

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form (<http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/resources/checklist.pdf>) and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	Identifying and Understanding the Health and Social Care Needs of Older Adults with Multiple Chronic Conditions and their Caregivers: A Protocol for a Scoping Review.
AUTHORS	Commissio, Elana; McGilton, Kathy; Ayala, Ana Patricia; Andrew, Melissa; Bergman, Howard; Beaudet, Line; Dubé, Veronique; Gray, Mikaela; Hale, Lori; Keatings, Margaret; Marshall, Emily; McElhaney, Janet; Morgan, Debra; Parrott, Edna; Ploeg, Jenny; Sampalli, Tara; Stephens, Douglas; Vedel, Isabelle; Walker, Jennifer; Wodchis, Walter; Puts, Martine

VERSION 1 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Dr Sarah Donnelly School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice, University College Dublin, Ireland
REVIEW RETURNED	11-Jul-2017
GENERAL COMMENTS	Many thanks for inviting me to review this interesting paper which outlines a protocol for a scoping review strategy in order to identify and understand the health and social care needs of older adults with multiple chronic conditions and their caregivers. This is an important emerging topic in health services research and the article is clear, well written, of a high standard and will make a valuable contribution to the dearth of literature on this subject. Each stage of the scoping review has been overall well explained and detailed. There are a few minor points I feel would benefit from further clarification and detail. Firstly, it is advised that protocol studies should include dates of the study to be carried out and while the finish date for the review is included (May 2017) the start date has been omitted and should be included. Secondly, some discussion relating to the actual search terms employed in the review and the rationale for the search terms chosen would be helpful as while Appendix A Medline search outlines the search terms employed, there is no discussion of the search terms in the main body of the article. Finally, some further elaboration of the how the quality criteria relating to Indigenous Focused studies will be employed and a supporting reference for the proposed strategy would also be helpful.

REVIEWER	Ronald D. Adelman Weill Medical College of Cornell University United States
REVIEW RETURNED	23-Jul-2017
GENERAL COMMENTS	I applaud the focus of the proposed research protocol; the literature review in the manuscript is incomplete; the questions of the protocol are so broad it unclear how the actual literature review will serve to answer these questions. When the researchers refer to the social and structural determinants of health- what do they mean specifically and how do they plan to synthesize these results to

VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Reviewer 1

Reviewer Comment:

There are a few minor points I feel would benefit from further clarification and detail. Firstly, it is advised that protocol studies should include dates of the study to be carried out and while the finish date for the review is included (May 2017) the start date has been omitted and should be included.

Author Response:

- We thank the reviewer for calling this omission to our attention. We have now added in start and finish dates for the review:

Pages 9: “Final searches were completed in May 2017 and we anticipate completion of study review processes by April 2018.”

Reviewer Comment:

Secondly, some discussion relating to the actual search terms employed in the review and the rationale for the search terms chosen would be helpful as while Appendix A Medline search outlines the search terms employed, there is no discussion of the search terms in the main body of the article.

Author Response:

We appreciate that including examples of terms employed in the search, in the main body of the article, would be beneficial.

- We have thus added in examples of search terms on pages 8-9: “Examples of search terms for the broad concept of care needs, preferences and priorities include: health priorities health services needs and demand and patient preferences. Examples of terms for the concept Indigenous populations include: aboriginal, Indigenous, native and tribe. Examples of terms for the concept of multimorbidity include: comorbidity, multiple chronic conditions, multimorbidity, and polypathology.”

Reviewer Comment:

Finally, some further elaboration of the how the quality criteria relating to Indigenous Focused studies will be employed and a supporting reference for the proposed strategy would also be helpful.

Author Response:

At present there is no standardized framework of the additional quality criteria to be applied to Indigenous-focused studies. Development of quality criteria for Indigenous-focused studies is underway, by Dr. Jennifer Walker, the Indigenous health researcher co-author for this study. To address the reviewer's comment we have provided more detail regarding our approach to employing additional quality criteria relating to Indigenous-focused studies, which follows standards for Indigenous research in Canada, and is informed by work currently being carried out by Dr. Walker.

- Specifically, on page 11 we have elaborated on how the quality criteria will be employed by adding the following two sentences: "The community engagement criterion will be met if the author list includes co-authors from Indigenous communities or organizations or if there is explicit description of the community engagement approaches. The Indigenous perspectives criterion will be met if the research team included (or consulted with) Indigenous Elders and/or Knowledge Keepers; established an Indigenous advisory structure; used an Indigenous theoretical framework; or employed Indigenous research methods."

- Furthermore, on page 11, we have added in a reference to the Tri-Council Policy Statement, Chapter 9, where standards for Indigenous research in Canada have been established, as well as a reference to a forthcoming systematic review, co-authored by Dr. Walker, where the above-listed quality criteria were developed and employed.

Reviewer: 2

Reviewer Comment:

I applaud the focus of the proposed research protocol; the literature review in the manuscript is incomplete; the questions of the protocol are so broad it unclear how the actual literature review will serve to answer these questions.

Author Response:

We thank the reviewer for the comment.

- We concur that our research questions are broad, as our aim in this work, is to explore the breadth and depth of the research and grey literature in our topic area. This is why we have chosen to conduct a scoping review, as scoping review methods permit this type of exploratory inquiry in a broad topic area. The specific aim of this work is to map key concepts and types of evidence as well as to identify gaps in the evidence. To this end, part of our proposed approach to answering these research questions is to conduct thematic, narrative summaries through content analysis, as we have clarified in the manuscript on page 11: "... and to conduct thematic content analysis.⁴³"

- Furthermore, if our findings reveal the need for a narrower synthesis of the literature in this area, the team will consider the merits of conducting a future systematic review and meta-analysis, which we have indicated on page 13: "If sufficient literature is found, our team will consider whether there is merit in conducting a future systematic review and meta-analysis."

Reviewer Comment:

When the researchers refer to the social and structural determinants of health- what do they mean specifically and how do they plan to synthesize these results to

Author Response:

As the reviewer's comment is incomplete, we have attempted to the best of our abilities to address the questions raised.

- To clarify what is meant by social and structural determinants of health we have added in examples of such determinants on page 7: "How do social and structural determinants of health, such as gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity and education, impact these needs?"
- Additionally, on page 6, we have added references to the World Health Organization Social Determinants of Health framework and an integrative review focusing on social determinants of health in older adults with multimorbidity co-authored by Dr. PI

VERSION 2 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Dr Sarah Donnelly University College Dublin, Ireland
REVIEW RETURNED	04-Nov-2017
GENERAL COMMENTS	I am very satisfied that this paper now satisfies the criteria for publication and that no further revisions are required. In my opinion, you have comprehensively addressed all of the points and issues raised during the first review process and that your scoping review protocol paper on 'Identifying and Understanding the Health and Social Care Needs of Older Adults with Multiple Chronic Conditions and their Caregivers' makes an important contribution to the knowledge base.