHL/ APA PsycINFO and SCOPUS as follows:

Concept #1: Nursing Practitioners

PubMed

"Nurse Practitioner"[Title/Abstract:~2] OR "Nurse Practitioners"[Title/Abstract:~2] OR "Advanced Practice Nurse"[Title/Abstract:~3] OR "Advanced Practice Nursing"[Title/Abstract:~3] OR "Advanced Nursing"[Title/Abstract:~2] OR "Advanced Nursing Practice"[Title/Abstract:~2] OR "Clinical Nurse Specialist"[Title/Abstract:~2] OR "Advanced Clinical Nurse"[Title/Abstract:~2]

CINAHL and APA PsycINFO:

Nurs\* N2 ("Practitioner" OR "Practitioners" OR "Advanced Practice" OR "Advanced" OR "Advanced Nursing" OR "Clinical Specialist" OR "Advanced Clinical")

SCOPUS

Nurs\* AND ( "Practitioner" OR "Practitioners" OR "Advanced Practice" OR "Advanced" OR "Advanced Nursing" OR "Clinical Specialist" OR "Advanced Clinical" )

Concept #2: Israel

PubMed / CINAHL /APA PsycINFO/ SCOPUS ("Israel" OR "Israel\*").

**Eligibility criteria** To be included in the review, papers need to be original research with a clear focus on Nurse Practitioners in Israel or include the Israeli context as part of a broader, multicultural or comparative study. Eligible sources are peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2000 and 2026 in either English or Hebrew. All types of empirical research will be considered, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods studies.

Papers will be excluded if they do not align with the conceptual framework of this review. Specifically, studies will be excluded if they focus solely on general nursing roles without reference to advanced practice or the Nurse Practitioner role, or if they address healthcare professions unrelated to nursing without any effect on NPs. Editorials, study protocols, opinion pieces, conference abstracts without accompanying full papers, and non-peer-reviewed sources will also be excluded unless they present substantive empirical data or policy analysis directly relevant to the Nurse Practitioner profession in Israel.

#### **Source of evidence screening and selection**

The search strategies were drafted with the research team together with two experienced librarians, and further refined through team discussion. To identify potentially relevant documents, searches will be run in all databases listed above with a date limit of 2000. Titles and abstracts will be exported into the reference management software, Covidence, which will automatically identify and remove duplicates. Titles and abstracts will be screened for eligibility by two independent researchers. Full texts will be retrieved and screened for both studies that meet the eligibility criteria as well as studies in which eligibility is unclear. Any disagreement in study selection, following both the title/abstract screening and the full text screening, will be resolved through discussion between researchers. If a consensus is not reached, a third researcher will be consulted. The remaining studies will be considered eligible for review.

**Data management** Data management will be guided by the JBI Manual for Evidence Synthesis: Scoping Review methodology (Peters et al., 2020). The data-charting form will be developed based on the objectives and research questions of the review and will be continuously updated as new relevant categories emerge during extraction. Prior to full data extraction, a pilot test of the charting form will be performed on a small sample (two to three studies) to assess consistency and completeness. Based on this pilot, the reviewers will refine the data-charting form, if necessary.

During full extraction, each included article will be reviewed independently by two researchers using the finalized form. Any disagreements or inconsistencies in data extraction will be resolved through discussion and consensus within the research team.

The extracted data will include: (1) general characteristics of each study (authors, year of publication, study aim, country of origin, study type and methodology, population characteristics, sample size, setting, dates of data collection, and intervention details if applicable); (2) information specific to the Nurse Practitioner profession (specialization, role, scope of practice, regulatory or educational context); and (3) main findings relevant to the research question. If necessary, authors of included studies will be contacted via email to clarify missing data or provide additional relevant information. For policy and legal documents, the following data will be extracted: the type of document (such as law, directive, or guideline), the issuing body (e.g., Ministry of Health or Knesset), the date of publication or enactment, the specific legal or policy content relevant to NPs (such as prescribing authority or certification process), and the document's reported or inferred impact on the development or practice of the NP role in Israel.

#### **Reporting results / Analysis of the evidence Quality Assessment**

Although formal risk of bias assessment is not a requirement for scoping reviews, an assessment of the methodological quality of included studies will be conducted using appropriate JBI Critical Appraisal Tools. The appraisal will be performed independently by two reviewers for each included study. These tools will be selected based on study design (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods). The purpose of this quality appraisal is not to exclude studies but to inform interpretation of the findings and provide a transparent assessment of the strength and limitations of the existing evidence base.

#### **Reporting results / Analysis of the evidence**

The PRISMA-ScR checklist (Tricco et al., 2018) will guide the reporting of all stages of the review. A detailed account of the search strategy, including databases searched, search terms used, and date of last search, will be provided to ensure transparency and reproducibility. A PRISMA flow diagram will be used to illustrate the screening and selection process, including the number of records identified, screened, excluded, and included, as well as reasons for exclusion at the full-text screening stage.

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**Presentation of the results** Data will be presented in a synthesis as a “map,” framework and described narratively to best convey the findings uncovered in the scoping review. The main results will be summarized alongside the main findings and will be linked to the original review questions and objectives as well as current literature.

Thematic synthesis will distinguish between evidence derived from academic sources and that based on policy and legal documents. Legislative milestones and policy shifts will be presented in a timeline format to demonstrate their chronological impact on NP role expansion. The synthesis of findings will be presented in the form of narrative summaries, thematic groupings, and tabular formats. Where appropriate, a conceptual framework or visual map may be developed to illustrate the organization and development of the Nurse Practitioner role in Israel. The review’s conclusions will be explicitly linked to the original research objectives and questions and will highlight areas for future investigation. The final synthesis will be tailored to inform multiple knowledge users, including policymakers, educators, healthcare professionals, and other stakeholders involved in the development and integration of advanced nursing roles within the Israeli healthcare system.

**Language restriction** English and Hebrew.

**Country(ies) involved** Israel.

**Keywords** Nursing practitioners; Advance Nursing; Israel.

**Dissemination plans** Dissemination of the findings will first occur via submission of the scoping review for peer-reviewed publication in a scientific journal. Following publication of the study, the findings will be shared with the experts in the field.

#### **Contributions of each author**

Author 1 - Ksenya Shulyaev - Author 1 developed the research question and review framework, defined the inclusion and exclusion criteria, drafted the review protocol, and registered it.

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Author 2 - Anna Zisberg - Author 2 supervised drafting the scoping review protocol, critically revised the content, and prepared the final version for submission.

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Author 3 - Efrat Shadmi - Author 3 conceptualized and designed the scoping review.

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Author 4 - Chava Kurtz - Author 4 critically revised the content of the protocol and participated in preparing the final version for submission.

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