



# What are the indicators of FASD in adults?

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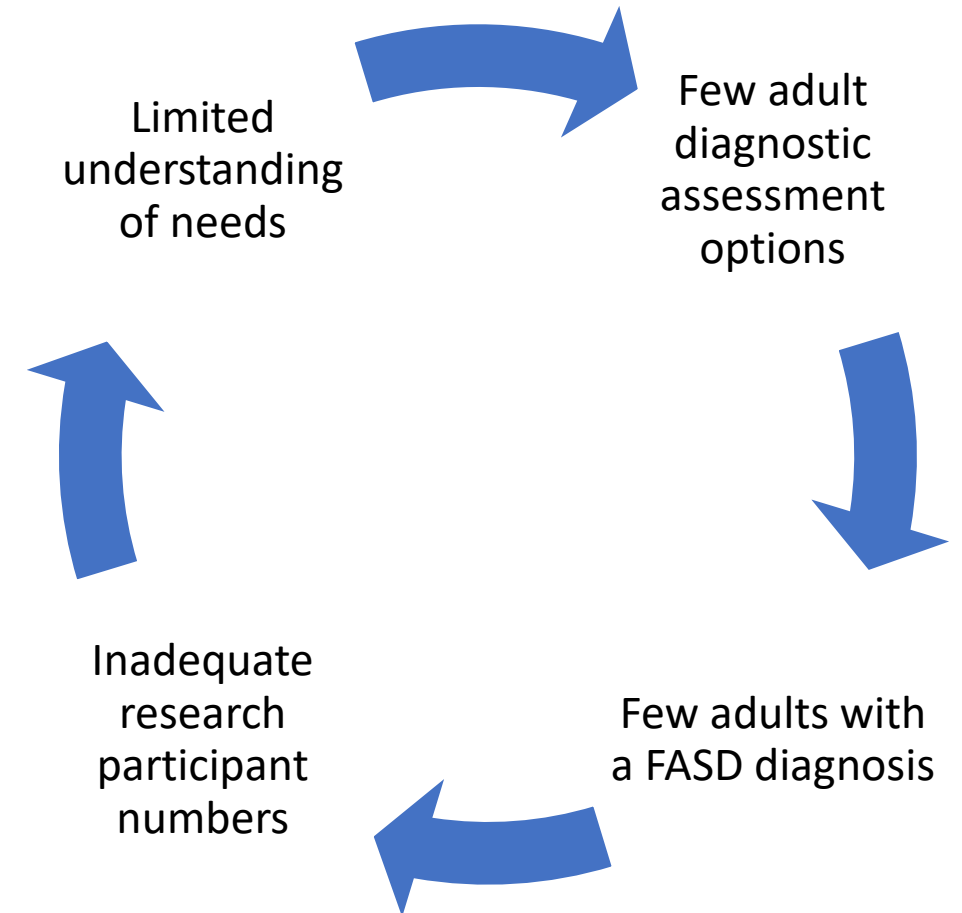
# Background

- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a lifelong neurodevelopmental condition.
- Almost all Australian FASD diagnostic clinics only provide assessments of children.
- There are no validated screening tools for identifying suspected FASD in adults.
- The result is few adults have a FASD diagnosis in Australia

# Challenges and Implications

## Underrepresentation in Research and Policy:

The lack of adult diagnosis limits the pool of identified individuals available for research and consultation in Australia, making it challenging for researchers, clinicians, and policymakers to understand FASD in adults.



**Aim:** To examine research literature to identify if there are specific indicators of FASD in adults beyond confirmed prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE).

**Objective:** To explore the potential for developing an indicator tool that could be used in practice and research.

# Search strategy

**Databases:** PsycINFO (OVID), Medline (OVID) CINAHL (UBESCO) ProQuest. (Nov 2022)

**Search terms:** FASD (all diagnosis) *and/or* Adult, *NOT* Rat, Mice, Zebrafish

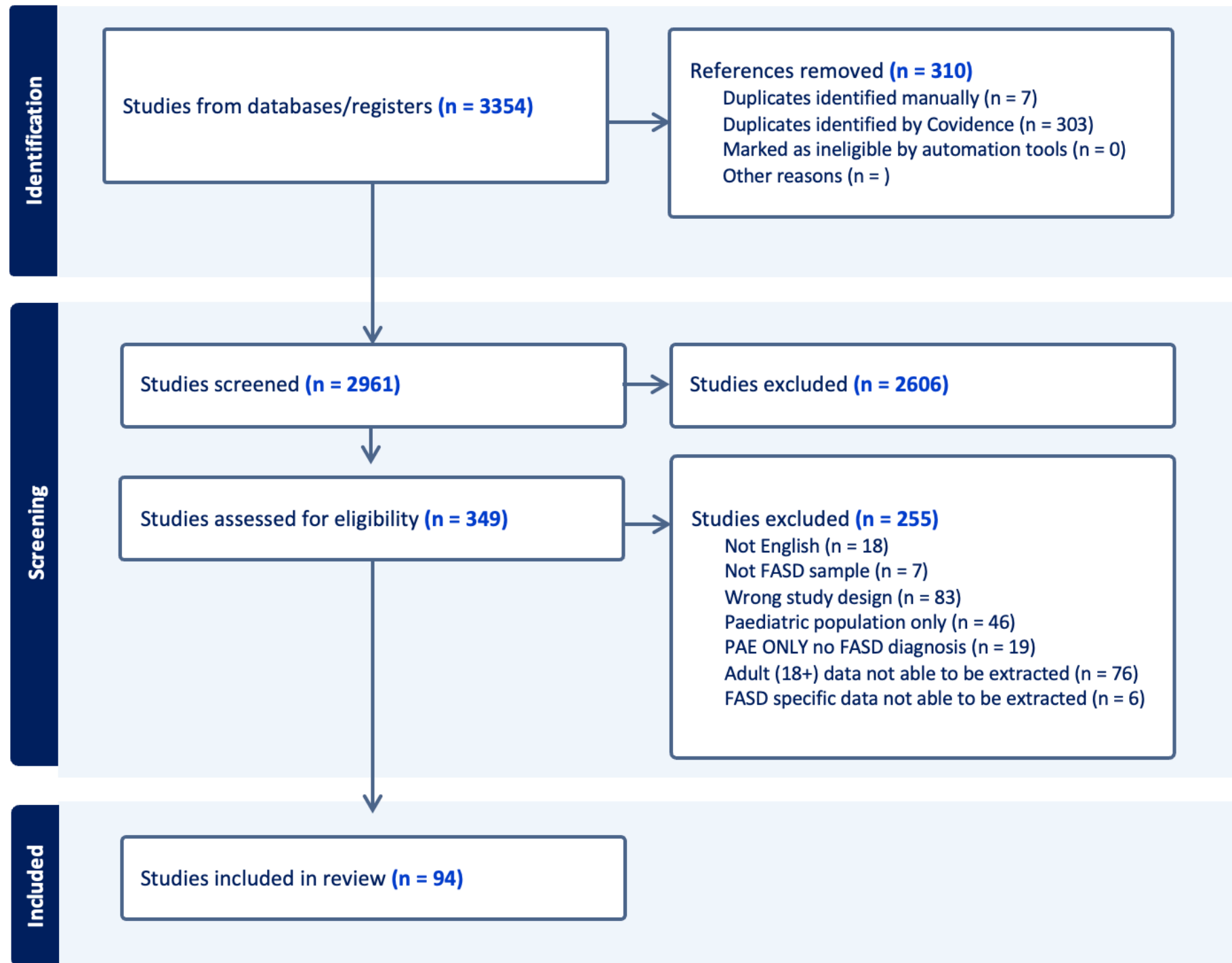
## Inclusion Criteria

- Studies that identify and describe FASD
- Original research and systemic/scoping reviews
- Studies that include people 18 years and over
- Studies in English

## Exclusion criteria:

- Abstracts, letters, opinion pieces, thesis
- Studies that only include children under 18 years.
- Studies that include people 18 years and over that focus on pre-natal alcohol exposure but where FASD is not a diagnosis

# Prisma



# Preliminary findings: Research focus

## Physical Health and Biological Factors (28)

- Physical features/growth
- Ocular/Optometry (5)
- Hearing
- Neurological differences (brain imaging) (10)
- Life expectancy/Mortality
- Spatial navigation
- Reproductive Outcomes

## Cognitive and Behavioural Profiles (19)

- Cognitive Profile
- Memory
- Executive functioning
- Attention
- Adaptive functioning
- Co-existing diagnoses (ID, brain injury, MH)
- Fine motor and balance
- Language

## Psychosocial and Mental Health Factors (22)

- Mental Health
- Addiction
- Psychosocial outcomes
- Criminal Justice (8)
- Resilience
- Suicide

## Social and Community Impacts (25)

- Child protection/OoHC
- Parents' experience
- Living/Lived experience
- Economic cost (burden)
- Quality of Life
- Hospitalizations
- Education experience
- Employment
- Parenting with FASD

# Other interesting findings

## Location:

- There were no original research studies on adults with FASD from Australia (one scoping review). Most studies were from USA and Canada.

## FASD and PAE:

- 19 studies on adults with PAE that discuss about FASD, but where participants had no diagnosis (screened out)
- Studies that combined data from adult participants with FASD and adult participants with PAE only.

## Age:

- Studies combining children and adults, where the adult data cannot be extracted
- Studies where age groups cross over, e.g., 14-24, where specific data on adults (18+) cannot be extracted.

## Study type:

- 19/94 of the studies draw on participant data from 4 different longitudinal cohorts.
- 10/94 were clinical case reports (1- 3 cases)
- 7/94 were systematic or scoping reviews



# From here:

- **Complete Scoping review to inform:**
- **Future qualitative research:** Exploring the experiences of adult diagnosis in Australia and the indicators that led adults with FASD to seek a diagnosis.



**Thank you**

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