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Barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use for opioid agonist treatment: protocol for a scoping review

Journal:	<i>BMJ Open</i>
Manuscript ID	bmjopen-2019-032285
Article Type:	Protocol
Date Submitted by the Author:	11-Jun-2019
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Keywords:	opioid agonist treatment, scoping review, buprenorphine, HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT, Substance misuse < PSYCHIATRY, PUBLIC HEALTH

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Manuscripts

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3 1 **TITLE: Barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use for opioid agonist treatment:**
4 2 **protocol for a scoping review**

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For peer review only

1 **Abstract**

2 **Introduction:** In the context of the opioid crisis in North America, the benefits of evidence-
3 based opioid agonist treatments (OAT) such as buprenorphine/naloxone have not been optimized
4 due to low uptake. Numerous factors contribute to the underuse of buprenorphine, and theory-
5 informed approaches to identify and address implementation barriers and facilitators are needed.
6 This scoping review aims to characterise the barriers and facilitators at the patient, healthcare
7 professional, organization, and system level according to the Theoretical Domains Framework
8 (TDF), and identify gaps to inform practice and policy.

9 **Methods and analysis:** We will conduct a scoping review using established methods and follow
10 the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis extension for scoping
11 reviews (PRISMA-ScR). We will identify English and French-language peer-reviewed literature
12 by searching five electronic bibliographic databases, from inception, and use Google, websites of
13 key organizations, and two or more custom search engines to identify relevant grey literature.
14 Eligible records will be quantitative or qualitative studies that examine barriers and facilitators to
15 buprenorphine use at the patient, healthcare professional, organization, and system level, and
16 involve participants with diagnosis of opioid use disorder or professionals involved in their care.
17 Two reviewers will be involved in independently screening, reviewing, and charting the data and
18 calibration exercises will be conducted at each stage. We will conduct descriptive analysis for
19 the charted data, and deductively code barriers and facilitators using the TDF.

20 **Ethics and dissemination:** As a scoping review of the literature, this study does not require
21 ethics approval. Our dissemination strategy will focus on developing tailored activities to meet
22 the needs of diverse knowledge user audiences. Barriers and facilitators mapped to the TDF can

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3 1 be linked to evidence-based strategies for change to improve buprenorphine use and access, and
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5 2 enable practice to reduce opioid-related harms.
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9 3 **Registration:** Open Science Framework (osf.io/mwetz/; June 4, 2019)
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12 4 **Keywords:** opioid agonist treatment; barriers and facilitators, scoping review, buprenorphine
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15 5 **Article summary**

16 17 18 6 Strengths and limitations of the study

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21 7 • This scoping review will contribute to the literature the first comprehensive
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23 8 understanding of the multiple levels of barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use to
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25 9 advance the design and implementation of buprenorphine delivery in various settings
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28 10 • Our methodology will follow the framework developed by Arksey and O'Malley and
29
30 11 enhanced by Levac et al. and the Joanna Briggs Institute, limited to English and French
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32 12 published and grey literature.
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35 13 • The Theoretical Domains Framework has been used extensively in health care
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37 14 implementation research, and enables our analysis to comprehensively account for
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39 15 individual, social, and environmental level influences on behavior.
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42 16 • To manage the number and scope of included studies, we will select and use systematic
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44 17 review level evidence, and exclude the primary literature included in the systematic
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47 18 review if there is alignment with our research question and search strategy.
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1 Introduction

2 Fatal and non-fatal opioid poisonings continue to escalate in North America, with an
3 estimated 47,600 opioid-related deaths in the United States (U.S.)¹ and more than 10,000 in
4 Canada between January 2016 and September 2018.² In response, strategies aimed at preventing
5 and reducing opioid-related deaths have been established, including access to evidence-based
6 treatment options for opioid use disorder (OUD). In the United States, approximately 7% of
7 individuals with OUD receive specialty care with approved medications for OUD,³ while the
8 extent of the gap in treatment in Canada has not been characterised. Opioid agonist treatments
9 (OAT) such as buprenorphine/naloxone have demonstrated effectiveness in reducing opioid-
10 related morbidity and mortality. Further, the superior safety and side effect profile of
11 buprenorphine and equivalent efficacy compared to methadone has led it to be the preferred first-
12 line treatment for OUD in Canada.⁴ Importantly, the superior safety profile of buprenorphine
13 reduces the treatment burden for the patient, with more flexible dosing schedules and earlier
14 provision of take-home prescriptions than methadone.⁴ Given the evidence, and continuing
15 opioid overdose crisis, widespread implementation and utilisation of evidence-based
16 buprenorphine for OUD would maximize its benefit in the population. While approved for use in
17 Canada since 2007 without any required exemptions for physicians,^{5,6} implementation of
18 buprenorphine has not been optimized. In British Columbia and Ontario, more than twice as
19 many patients on OAT receive methadone compared with buprenorphine,^{7,8} while many more
20 may need treatment and not be engaged using either medication.

21 The body of literature relevant to the underuse of buprenorphine for OUD suggests a
22 range of barriers, related to patients, healthcare professionals, organizations, and system level
23 policies. Numerous factors such as patient preferences,^{9,10} insufficient prescriber knowledge,¹¹⁻¹³

1 inadequate time or resources,^{11,12,14,15} institutional support,¹⁶ stigma,^{11,12} concern of diversion,¹⁷⁻
2 ¹⁹ insurance coverage,²⁰ geographic barriers,²¹ and limited numbers of prescribers^{22,23} have been
3 described as causes of limited access and use of buprenorphine. Though several barriers have
4 been identified, there have been few studies that have explored and characterised these factors
5 using theory. Three current systematic reviews of barriers to OAT are registered in
6 PROSPERO,²⁴⁻²⁶ of which one focuses on adolescents²⁵ and two focus on specific professional
7 groups including pharmacists and physicians.^{24,26} Furthermore, two of the reviews focus on OAT
8 generally, including methadone.^{24,25} To our knowledge, no existing research addresses the
9 barriers and facilitators at multiple levels, and specific to buprenorphine use. Consequently, the
10 literature on barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use remains narrow in scope and under-
11 theorized. Behaviour change theories and implementation frameworks can be effective tools to
12 identify key behavioural influences related to adoption of evidence-based practices and potential
13 strategies to address them.²⁷ A theory-informed approach to understanding implementation
14 problems related to buprenorphine use can guide analysis of factors at multiple levels. This
15 information can help to identify effective strategies that address barriers and leverage facilitators,
16 which may ultimately reduce mortality during an opioid crisis.

17 This study addresses the question: What are the barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine
18 use at the patient, healthcare professional, organization, and system level, experienced by people
19 with a diagnosis of opioid use disorder or professionals involved in their care? The specific aims
20 of this scoping review are to: (1) characterise the barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use
21 experienced by patients, healthcare professionals, organizations, and healthcare systems reported
22 in the peer-reviewed and grey literature, and (2) identify gaps in the literature to inform future
23 implementation practice. We will use the Theoretical Domains Framework (TDF)²⁷ as a

1 behaviour change theory to guide our review and we will apply an integrated knowledge
2 translation (iKT) approach,²⁸ engaging knowledge users including harm reduction workers and
3 people with lived experience of drug use (including opioid use), health system leaders and
4 educators, primary care and addiction medicine prescribers, health service researchers,
5 implementation science methodologists, and knowledge mobilization specialists throughout the
6 study as members of the project team.

7 **Methods and analysis**

8 Due to the breadth of the literature on barriers and facilitators of buprenorphine use at
9 multiple levels, a scoping review is an appropriate approach to address the broad aims of this
10 study. Our scoping review methodology will follow the framework developed by Arksey and
11 O'Malley²⁹ and enhanced by Levac et al.³⁰ and the Joanna Briggs Institute,³¹ and includes five of
12 the six outlined stages.²⁹ The optional sixth stage of consultations will be carried out in another
13 phase of our research; however, we will have knowledge user involvement on the project team
14 throughout. Our reporting will follow the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and
15 Meta-Analyses extension for scoping reviews (PRISMA-ScR) to ensure quality and transparency
16 of the methods and results described in our review;³² and for the protocol, see the accompanying
17 Research Checklist - Preferred reporting items for systematic review and meta-analysis protocols,
18 PRISMA-P. Our study does not require ethics approval since the proposed methodology consists
19 of a review of publicly available peer-reviewed and grey literature. We have also registered this
20 protocol in Open Science Framework (osf.io/mwctz; June 4, 2019). We will conduct the scoping
21 review between June 2019 and March 2020, with preparation in May 2019 involving an initial
22 assessment of search results and the application of selection criteria between reviewers.

1 Our objectives are to: 1) systematically scope the literature; 2) map barriers and
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1 Our objectives are to: 1) systematically scope the literature; 2) map barriers and
2 facilitators at multiple levels according to the 14 theoretical domains of the TDF; and 3) identify
3 gaps in the literature. We selected the TDF to inform our analysis because it has been used
4 extensively in implementation research to identify barriers and facilitators to change (e.g., uptake
5 of new treatments) among healthcare professionals and patients.³³ The TDF is a synthesis of
6 thirty-three theories relevant to behaviour change into twelve domains, and then revised to
7 fourteen domains, that influence behaviour change: knowledge; skills; social/professional role
8 and identity; beliefs about capabilities; optimism; beliefs about consequences; reinforcement;
9 intentions; goals; memory, attention, and decision processes; environmental context and
10 resources; social influences; emotion; behavioural regulation.²⁷ The domains of the TDF
11 comprehensively account for individual, social, and environmental level influences on behavior.

12 Additionally, the fourteen domains of the TDF link to the core dimension of the
13 Behaviour Change Wheel (BCW), in which capability, opportunity, and motivation (COM-B)
14 are conceptualised as the three interacting conditions that generate behaviour. Linkage to the
15 BCW can guide the selection of intervention functions, policy categories, and behaviour change
16 techniques (i.e., the active component on a behaviour change intervention)^{34,35} to overcome
17 barriers and enhance facilitators.

18 *Search strategy*

19 First, we will search MEDLINE, Embase, PsycINFO, CINAHL, and SociINDEX
20 electronic databases for peer-reviewed literature using a comprehensive search strategy from
21 inception to 2019. Two research librarians at Public Health Ontario (PHO) developed the search
22 strategy in MEDLINE, which was then peer-reviewed by other members of PHO Library

1 Services (See Supplement 1). Key search concepts included buprenorphine, opioid agonist
2 treatment, and barriers and facilitators. Due to its comprehensive search functions, the search
3 strategy was first developed for MEDLINE, and will be modified for use in the other databases.
4 We will review the first 10 search results per year between 2019 and 2009 to ensure that the
5 search strategy is identifying relevant titles, and captures all sample articles identified prior to the
6 search. The search strategy will include both English and French language publications, due to
7 long-term experience with buprenorphine prescribing practices in France.³⁶

8 Second, we will conduct a grey literature search following PHO grey literature standards
9 where fidelity to the academic literature search is maintained within the constraints of our chosen
10 records. The results and strategies for each source will be reported on PHO Grey Literature
11 reporting form. We will search Google, websites of key organizations (e.g., Health Quality
12 Ontario), and two or more custom search engines that capture national and international
13 government and non-government organizations in the areas of health and public health, and we
14 will review the first 100 results. If no French records were identified, we will perform a specific
15 search in Google with a French extension and using French terms. This is to ensure we capture
16 lessons learned from the context in France, in which there has been long-term and widespread
17 use of buprenorphine among healthcare professionals.³⁶ Prior to analysis, searches for the peer-
18 reviewed and grey literature will be re-run to ensure that the most current available information
19 is captured. Third, we will screen the reference lists of all included articles, search PROSPERO
20 for relevant systematic reviews using the term “buprenorphine” and contact registered study
21 authors, and ask knowledge users on the project team for relevant records.²⁴⁻²⁶

22 *Eligibility criteria*

1 English and French-language peer-reviewed and grey literature records will be eligible
2 for inclusion if they: 1) aim to examine barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use; 2) include
3 study participants (including all age groups) with a diagnosis of OUD, opioid dependence, or
4 currently on buprenorphine, as well as professionals involved in their care; 3) describe barriers or
5 facilitators to buprenorphine use at the patient/caregiver, healthcare professional, organization or
6 system level; and 4) use qualitative (e.g., interviews, focus groups, questionnaires), quantitative
7 (e.g., cohort, case control, randomized controlled trials, questionnaires) or systematic review
8 study designs. There will be no restrictions on the clinical care setting used in the study. Articles
9 with no research method examining barriers and facilitators will be excluded (e.g., narrative
10 reviews, commentary articles, guideline documents without systematic methods for literature
11 synthesis). We will also exclude studies that combine barriers and facilitators for both
12 buprenorphine and methadone together, as we aim specifically to describe those most relevant to
13 buprenorphine.

14 *Study selection*

15 Two reviewers will independently screen search results and apply the eligibility criteria
16 to titles and abstracts. A calibration exercise will be conducted after screening the first 100
17 results or until sufficient agreement is achieved (80% inter-rater agreement) to ensure reliability
18 of source selection for inclusion, to pilot test the application of the eligibility criteria, and to
19 establish a common understanding of the criteria. We will refine the eligibility criteria if there is
20 low agreement on certain conditions or if limited records are identified for each level.

21 Both reviewers will independently screen titles and abstracts of eligible articles with the
22 refined criteria, and relevant records will undergo a full-text review that follows the same

1 process as the title and abstract screening including calibration. Discrepancies will be addressed
 2 through consensus discussion or involvement of a third reviewer. We will screen reference lists
 3 and relevant records identified by knowledge users in a similar manner. It is likely that the broad
 4 inclusion of barriers and facilitators at multiple levels will generate extensive search results that
 5 will need to be managed to the scope of our resources and capacity for this project. For example,
 6 in preliminary communication with an author of an ongoing systematic review in PROSPERO,
 7 the research team expects to include over 100 primary studies [PROSPERO 2018
 8 CRD42018086835; personal communication]. To manage the number and scope of included
 9 studies, we will select and use systematic review level evidence, and exclude the primary
 10 literature included in the systematic review if there is alignment with our research question and
 11 search strategy.

12 *Data charting process*

13 Data will be abstracted into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet table. The data items are
 14 outlined in Table 1.

15 **Table 1. Data items**

Data items	Description
Reference ID number	ID number in citation management software
Author (s)	First author
Year of publication	Article year
Geographic location	In which country/city was the study conducted
Study design	The study design as defined by authors
Study setting	Where did the study take place
Population and sample size	Number and characteristics of participants of the study
Study aims/purpose	The aims of the study as defined by the author

Intervention description	Characteristics of the buprenorphine intervention described by the author (may include no direct intervention in the study e.g., survey of attitudes)
Outcomes	How the authors measured outcomes and the main results
Barriers to the intervention at different levels	Factors that may have reduced use of buprenorphine at the level of the patient, healthcare professional, organization, and healthcare system level
Facilitators to the intervention at different levels	Factors that may have enabled use of buprenorphine at the level of the patient, healthcare professional, organization, and healthcare systems
Theoretical basis	If applicable, theories and frameworks described in the study for the categorization of barriers and facilitators
Study limitations	Authors' reported gaps and limitations of the study

Two reviewers will independently extract data from 10 records included in the published (n=5) and grey literature search (n=5) to ensure consistency in how the relevant data is extracted and that there is common understanding of the categories and how to use the form. We will sample in sets of five until 80% inter-rater agreement is achieved across all items. Additionally, the principal investigator will review the data, and refine or add categories as needed. Following testing, one reviewer will independently read and extract data from all included records, and a second reviewer will independently verify 20% of the records for reliability. Discrepancies in the extracted information will be resolved through discussion with the principal investigator. Data extraction will be an iterative process whereby the table will be reviewed and revised to include feedback from knowledge users as well as emerging themes from the literature that are not captured in the table. In line with the scoping review methodology and the aims of our project, we will not perform critical appraisal and risk of bias assessment of included records.²⁹

1 *Data synthesis*

2 For our second objective, we will code the barriers and facilitators extracted from the
3 literature to the constructs included and defined in the domains of the TDF. Two project team
4 members will analyze and code 10% of the data table into the domains of the TDF using pre-
5 determined definitions. If insufficient detail is provided to map barriers and facilitators to the
6 TDF domains, we will use components of the COM-B model to which the TDF are linked.³⁷ If
7 the authors of an included study have categorized their findings according to the TDF or COM-
8 B, we will use the author's categorizations, and also note the methodology used by the authors.
9 Codes will be assigned to barriers and facilitators that do not align with the TDF or COM-B. The
10 TDF domains and sub-domains within them, COM-B, and newly generated codes will be used to
11 develop a coding framework. To ensure validity and credibility, the broader project team will be
12 involved in a consensus discussion on the coding framework. Upon reaching consensus, coding
13 will be applied by two team members to the remaining extracted data, and an inter-rater exercise
14 will be completed to achieve 80% agreement. We will provide a descriptive summary
15 highlighting the most frequent themes within each level. When applicable and useful, we will
16 also use frequency analysis to provide a numerical summary of the charted data. For example,
17 study characteristics of the included records (e.g., design, participants, and settings) will largely
18 be described using frequencies. Records drawing from the same study dataset will be treated as
19 one unit of analysis.

20 For our third objective, the TDF analysis of the barriers and facilitators at different levels
21 will facilitate the process of identifying gaps in the literature. We will examine the domains of
22 the TDF in which there are none or few barriers and facilitators identified. The paucity of
23 identified barriers and facilitators within these domains may represent areas which are not

1 relevant for buprenorphine use or where a gap in the literature may exist. Non-coded domains
 2 will be discussed with the project team to prompt for examples of barriers and facilitators that
 3 were not captured in the literature. In addition, we will analyze the charted data on the study
 4 limitations, as described by authors, to characterize areas for further research. The proposed data
 5 synthesis plan and its alignment with each of the study objectives are presented in Table 2.

6 **Table 2. Synthesis of results**

Study objective	Data items	Reporting
To identify the barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use experienced by patients, healthcare professionals, or within organizations, and healthcare systems	Reported factors that reduced or facilitated use of buprenorphine at the level of the patient, healthcare professional, organization, and healthcare system level	The number of articles identified that report barriers or facilitators at each level.
		The number of articles that report barriers or facilitators by domain of the TDF and COM-B model across the levels.
		Description of the types of barriers or facilitators at each level according to the domains of the TDF and COM-B model, and compare prevalent barriers and facilitators between levels.
		The number of articles that report barriers or facilitators that did not align with the domains of the TDF and a description of these barriers or facilitators.
To identify gaps in the literature	Authors' reported limitations and gaps	Description of existing gaps in the literature and areas for future research and evaluation.
		Description of the domains of the TDF which had none or few coded barriers or facilitators.

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2 *Patient and public involvement*

3 The research team includes people with lived experience of substance use and individuals who
4 support people with engagement in treatment for opioid use disorder. Further, several team members
5 work closely with people who use drugs in the context of clinical work or community-based research.
6 These members have provided guidance on designing the scoping review, as part of a larger
7 implementation evaluation study.

8 **Ethics and dissemination**

9 Our protocol follows a rigorous methodology, using a theory-based approach that
10 provides for systematic understanding of the factors contributing to underuse of buprenorphine
11 as an evidence-based treatment for OUD. Our process for analysis will generate a list of barriers
12 and facilitators mapped to the domains of the TDF and COM-B (when applicable) that can be
13 further linked to evidence-based strategies for change to improve use and access. Representation
14 of people who use drugs and practice at all levels on the project team will increase the potential
15 for our findings from the literature and mapping is valid, reliable, and relevant. Although
16 research ethics board is not required for our study, engagement with people who use drugs will
17 also mitigate the potential for our stigmatized beliefs to be reflected in work. Further
18 consultation and understanding of barriers and facilitators in the Canadian context using in-depth
19 interviews and group consultations with representatives from each level will occur in the next
20 phase of this work.

21 Informed by the Knowledge-to-Action framework,³⁸ our dissemination strategy will
22 focus on developing tailored activities to meet the needs of diverse knowledge user audiences.

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3 1 First, dissemination to academic audiences will occur with the preparation of a scoping review
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5 2 manuscript to be submitted to an open-access journal. To supplement the manuscript, we will
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7 3 create summaries using multiple formats that are accessible to a broader set of knowledge users
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10 4 including, online visual and written summaries, webinars, interactive workshops, and conference
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12 5 presentations. All summaries that are developed will contain the link to the open-access journal,
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14 6 and be posted on the Public Health Ontario website and social media page that reaches
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17 7 approximately 27,000 followers.
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1 This scoping review will contribute to the literature the first comprehensive understanding of the
2 multiple levels of barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use to advance the design and
3 implementation of buprenorphine delivery in various settings. This work will constitute the first
4 step in a multi-phase project aimed at evaluating the implementation of buprenorphine in
5 Canada. Our results can enable healthcare professionals, researchers, organizations, and system
6 leaders to identify population-level strategies that address barriers and enhance facilitators to
7 improve treatment access. Doing so is critical as this evidence-based treatment is a vital
8 component of our response to reduce opioid-related mortality during the largest drug overdose
9 crisis in North America.

10

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1 **Declarations**

2 Authors' contributions: PL, KC, CS, AMB, ST, EM, KA, EG, MH, HM, SS participated in the
3 development of the protocol for this project. BP developed and conducted the search. PL and TK
4 drafted the manuscript and all authors revised it. All authors read and approved the final
5 manuscript.

6 Funding statement: This scoping review is part of a project funded by the Canadian Institutes of
7 Health Research Operating Grant: Evaluation of Interventions to Address the Opioid Crisis
8 (Funding Reference Number: 162063).

9 Competing interests statement: All authors report a grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health
10 Research during the development of the protocol. PL, TK, EM, BP report employment at Public
11 Health Ontario. PL and CS report non-financial support from Adapt Pharma through in-kind
12 donation of naloxone on an unrelated study.

13 Acknowledgements: We would like to thank, Lee Fairclough, Frank Crichlow, and Amy Wright
14 who provided their expertise in the development of the proposal for this project. We would also
15 like to thank members of Library Services at Public Health Ontario who provided peer-review of
16 the search strategy.

17 Data availability statement: Data are not available as this manuscript refers to our study protocol
18 which has not yet been completed.

19 Additional File: Supplement 1 (pdf): Full electronic search strategy for Ovid MEDLINE. This
20 file includes the full search strategy and results for Medline, and adapted for other databases.

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1 Word Count: 2858

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For peer review only

Supplement 1. Full electronic search strategy for OVID MEDLINE

The following search was designed by Public Health Ontario (PHO) Library Services in Ovid MEDLINE and then adapted to the Ovid platform databases Embase and PsycINFO, and the EBSCO host databases CINAHL, and SocINDEX, using subject headings and search fields specific to those databases.

Table 1. Search strategy in Ovid MEDLINE (1946 to April 15, 2019)

#	Searches	Results
1	Buprenorphine, Naloxone Drug Combination/	233
2	(buprenorphine or suboxone or subutex).ti.	3667
3	opiate addiction/ or opiate substitution treatment/ or narcotic antagonist/	24746
4	((opioid* or opiate*) adj3 (agonist* or dependen* or disorder* or maintenance or substitut* or treatment* or therap*)).ti,ab,kw.	23800
5	buprenorphine/ or (buprenorphine or suboxone or subutex).ab,kw. or (52485-79-7 or 53152-21-9).rn.	6764
6	5 and (3 or 4)	3846
7	1 or 2 or 6	5508
8	attitude/ or attitude to health/ or awareness/ or consumer health information/ or habit/ or health behavior/ or health education/ or health literacy/ or help seeking behavior/ or motivation/ or perception/ or personal autonomy/ or satisfaction/ or exp self concept/ or social behavior/ or exp "social aspects and related phenomena"/ or self control/ or social discrimination/ or social competence/ or time/ or time factor/	1620486
9	exp "cost"/ or economics/ or pharmacoeconomics/ or exp insurance/ or exp health insurance/ or exp reimbursement/ or fee/	394599
10	exp health care delivery/ or health care organization/ or exp health service/ or economic model/ or resource allocation/	2605283
11	government/ or health care policy/ or medical care/ or exp medicaid/ or exp medicare/ or policy/ or public policy/	101965
12	health personnel attitude/ or medication compliance/ or patient attendance/ or ambulatory care/ or patient attitude/ or patient compliance/ or patient dropout/ or patient education/ or patient participation/ or patient preference/ or patient satisfaction/ or doctor patient relation/ or professional-patient relationship/ or patient referral/ or treatment refusal/	464331
13	(access* or accept* or adverse effect* or afford* or approach* or attitude* or aware* or barrier* or belief* or challenge* or cost* or coverage or denial* or discriminat* or educat* or efficien* or enabl* or facilitat* or fear* or financ* or formularies or formulary or gender or harass* or incarcerat* or induct* or inefficien* or insurance or interaction* or knowledge or law or laws or "lessons learn*" or Medicaid or Medicare or motivat* or office-based or outreach or perception* or perspective* or (pattern* adj3 prescrib*) or pay* or pharmacoeconomic* or polic* or preferen* or promot* or refus* or refer* or regulat* or resource* or side effect* or social or stigma* or support* or	12346029

	sustainab* or threshold or time* or train* or willingness or worry*).ti,ab,kw.	
14	or/8-13	14172121
15	7 and 14	3897
16	(exp Africa/ or exp Asia/ or exp "South and Central America"/ or exp Mexico/ or developing country/) not (North America/ or Canada/ or United States/ or exp "Australia and New Zealand"/ or exp Europe/ or developed country/)	942835
17	15 not 16	3822
18	(exp animal/ or animal experiment/ or nonhuman/) not exp human/	4569638
19	17 not 18	3289
20	limit 19 to (english or french)	3104

PRISMA-P (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic review and Meta-Analysis Protocols) 2015 checklist: recommended items to address in a systematic review protocol*

Section and topic	Item No	Checklist item	Line and Page No.
ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION			
Title:			
Identification	1a	Identify the report as a protocol of a systematic review	1-2; Pg. 1
Update	1b	If the protocol is for an update of a previous systematic review, identify as such	N/A
Registration	2	If registered, provide the name of the registry (such as PROSPERO) and registration number	3; Pg. 5
Authors:			
Contact	3a	Provide name, institutional affiliation, e-mail address of all protocol authors; provide physical mailing address of corresponding author	6-46; Pg. 1-3 1-5; Pg. 3
Contributions	3b	Describe contributions of protocol authors and identify the guarantor of the review	2-5; Pg. 25
Amendments	4	If the protocol represents an amendment of a previously completed or published protocol, identify as such and list changes; otherwise, state plan for documenting important protocol amendments	N/A
Support:			
Sources	5a	Indicate sources of financial or other support for the review	6-8; Pg. 25
Sponsor	5b	Provide name for the review funder and/or sponsor	6-8; Pg. 25
Role of sponsor or funder	5c	Describe roles of funder(s), sponsor(s), and/or institution(s), if any, in developing the protocol	N/A
INTRODUCTION			
Rationale	6	Describe the rationale for the review in the context of what is already known	3-16; Pg. 7
Objectives	7	Provide an explicit statement of the question(s) the review will address with reference to participants, interventions, comparators, and outcomes (PICO)	17-23; Pg. 7
METHODS			
Eligibility criteria	8	Specify the study characteristics (such as PICO, study design, setting, time frame) and report characteristics (such as years considered, language, publication status) to be used as criteria for eligibility for the review	1-13; Pg. 11
Information sources	9	Describe all intended information sources (such as electronic databases, contact with study authors, trial registers or other grey literature sources) with planned dates of coverage	18-22; Pg. 9 1-21; Pg. 10
Search strategy	10	Present draft of search strategy to be used for at least one electronic database, including planned limits such that it could be repeated	Supplement 1

Study records:			
Data management	11a	Describe the mechanism(s) that will be used to manage records and data throughout the review	N/A
Selection process	11b	State the process that will be used for selecting studies (such as two independent reviewers) through each phase of the review (that is, screening, eligibility and inclusion in meta-analysis)	14-22; Pg. 11 1-11; Pg. 12
Data collection process	11c	Describe planned method of extracting data from reports (such as piloting forms, done independently in duplicate), any processes for obtaining and confirming data from investigators	12-15; Pg. 12 1-13; Pg. 13
Data items	12	List and define all variables for which data will be sought (such as PICO items, funding sources), any pre-planned data assumptions and simplifications	Table 1; Pg. 12
Outcomes and prioritization	13	List and define all outcomes for which data will be sought, including prioritization of main and additional outcomes, with rationale	N/A for scoping review
Risk of bias in individual studies	14	Describe anticipated methods for assessing risk of bias of individual studies, including whether this will be done at the outcome or study level, or both; state how this information will be used in data synthesis	N/A for scoping review
Data synthesis	15a	Describe criteria under which study data will be quantitatively synthesised	N/A
	15b	If data are appropriate for quantitative synthesis, describe planned summary measures, methods of handling data and methods of combining data from studies, including any planned exploration of consistency (such as I^2 , Kendall's τ)	N/A
	15c	Describe any proposed additional analyses (such as sensitivity or subgroup analyses, meta-regression)	N/A
	15d	If quantitative synthesis is not appropriate, describe the type of summary planned	1-23; Pg. 14 1-6, Table 2; Pg. 15
Meta-bias(es)	16	Specify any planned assessment of meta-bias(es) (such as publication bias across studies, selective reporting within studies)	N/A for scoping review
Confidence in cumulative evidence	17	Describe how the strength of the body of evidence will be assessed (such as GRADE)	N/A for scoping review

*** It is strongly recommended that this checklist be read in conjunction with the PRISMA-P Explanation and Elaboration (if available) for important clarification on the items. Amendments to a review protocol should be tracked and dated. The copyright for PRISMA-P (including checklist) is held by the PRISMA-P Group and is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution Licence 4.0.**

From: Shamseer L, Moher D, Clarke M, Ghersi D, Liberati A, Petticrew M, Shekelle P, Stewart L, PRISMA-P Group. Preferred reporting items for systematic review and meta-analysis protocols (PRISMA-P) 2015: elaboration and explanation. BMJ. 2015 Jan 2;349(jan02 1):g7647.

BMJ Open

Barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use for opioid agonist treatment: protocol for a scoping review

Journal:	<i>BMJ Open</i>
Manuscript ID	bmjopen-2019-032285.R1
Article Type:	Protocol
Date Submitted by the Author:	02-Oct-2019
Complete List of Authors:	Leece, Pamela; Public Health Ontario, Health Promotion, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Khorasheh, Triti; Public Health Ontario, Health Promotion, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Corace, Kimberly; University of Ottawa, Strike, Carol; University of Toronto, Dalla Lana School of Public Health Bayoumi, Ahmed; St. Michael's Hospital, Centre for Research on Inner City Health, Keenan Research Centre of the Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute Taha, Sheena; Canadian Center on Substance Use and Addiction Marks, Elisabeth; Public Health Ontario Laboratory Services Pach, Beata; Public Health Ontario Ahamad, Keith; British Columbia Centre on Substance Use Grennell, Erin; Queen's University Holowaty, Melissa; Queen's University Manson, Heather; Public Health Ontario, Health promotion, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Straus, Sharon; St. Michael's Hospital, Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute
Primary Subject Heading:	Addiction
Secondary Subject Heading:	Public health
Keywords:	opioid agonist treatment, scoping review, buprenorphine, HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT, Substance misuse < PSYCHIATRY, PUBLIC HEALTH

SCHOLARONE™
Manuscripts

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2
3 1 **TITLE: Barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use for opioid agonist treatment:**
4 2 **protocol for a scoping review**

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For peer review only

1 **Abstract**

2 **Introduction:** In the context of the opioid crisis in North America, the benefits of evidence-
3 based opioid agonist treatments (OAT) such as buprenorphine/naloxone have not been optimized
4 due to low uptake. Numerous factors contribute to the underuse of buprenorphine, and theory-
5 informed approaches to identify and address implementation barriers and facilitators are needed.
6 This scoping review aims to characterise the barriers and facilitators at the patient, healthcare
7 professional, organization, and system level according to the Theoretical Domains Framework
8 (TDF), and identify gaps to inform practice and policy.

9 **Methods and analysis:** We will conduct a scoping review using established methods and follow
10 the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis extension for scoping
11 reviews (PRISMA-ScR). We will identify English and French-language peer-reviewed literature
12 by searching five electronic bibliographic databases (MEDLINE, Embase, PsycINFO, CINAHL,
13 and SociINDEX), from inception, and use Google, websites of key organizations, and two or
14 more custom search engines to identify relevant grey literature. Eligible records will be
15 quantitative or qualitative studies that examine barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use at
16 the patient, healthcare professional, organization, and system level, and involve participants with
17 diagnosis of opioid use disorder or professionals involved in their care. Two reviewers will be
18 involved in independently screening, reviewing, and charting the data and calibration exercises
19 will be conducted at each stage. We will conduct descriptive analysis for the charted data, and
20 deductively code barriers and facilitators using the TDF.

21 **Ethics and dissemination:** As a scoping review of the literature, this study does not require
22 ethics approval. Our dissemination strategy will focus on developing tailored activities to meet

1 the needs of diverse knowledge user audiences. Barriers and facilitators mapped to the TDF can
2 be linked to evidence-based strategies for change to improve buprenorphine use and access, and
3 enable practice to reduce opioid-related harms.

4 **Registration:** Open Science Framework (osf.io/mwctz; June 4, 2019)

5 **Keywords:** opioid agonist treatment; barriers and facilitators, scoping review, buprenorphine

6 **Article summary**

7 Strengths and limitations of the study

- 8 • This scoping review aims to understand multiple levels of barriers and facilitators to
9 buprenorphine use to advance the design and implementation of buprenorphine delivery
10 in various settings
- 11 • Our methodology will follow the framework developed by Arksey and O'Malley and
12 enhanced by Levac et al. and the Joanna Briggs Institute..
- 13 • The Theoretical Domains Framework enables our analysis to comprehensively account
14 for individual, social, and environmental level influences on behavior.
- 15 • To manage the number of included studies, we will use systematic review level evidence
16 and exclude overlapping primary literature if there is alignment with our question and
17 search strategy.
- 18 • Our search may be limited in capturing newer innovations in practice, such as low-
19 threshold models or recent buprenorphine formulations (e.g., depot buprenorphine)

1 Introduction

2 Fatal and non-fatal opioid poisonings continue to escalate in North America, with an
3 estimated 47,600 opioid-related deaths in the United States (U.S.)¹ and more than 10,000 in
4 Canada between January 2016 and September 2018.² In response, strategies aimed at preventing
5 and reducing opioid-related deaths have been established, including access to evidence-based
6 treatment options for opioid use disorder (OUD). In the United States, approximately 7% of
7 individuals with OUD receive specialty care with approved medications for OUD,³ while the
8 extent of the gap in treatment in Canada has not been characterised. Opioid agonist treatments
9 (OAT) such as buprenorphine/naloxone have demonstrated effectiveness in reducing opioid-
10 related morbidity and mortality. Further, the superior safety and side effect profile of
11 buprenorphine and equivalent efficacy compared to methadone has led it to be the preferred first-
12 line treatment for OUD in Canada.⁴ Importantly, the superior safety profile of buprenorphine
13 reduces the treatment burden for the patient, with more flexible dosing schedules and earlier
14 provision of take-home prescriptions than methadone.⁴ Given the evidence, and continuing
15 opioid overdose crisis, widespread implementation and utilisation of evidence-based
16 buprenorphine for OUD would maximize its benefit in the population. While approved for use in
17 Canada since 2007 without any required exemptions for physicians,^{5,6} implementation of
18 buprenorphine including availability, accessibility, and uptake, have not been optimized to
19 achieve higher rates of use among eligible people. In British Columbia and Ontario, more than
20 twice as many patients on OAT receive methadone compared with buprenorphine,^{7,8} while many
21 more may need treatment and not be engaged using either medication.

22 The body of literature relevant to the underuse of buprenorphine for OUD suggests a
23 range of barriers, related to patients, healthcare professionals, organizations, and system level

1 policies. Numerous factors such as patient preferences,^{9,10} insufficient prescriber knowledge,¹¹⁻¹³
2 inadequate time or resources,^{11,12,14,15} institutional support,¹⁶ stigma,^{11,12} concern of diversion,¹⁷⁻
3 ¹⁹ insurance coverage,²⁰ geographic barriers,²¹ and limited numbers of prescribers^{22,23} have been
4 described as causes of limited access and use of buprenorphine. Though several barriers have
5 been identified, there have been few studies that have explored and characterised these factors
6 using theory. Three current systematic reviews of barriers to OAT are registered in
7 PROSPERO,²⁴⁻²⁶ of which one focuses on adolescents²⁵ and two focus on specific professional
8 groups including pharmacists and physicians.^{24,26} Furthermore, two of the reviews focus on OAT
9 generally, including methadone.^{24,25} To our knowledge, no existing research addresses the
10 barriers and facilitators at multiple levels, and specific to buprenorphine use. Consequently, the
11 literature on barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use remains narrow in scope and under-
12 theorized. Behaviour change theories and implementation frameworks can be effective tools to
13 identify key behavioural influences related to adoption of evidence-based practices and potential
14 strategies to address them.²⁷ A theory-informed approach to understanding implementation
15 problems related to buprenorphine use can guide analysis of factors at multiple levels. There is a
16 high potential to expand access to OAT by addressing barriers and leveraging facilitators specific
17 to the context of buprenorphine - it is the preferred first-line treatment due to safety reasons, and
18 considerations may differ between treatments (e.g., initiation protocols, risk of precipitated
19 withdrawal, full- or partial-agonist pharmacology), calling for specific attention to
20 buprenorphine. This information can help to identify effective strategies that address barriers and
21 leverage facilitators, which may ultimately reduce mortality during an opioid crisis. While our
22 research team is based in Canada, this scoping review will be of interest to international

1 audiences as it includes international literature, and facilitators/ barriers to implementation may
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1 audiences as it includes international literature, and facilitators/ barriers to implementation may
2 be common across jurisdictions (e.g., stigma perceived at the patient level).

3 This study addresses the question: What are the barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine
4 use at the patient, healthcare professional, organization, and system level, experienced by people
5 with a diagnosis of opioid use disorder or professionals involved in their care? The specific aims
6 of this scoping review are to: (1) characterise the barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use
7 experienced by patients, healthcare professionals, organizations, and healthcare systems reported
8 in the peer-reviewed and grey literature, and (2) identify gaps in the literature to inform future
9 implementation practice. We will use the Theoretical Domains Framework (TDF)²⁷ as a
10 behaviour change theory to guide our review and we will apply an integrated knowledge
11 translation (iKT) approach,²⁸ engaging knowledge users including harm reduction workers and
12 people with lived experience of drug use (including opioid use), health system leaders and
13 educators, primary care and addiction medicine prescribers, health service researchers,
14 implementation science methodologists, and knowledge mobilization specialists throughout the
15 study as members of the project team. Throughout our protocol we use the term OAT as it is
16 consistent with the current national clinical practice guideline for treatment of opioid use
17 disorder opioid use disorder⁴. This term is also used in other jurisdictions, such as Australia,
18 while terms in other jurisdictions vary, including “medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD)”
19 in the United States,²⁹ and “opioid maintenance treatment” in Europe including the United
20 Kingdom.^{30,31}

21 **Methods and analysis**

1 Due to the breadth of the literature on barriers and facilitators of buprenorphine use at
2 multiple levels, a scoping review is an appropriate approach to address the broad aims of this
3 study.³² Systematic review methods are typically used for understanding outcomes across
4 multiple similar studies; a scoping review can assess the need or feasibility of a systematic
5 review.^{32,33} Our scoping review methodology will follow the framework developed by Arksey
6 and O'Malley³² and enhanced by Levac et al.³⁴ and the Joanna Briggs Institute,³⁵ and includes
7 five of the six outlined stages.³² The optional sixth stage of consultations will be carried out in
8 another phase of our research; however, we will have knowledge user involvement on the project
9 team throughout. Our reporting will follow the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic
10 Reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for scoping reviews (PRISMA-ScR) to ensure quality and
11 transparency of the methods and results described in our review;³⁶ and for the protocol, see the
12 accompanying Research Checklist - Preferred reporting items for systematic review and meta-
13 analysis protocols, PRISMA-P. Our study does not require ethics approval since the proposed
14 methodology consists of a review of publicly available peer-reviewed and grey literature. We
15 have also registered this protocol in Open Science Framework (osf.io/mwctz; June 4, 2019). We
16 will conduct the scoping review between June 2019 and March 2020, with preparation in May
17 2019 involving an initial assessment of search results and the application of selection criteria
18 between reviewers.

19 Our objectives are to: 1) systematically scope the literature; 2) map barriers and
20 facilitators at multiple levels according to the 14 theoretical domains of the TDF; and 3) identify
21 gaps in the literature. We selected the TDF to inform our analysis because it has been used
22 extensively in implementation research to identify barriers and facilitators to change (e.g., uptake
23 of new treatments) among healthcare professionals and patients.³⁷ The TDF is a synthesis of

1 thirty-three theories relevant to behaviour change into twelve domains, and then revised to
2 fourteen domains, that influence behaviour change: knowledge; skills; social/professional role
3 and identity; beliefs about capabilities; optimism; beliefs about consequences; reinforcement;
4 intentions; goals; memory, attention, and decision processes; environmental context and
5 resources; social influences; emotion; behavioural regulation.²⁷ The domains of the TDF
6 comprehensively account for individual, social, and environmental level influences on behavior.

7 Additionally, the fourteen domains of the TDF link to the core dimension of the
8 Behaviour Change Wheel (BCW), in which capability, opportunity, and motivation (COM-B)
9 are conceptualised as the three interacting conditions that generate behaviour. Linkage to the
10 BCW can guide the selection of intervention functions, policy categories, and behaviour change
11 techniques (i.e., the active component on a behaviour change intervention)^{38,39} to overcome
12 barriers and enhance facilitators.

13 *Search strategy*

14 First, we will search MEDLINE, Embase, PsycINFO, CINAHL, and SociINDEX
15 electronic databases for peer-reviewed literature using a comprehensive search strategy from
16 inception to 2019. Two research librarians at Public Health Ontario (PHO) developed the search
17 strategy in MEDLINE, which was then peer-reviewed by other members of PHO Library
18 Services (See Supplement 1). Key search concepts included buprenorphine, opioid agonist
19 treatment, and barriers and facilitators. Due to its comprehensive search functions, the search
20 strategy was first developed for MEDLINE, and will be modified for use in the other databases.
21 We will review the first 10 search results per year between 2019 and 2009 to ensure that the
22 search strategy is identifying relevant titles, and captures all sample articles identified prior to the

1 search. The search strategy will include both English and French language publications, due to
2 long-term experience with buprenorphine prescribing practices in France.⁴⁰ Due to limited
3 resources, we are unable to manage publications in other languages, and will not use automated
4 translation tools that could introduce error due to the technical nature of the topic.⁴¹⁻⁴³ Non-
5 English content represented a small proportion of all results retrieved in Medline (about 5%).

6 Second, we will conduct a grey literature search following PHO grey literature standards
7 where fidelity to the academic literature search is maintained within the constraints of our chosen
8 records. The results and strategies for each source will be reported on PHO Grey Literature
9 reporting form. We will search Google, websites of key organizations (e.g., Health Quality
10 Ontario), and two or more custom search engines that capture national and international
11 government and non-government organizations in the areas of health and public health, and we
12 will review the first 100 results. If no French records were identified, we will perform a specific
13 search in Google with a French extension and using French terms. This is to ensure we capture
14 lessons learned from the context in France, in which there has been long-term and widespread
15 use of buprenorphine among healthcare professionals.⁴⁰ Prior to analysis, searches for the peer-
16 reviewed and grey literature will be re-run to ensure that the most current available information
17 is captured. Third, we will screen the reference lists of all included articles, search PROSPERO
18 for relevant systematic reviews using the term “buprenorphine” and contact registered study
19 authors, and ask knowledge users on the project team for relevant records.²⁴⁻²⁶

20 *Eligibility criteria*

21 English and French-language peer-reviewed and grey literature records will be eligible
22 for inclusion if they: 1) aim to examine barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use; 2) include

1 study participants (including all age groups) with a diagnosis of OUD, opioid dependence, or
2 currently on buprenorphine, as well as professionals involved in their care; 3) describe barriers or
3 facilitators to buprenorphine use at the patient/caregiver, healthcare professional, organization or
4 system level; and 4) use qualitative (e.g., interviews, focus groups, questionnaires), quantitative
5 (e.g., cohort, case control, randomized controlled trials, questionnaires) or systematic review
6 study designs. There will be no restrictions on the clinical care setting used in the study. Articles
7 with no research method examining barriers and facilitators will be excluded (e.g., narrative
8 reviews, commentary articles, guideline documents without systematic methods for literature
9 synthesis). We will also exclude studies that combine barriers and facilitators for both
10 buprenorphine and methadone together, as we aim specifically to describe those most relevant to
11 buprenorphine.

12 *Study selection*

13 Two reviewers will independently screen search results and apply the eligibility criteria
14 to titles and abstracts. A calibration exercise will be conducted after screening the first 100
15 results or until sufficient agreement is achieved (80% inter-rater agreement) to ensure reliability
16 of source selection for inclusion, to pilot test the application of the eligibility criteria, and to
17 establish a common understanding of the criteria. We will refine the eligibility criteria if there is
18 low agreement on certain conditions or if limited records are identified for each level.

19 Both reviewers will independently screen titles and abstracts of eligible articles with the
20 refined criteria, and relevant records will undergo a full-text review that follows the same
21 process as the title and abstract screening including calibration. Discrepancies will be addressed
22 through consensus discussion or involvement of a third reviewer. We will screen reference lists

1 and relevant records identified by knowledge users in a similar manner. It is likely that the broad
 2 inclusion of barriers and facilitators at multiple levels will generate extensive search results that
 3 will need to be managed to the scope of our resources and capacity for this project. For example,
 4 in preliminary communication with an author of an ongoing systematic review in PROSPERO,
 5 the research team expects to include over 100 primary studies [PROSPERO 2018
 6 CRD42018086835; personal communication]. To manage the number and scope of included
 7 studies, we will select and use systematic review level evidence, and exclude the primary
 8 literature included in the systematic review if there is alignment with our research question and
 9 search strategy.

10 *Data charting process*

11 Data will be abstracted into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet table. The data items are
 12 outlined in Table 1. To account for differences in health systems, we will extract information
 13 available on the jurisdictional context of service delivery to the extent available in the data on
 14 geographic location and study setting.

15 **Table 1. Data items**

Data items	Description
Reference ID number	ID number in citation management software
Author (s)	First author
Year of publication	Article year
Geographic location	In which country/city was the study conducted (including context)
Study design	The study design as defined by authors
Study setting	Where did the study take place (including context)
Population and sample size	Number and characteristics of participants of the study

Study aims/purpose	The aims of the study as defined by the author
Intervention description	Characteristics of the buprenorphine intervention described by the author (may include no direct intervention in the study e.g., survey of attitudes)
Outcomes	How the authors measured outcomes and the main results
Barriers to the intervention at different levels	Factors that may have reduced use of buprenorphine at the level of the patient, healthcare professional, organization, and healthcare system level
Facilitators to the intervention at different levels	Factors that may have enabled use of buprenorphine at the level of the patient, healthcare professional, organization, and healthcare systems
Theoretical basis	If applicable, theories and frameworks described in the study for the categorization of barriers and facilitators
Study limitations	Authors' reported gaps and limitations of the study

Two reviewers will independently extract data from 10 records included in the published (n=5) and grey literature search (n=5) to ensure consistency in how the relevant data is extracted and that there is common understanding of the categories and how to use the form. We will sample in sets of five until 80% inter-rater agreement is achieved across all items. Additionally, the principal investigator will review the data, and refine or add categories as needed. Following testing, one reviewer will independently read and extract data from all included records, and a second reviewer will independently verify 20% of the records for reliability. Discrepancies in the extracted information will be resolved through discussion with the principal investigator. Data extraction will be an iterative process whereby the table will be reviewed and revised to include feedback from knowledge users as well as emerging themes from the literature that are not

1 captured in the table. In line with the scoping review methodology and the aims of our project,
2 we will not perform critical appraisal and risk of bias assessment of included records.³²

3 *Data synthesis*

4 For our second objective, we will code the barriers and facilitators extracted from the
5 literature to the constructs included and defined in the domains of the TDF. Two project team
6 members will analyze and code 10% of the data table into the domains of the TDF using pre-
7 determined definitions. If insufficient detail is provided to map barriers and facilitators to the
8 TDF domains, we will use components of the COM-B model to which the TDF are linked.⁴⁴ If
9 the authors of an included study have categorized their findings according to the TDF or COM-
10 B, we will use the author's categorizations, and also note the methodology used by the authors.
11 Codes will be assigned to barriers and facilitators that do not align with the TDF or COM-B. The
12 TDF domains and sub-domains within them, COM-B, and newly generated codes will be used to
13 develop a coding framework. To ensure validity and credibility, the broader project team will be
14 involved in a consensus discussion on the coding framework. Upon reaching consensus, coding
15 will be applied by two team members to the remaining extracted data, and an inter-rater exercise
16 will be completed to achieve 80% agreement. We will provide a descriptive summary
17 highlighting the most frequent themes within each level. When applicable and useful, we will
18 also use frequency analysis to provide a numerical summary of the charted data. For example,
19 study characteristics of the included records (e.g., design, participants, and settings) will largely
20 be described using frequencies. Records drawing from the same study dataset will be treated as
21 one unit of analysis.

22 For our third objective, the TDF analysis of the barriers and facilitators at different levels
23 will facilitate the process of identifying gaps in the literature. We will examine the domains of

1 the TDF in which there are none or few barriers and facilitators identified. The paucity of
 2 identified barriers and facilitators within these domains may represent areas which are not
 3 relevant for buprenorphine use or where a gap in the literature may exist. Non-coded domains
 4 will be discussed with the project team to prompt for examples of barriers and facilitators that
 5 were not captured in the literature. In addition, we will analyze the charted data on the study
 6 limitations, as described by authors, to characterize areas for further research. The proposed data
 7 synthesis plan and its alignment with each of the study objectives are presented in Table 2.

8 **Table 2. Synthesis of results**

Study objective	Data items	Reporting
To identify the barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use experienced by patients, healthcare professionals, or within organizations, and healthcare systems	Reported factors that reduced or facilitated use of buprenorphine at the level of the patient, healthcare professional, organization, and healthcare system level	The number of articles identified that report barriers or facilitators at each level.
		The number of articles that report barriers or facilitators by domain of the TDF and COM-B model across the levels.
		Description of the types of barriers or facilitators at each level according to the domains of the TDF and COM-B model, and compare prevalent barriers and facilitators between levels.
		The number of articles that report barriers or facilitators that did not align with the domains of the TDF and a description of these barriers or facilitators.
To identify gaps in the literature	Authors' reported limitations and gaps	Description of existing gaps in the literature and areas for future research and evaluation.

		Description of the domains of the TDF which had none or few coded barriers or facilitators.
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2 *Patient and public involvement*

3 The research team includes people with lived experience of substance use and individuals
 4 who support people with engagement in treatment for opioid use disorder. Further, several team
 5 members work closely with people who use drugs in the context of clinical work or community-
 6 based research. These members have provided guidance on designing the scoping review, as part
 7 of a larger implementation evaluation study.

8 **Ethics and dissemination**

9 Our protocol follows a rigorous methodology, using a theory-based approach that
 10 provides for systematic understanding of the factors contributing to underuse of buprenorphine
 11 as an evidence-based treatment for OUD. Our process for analysis will generate a list of barriers
 12 and facilitators mapped to the domains of the TDF and COM-B (when applicable) that can be
 13 further linked to evidence-based strategies for change to improve use and access. Representation
 14 of people who use drugs and practice at all levels on the project team will increase the potential
 15 for our findings from the literature and mapping is valid, reliable, and relevant. Although
 16 research ethics board is not required for our study, engagement with people who use drugs will
 17 also mitigate the potential for our stigmatized beliefs to be reflected in work. Further
 18 consultation and understanding of barriers and facilitators in the Canadian context using in-depth
 19 interviews and group consultations with representatives from each level will occur in the next
 20 phase of this work.

1 Informed by the Knowledge-to-Action framework,⁴⁵ our dissemination strategy will
2 focus on developing tailored activities to meet the needs of diverse knowledge user audiences.
3 First, dissemination to academic audiences will occur with the preparation of a scoping review
4 manuscript to be submitted to an open-access journal. To supplement the manuscript, we will
5 create summaries using multiple formats that are accessible to a broader set of knowledge users
6 including, online visual and written summaries, webinars, interactive workshops, and conference
7 presentations. All summaries that are developed will contain the link to the open-access journal,
8 and be posted on the Public Health Ontario website and social media page that reaches
9 approximately 27,000 followers.

10 This scoping review will contribute to the literature the first comprehensive
11 understanding of the multiple levels of barriers and facilitators to buprenorphine use to advance
12 the design and implementation of buprenorphine delivery in various settings. This work will
13 constitute the first step in a multi-phase project aimed at evaluating the implementation of
14 buprenorphine in Canada. Our results can enable healthcare professionals, researchers,
15 organizations, and system leaders to identify population-level strategies that address barriers and
16 enhance facilitators to improve treatment access. Doing so is critical as this evidence-based
17 treatment is a vital component of our response to reduce opioid-related mortality during the
18 largest drug overdose crisis in North America.

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4 **Declarations**

5 Authors' contributions: PL, KC, CS, AMB, ST, EM, KA, EG, MH, HM, SS participated in the
6 development of the protocol for this project. BP developed and conducted the search. PL and TK
7 drafted the manuscript and all authors revised it. All authors read and approved the final
8 manuscript.

9 Funding statement: This scoping review is part of a project funded by the Canadian Institutes of
10 Health Research Operating Grant: Evaluation of Interventions to Address the Opioid Crisis
11 (Funding Reference Number: 162063).

12 Competing interests statement: All authors report a grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health
13 Research during the development of the protocol. PL, TK, EM, BP report employment at Public
14 Health Ontario. PL and CS report non-financial support from Adapt Pharma through in-kind
15 donation of naloxone on an unrelated study.

16 Acknowledgements: We would like to thank, Lee Fairclough, Frank Crichlow, and Amy Wright
17 who provided their expertise in the development of the proposal for this project. We would also
18 like to thank members of Library Services at Public Health Ontario who provided peer-review of
19 the search strategy.

20 Data availability: All data relevant to the study are included in the article or uploaded as
21 supplementary information.

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1 Additional File: Supplement 1 (pdf): Full electronic search strategy for Ovid MEDLINE. This
2 file includes the full search strategy and results for Medline, and adapted for other databases.

3 Word Count: 3137

4

For peer review only

Supplement 1. Full electronic search strategy for OVID MEDLINE

The following search was designed by Public Health Ontario (PHO) Library Services in Ovid MEDLINE and then adapted to the Ovid platform databases Embase and PsycINFO, and the EBSCO host databases CINAHL, and SocINDEX, using subject headings and search fields specific to those databases.

Table 1. Search strategy in Ovid MEDLINE (1946 to April 15, 2019)

#	Searches	Results
1	Buprenorphine, Naloxone Drug Combination/	233
2	(buprenorphine or suboxone or subutex).ti.	3667
3	opiate addiction/ or opiate substitution treatment/ or narcotic antagonist/	24746
4	((opioid* or opiate*) adj3 (agonist* or dependen* or disorder* or maintenance or substitut* or treatment* or therap*)).ti,ab,kw.	23800
5	buprenorphine/ or (buprenorphine or suboxone or subutex).ab,kw. or (52485-79-7 or 53152-21-9).rn.	6764
6	5 and (3 or 4)	3846
7	1 or 2 or 6	5508
8	attitude/ or attitude to health/ or awareness/ or consumer health information/ or habit/ or health behavior/ or health education/ or health literacy/ or help seeking behavior/ or motivation/ or perception/ or personal autonomy/ or satisfaction/ or exp self concept/ or social behavior/ or exp "social aspects and related phenomena"/ or self control/ or social discrimination/ or social competence/ or time/ or time factor/	1620486
9	exp "cost"/ or economics/ or pharmacoeconomics/ or exp insurance/ or exp health insurance/ or exp reimbursement/ or fee/	394599
10	exp health care delivery/ or health care organization/ or exp health service/ or economic model/ or resource allocation/	2605283
11	government/ or health care policy/ or medical care/ or exp medicaid/ or exp medicare/ or policy/ or public policy/	101965
12	health personnel attitude/ or medication compliance/ or patient attendance/ or ambulatory care/ or patient attitude/ or patient compliance/ or patient dropout/ or patient education/ or patient participation/ or patient preference/ or patient satisfaction/ or doctor patient relation/ or professional-patient relationship/ or patient referral/ or treatment refusal/	464331
13	(access* or accept* or adverse effect* or afford* or approach* or attitude* or aware* or barrier* or belief* or challenge* or cost* or coverage or denial* or discriminat* or educat* or efficien* or enabl* or facilitat* or fear* or financ* or formularies or formulary or gender or harass* or incarcerat* or induct* or inefficien* or insurance or interaction* or knowledge or law or laws or "lessons learn*" or Medicaid or Medicare or motivat* or office-based or outreach or perception* or perspective* or (pattern* adj3 prescrib*) or pay* or pharmacoeconomic* or polic* or preferen* or promot* or refus* or refer* or regulat* or resource* or side effect* or social or stigma* or support* or	12346029

	sustainab* or threshold or time* or train* or willingness or worry*).ti,ab,kw.	
14	or/8-13	14172121
15	7 and 14	3897
16	(exp Africa/ or exp Asia/ or exp "South and Central America"/ or exp Mexico/ or developing country/) not (North America/ or Canada/ or United States/ or exp "Australia and New Zealand"/ or exp Europe/ or developed country/)	942835
17	15 not 16	3822
18	(exp animal/ or animal experiment/ or nonhuman/) not exp human/	4569638
19	17 not 18	3289
20	limit 19 to (english or french)	3104

PRISMA-P (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic review and Meta-Analysis Protocols) 2015 checklist: recommended items to address in a systematic review protocol*

Section and topic	Item No	Checklist item	Line and Page No.
ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION			
Title:			
Identification	1a	Identify the report as a protocol of a systematic review	1-2; Pg. 1
Update	1b	If the protocol is for an update of a previous systematic review, identify as such	N/A
Registration	2	If registered, provide the name of the registry (such as PROSPERO) and registration number	3; Pg. 5
Authors:			
Contact	3a	Provide name, institutional affiliation, e-mail address of all protocol authors; provide physical mailing address of corresponding author	6-46; Pg. 1-3 1-5; Pg. 3
Contributions	3b	Describe contributions of protocol authors and identify the guarantor of the review	2-5; Pg. 25
Amendments	4	If the protocol represents an amendment of a previously completed or published protocol, identify as such and list changes; otherwise, state plan for documenting important protocol amendments	N/A
Support:			
Sources	5a	Indicate sources of financial or other support for the review	6-8; Pg. 25
Sponsor	5b	Provide name for the review funder and/or sponsor	6-8; Pg. 25
Role of sponsor or funder	5c	Describe roles of funder(s), sponsor(s), and/or institution(s), if any, in developing the protocol	N/A
INTRODUCTION			
Rationale	6	Describe the rationale for the review in the context of what is already known	3-16; Pg. 7
Objectives	7	Provide an explicit statement of the question(s) the review will address with reference to participants, interventions, comparators, and outcomes (PICO)	17-23; Pg. 7
METHODS			
Eligibility criteria	8	Specify the study characteristics (such as PICO, study design, setting, time frame) and report characteristics (such as years considered, language, publication status) to be used as criteria for eligibility for the review	1-13; Pg. 11
Information sources	9	Describe all intended information sources (such as electronic databases, contact with study authors, trial registers or other grey literature sources) with planned dates of coverage	18-22; Pg. 9 1-21; Pg. 10
Search strategy	10	Present draft of search strategy to be used for at least one electronic database, including planned limits such that it could be repeated	Supplement 1

Study records:			
Data management	11a	Describe the mechanism(s) that will be used to manage records and data throughout the review	N/A
Selection process	11b	State the process that will be used for selecting studies (such as two independent reviewers) through each phase of the review (that is, screening, eligibility and inclusion in meta-analysis)	14-22; Pg. 11 1-11; Pg. 12
Data collection process	11c	Describe planned method of extracting data from reports (such as piloting forms, done independently in duplicate), any processes for obtaining and confirming data from investigators	12-15; Pg. 12 1-13; Pg. 13
Data items	12	List and define all variables for which data will be sought (such as PICO items, funding sources), any pre-planned data assumptions and simplifications	Table 1; Pg. 12
Outcomes and prioritization	13	List and define all outcomes for which data will be sought, including prioritization of main and additional outcomes, with rationale	N/A for scoping review
Risk of bias in individual studies	14	Describe anticipated methods for assessing risk of bias of individual studies, including whether this will be done at the outcome or study level, or both; state how this information will be used in data synthesis	N/A for scoping review
Data synthesis	15a	Describe criteria under which study data will be quantitatively synthesised	N/A
	15b	If data are appropriate for quantitative synthesis, describe planned summary measures, methods of handling data and methods of combining data from studies, including any planned exploration of consistency (such as I^2 , Kendall's τ)	N/A
	15c	Describe any proposed additional analyses (such as sensitivity or subgroup analyses, meta-regression)	N/A
	15d	If quantitative synthesis is not appropriate, describe the type of summary planned	1-23; Pg. 14 1-6, Table 2; Pg. 15
Meta-bias(es)	16	Specify any planned assessment of meta-bias(es) (such as publication bias across studies, selective reporting within studies)	N/A for scoping review
Confidence in cumulative evidence	17	Describe how the strength of the body of evidence will be assessed (such as GRADE)	N/A for scoping review

*** It is strongly recommended that this checklist be read in conjunction with the PRISMA-P Explanation and Elaboration (where available) for important clarification on the items. Amendments to a review protocol should be tracked and dated. The copyright for PRISMA-P (including checklist) is held by the PRISMA-P Group and is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution Licence 4.0.**

From: Shamseer L, Moher D, Clarke M, Ghersi D, Liberati A, Petticrew M, Shekelle P, Stewart L, PRISMA-P Group. Preferred reporting items for systematic review and meta-analysis protocols (PRISMA-P) 2015: elaboration and explanation. BMJ. 2015 Jan 2;349(jan02 1):g7647.