

Seeking Best Practices to Optimize the Patient Experience in Medical Travel from Northern BC

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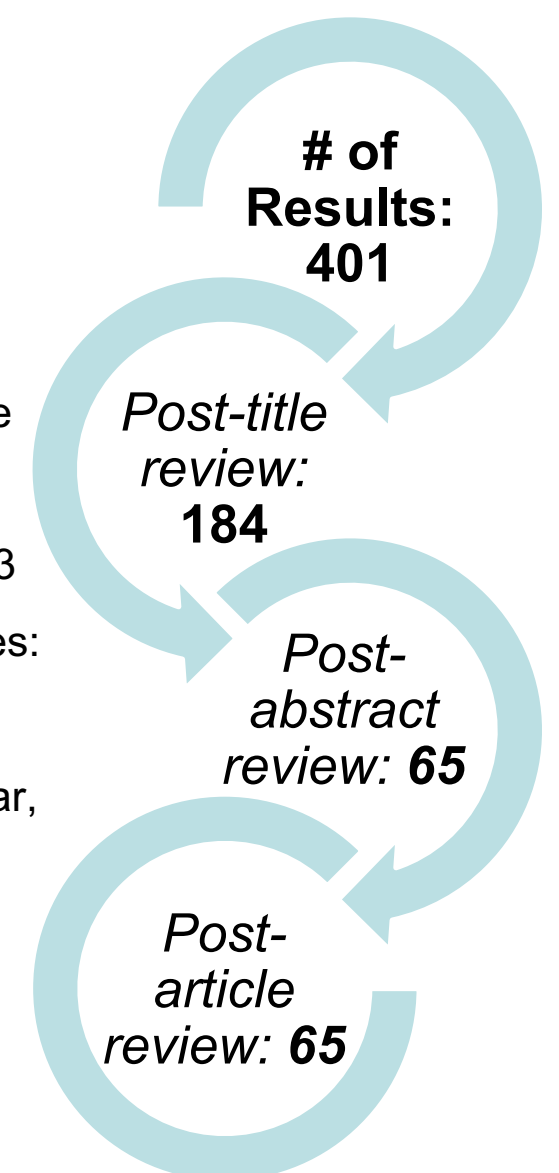
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Background

- Additional knowledge is needed on the patient experience of transitioning from rural settings to urban centers for a higher level of medical care
- The experience before, during, and after transfer, in combination with critical illness, can be very stressful for patients and families
- Before transfer, the anticipation of moving from a familiar location to an unfamiliar metropolitan area can be anxiety provoking
- During transfer, patients experience confusion and fear due to the unpredictable nature of transfer and lack of control
- Upon returning home, inconsistencies in discharge planning and care plans in their home community can increase stress
- **Objective:** Perform a scoping review summarizing relevant literature to better understand the experiences of patients and families who travel outside of their home community to receive medical care and how health care providers and policy makers can better support this process

Methodology

- An advisory board of patient partners was formed. Their input guided the search strategy process
- Medline Ovid was the main database used to conduct the scoping review
- Inclusion criteria combined 13 terms within 3 main categories: (1) Rural/Urban: rural, urban, northern, isolated, circumpolar, remote, (2) Medical Care: medical*, patient, hospital, clinic, and (3) Transition: transition, travel, relocate

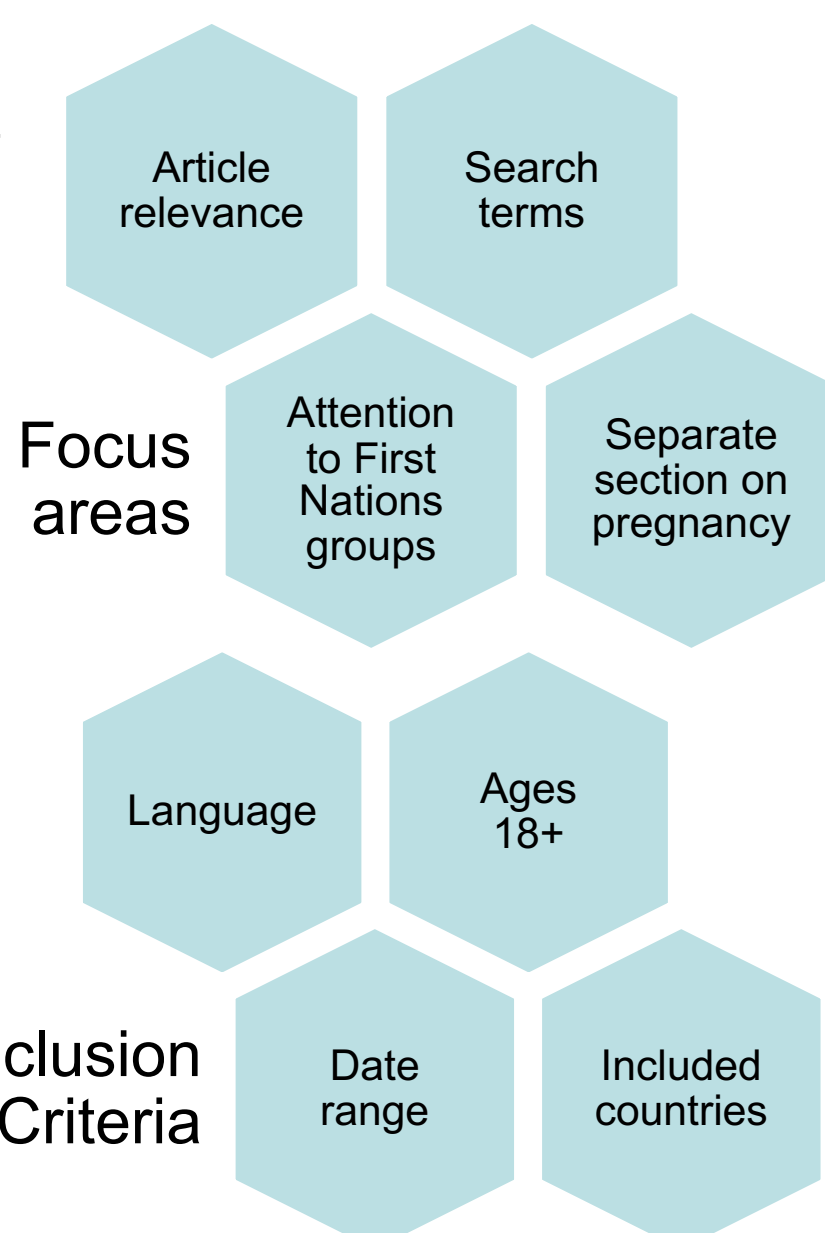


Patient-Partner Engagement

Patient partners directly shaped the literature review process through refining inclusion criteria and deciding on focus areas for the literature review.

Examples of patient partner recommendations:

- Date the search from 2009-2019 as going beyond this would not be helpful due to drastic advances in wireless technology having significantly changed access to care for isolated communities
- Highlight the experience of pregnancy care and abortion care in the literature review. This is important due to the challenges that individuals in rural communities face accessing these services



Discussion and Impact

The literature review is one of five steps within a larger study:

1. Formation of a Stakeholder Advisory Board, 2. Scoping Review, 3. Focus Groups, 4. Patient Journey Mapping, and 5. Community Forums.

This project intends to:

- Inform a Best Practices Guideline that will support patients in rural and northern communities who must leave their communities to access medical care
- Build capacity for community-based research in Northwestern BC and Transitions in Care
- Engage patients as key team members and support their involvement allowing for increase in knowledge translation
- Involve surrounding First Nations groups in the research process
- Patient partners provided important insights based on their living experience that the research team would not have otherwise considered
- Patient partner guidance allows us to understand their specific priorities and concerns, focus on what is meaningful to them, and create a Best Practices Guideline that will meet their needs

Acknowledgements



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Reference

Arksey, H., & O'Malley, L. (2005). Scoping studies: Towards a methodological framework. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 8(1), 19-32.