

Australian General Practitioners' views on qualities that make effective discharge communication: a scoping review

Background

- ❖ Transitions of patient care between hospital discharge and the community are known to be an area of high-risk where communication is imperative for patient safety.
- ❖ The Inadequate communication during transitions of care is known to result in hospital re-admissions, patient related harm, mortality, and associated costs

Aims

The aim of this review was to identify and map literature that discusses Australian General Practitioners' (GPs) views on the qualities that make up effective discharge communication.

Methods

- ❖ Medline via Ovid, Scopus and Cochrane databases were searched using MeSH headings and keywords.
- ❖ Articles were included for review if they discussed Australian GPs' views on discharge communication from hospital to general practice

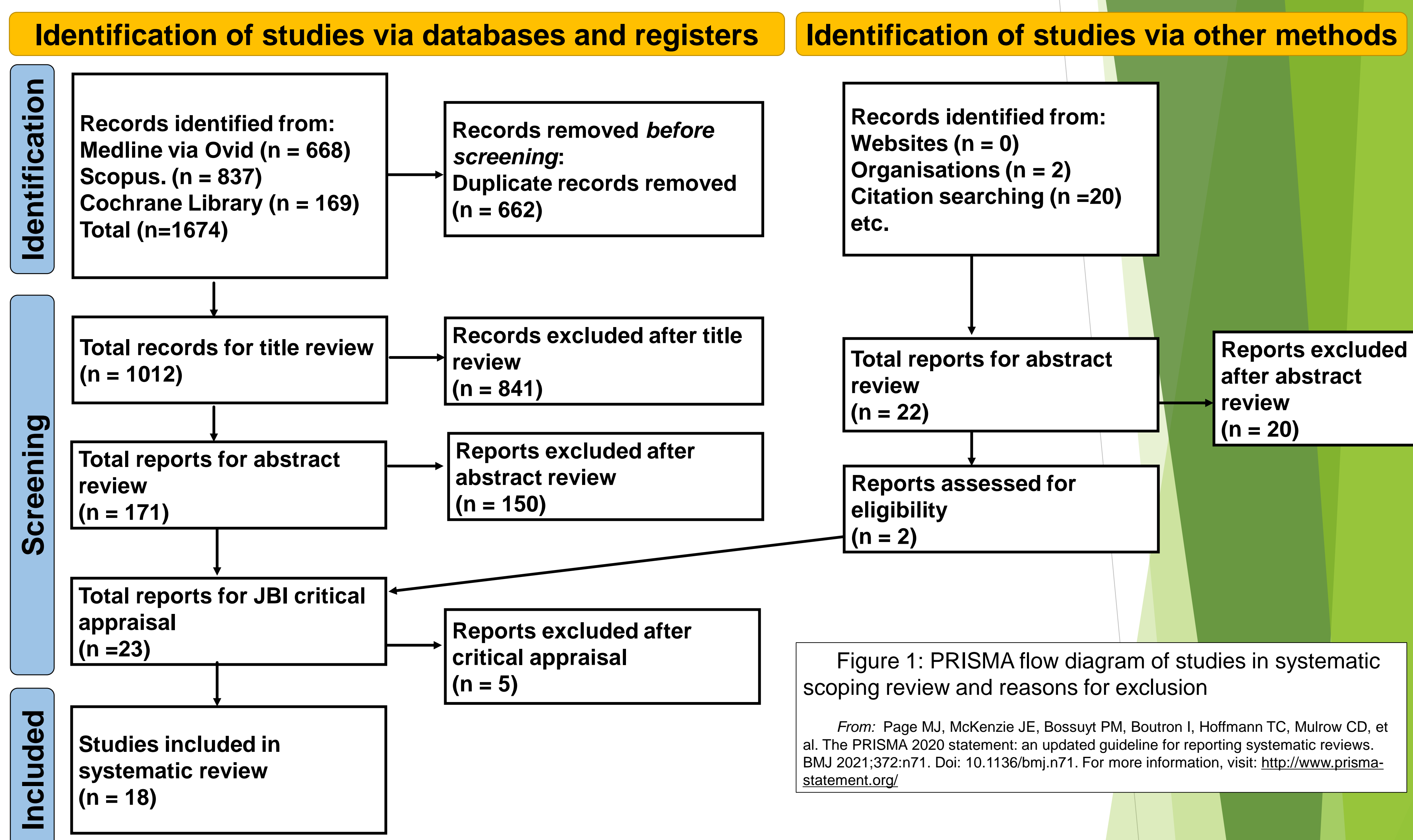


Figure 1: PRISMA flow diagram of studies in systematic scoping review and reasons for exclusion
From: Page MJ, McKenzie JE, Bossuyt PM, Boutron I, Hoffmann TC, Mulrow CD, et al. The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. BMJ 2021;372:n71. Doi: 10.1136/bmj.n71. For more information, visit: <http://www.prisma-statement.org/>

Results

- ❖ Eighteen primary research studies met the inclusion criteria.
- ❖ Fourteen studies were quantitative, four were qualitative, and one was mixed-methods.
- ❖ Five studies identified that GPs view the timeliness of discharge summary receipt to be a problem.
- ❖ Communication of medication information in the discharge summary was discussed in six studies, with two of these reporting that GPs view reasons for medication changes to be essential.
- ❖ Five studies noted that GPs would prefer to receive clinical discipline or diagnosis specific information.
- ❖ Four studies identified GPs viewed the format and readability of discharge summaries to be problematic, with difficulties finding salient information.

Conclusions

- ❖ The findings of this scoping review indicate that GPs view timeliness, completeness, readability, medication information and diagnosis/clinical discipline specific information to be the qualities that make up effective discharge communication from hospital discharge to the community.
- ❖ There are opportunities for further research in Australian GPs' perspectives on effective discharge communication, and future studies in interventions to improve discharge communication, patient safety and policy in transfers of care