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## #111 - Context matters: a scoping review of implementation science in aged care

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### Objectives/aims

Aged care has been subject to considerable scrutiny and increasing regulation and reform over the last 20 years, and has been found to need better implementation of evidence to improve practice. Often, we look to healthcare to inform implementation efforts, where the field of implementation science has advanced significantly, while implementation science in aged care is still in a developmental phase. But when implementing evidence-based practice, context matters. While there are many parallels between aged care and clinical healthcare disciplines, there are some key contextual differences. A robust research field and sound understanding of implementation in the aged care context is required to support efforts to drive improvement.

The aim of this study was to explore the literature on aged care implementation science to identify strengths and weaknesses of this field, and to identify the factors that influence the implementation of evidence-based practice in the aged care context.

### Methods

We conducted a scoping review of academic literature published since 2012, exploring studies of implementation in aged care. We conducted screening using Covidence, and data extraction with NVivo. We collected data on the characteristics of the included studies and identified factors that influenced implementation. We triangulated this with input from an advisory group comprised of aged care consumers, workforce and researchers.



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## Main findings

Our search yielded 2206 papers, from which 1678 were removed in the initial screening. 528 underwent full-text screening, from which 346 were excluded. 182 studies met the criteria and were included in our review.

Our analysis showed that there has been considerable growth in the volume of aged care implementation research since 2012. The vast majority of studies relate to residential aged care (72%) and very few focus solely on community aged care (15%). The most common type of intervention related to the translation of knowledge/evidence to new or improved practice (guidelines etc, 58%). Interventions largely focused on clinical care (49%) compared to personal care (17%). Very few studies incorporated any degree of consumer involvement (14%) or were underpinned by an implementation science theory or framework (29%).

We identified five main themes of factors that influence implementation: people's beliefs, attitudes and capabilities; organisational context factors, particularly workforce and other resource shortages, as well as culture and systems; factors relating to the compatibility between the intervention, the context and the stakeholders; relational factors in terms of the interactions and relationships between stakeholders; and the implementation strategies and stakeholder engagement that constitute the activities of implementation. Our advisory group 'sense-checked' and validated these themes, and suggested additional factors within these themes.

The field of aged care implementation science is expanding, yet there remains a significant opportunity to optimise the quality and applicability of research by actively involving consumers and using implementation science frameworks. Greater attention to the community aged care sector is also recommended. Our identification of factors that influence implementation will inform the co-design of aged care context-specific guidance and practical resources to support organisations to successfully implement evidence-based practice to drive quality care for older people.