



NURSE-LED TRIAGE IN MUSCULOSKELETAL CARE: A REALIST SYNTHESIS

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Background

- In earlier work, our research team documented that most arthritis stakeholders endorse an approach to arthritis care that involved non-physicians in an integral way.
- There is some evidence that nurse-led triage of musculoskeletal patients might bring improvements in patient care.



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Background

- We undertook a realist synthesis to tabulate existing interventions related to nurse-led triage in musculoskeletal disease.
- Our over-all aim is to describe the settings and outcomes associated with these interventions, in an effort to identify factors that seem to predict successful implementation of nurse-led triage.



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Methods

- A realist synthesis involves successive reviews of the literature and other forms of evidence, along with a detailed explanatory analysis focused on what would make a given intervention work, in the context of variable regional effects and circumstances.
- Such a review aims to determine the relative importance of characteristics of the population served, the context, how an intervention is implemented, etc.
- The first step of our literature search employed MEDLINE (1959-2009), EMBASE (1980-2009), EMBASE Classic (1947-1979) and CINAHL (1982-2009).



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Methods

Keywords:

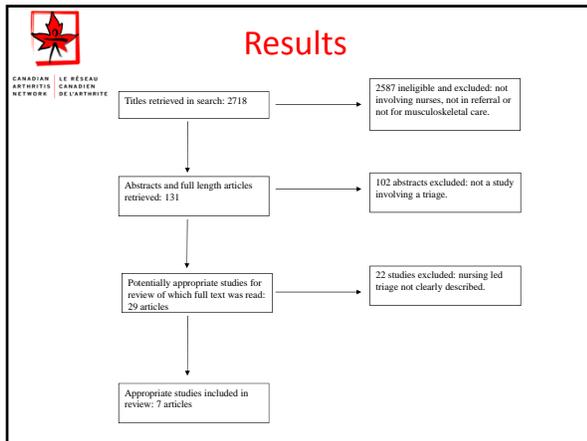
- » 1. Triage/
- » 2. "Triage*"*.ab,ti.
- » 3. Rheumatology/
- » 4. "rheumat*"*.ab,ti.
- » 5. exp "Referral and Consultation"/
- » 6. exp Nurses/ or exp Nurse's Role/
- » 7. exp musculoskeletal diseases/
- » 8. musculoskeletal.ab,ti.
- » 9. 8 or 4 or 3 or 7
- » 10. (nurse or nurses or nursing).ab,ti.
- » 11. (refer or referral*).ab,ti.
- » 12. exp Nursing/
- » 13. 6 or 10 or 12
- » 14. 11 or 5
- » 15. 13 and 14
- » 16. 1 or 2 or 15
- » 17. 16 and 9
- » 18. exp Nursing Process/
- » 19. 18 or 13
- » 20. (referring or diagnos* or evaluat* or assess*).ab,ti.
- » 21. (referring or diagnos*).ab,ti.
- » 22. 21 or 14
- » 23. 22 and 19
- » 24. 1 or 23 or 2
- » 25. 24 and 9



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Methods

- Two of our team members screened the titles and abstracts of all potentially relevant citations, to exclude topics outside our area of interest.
- Data was extracted from the remaining articles, to establish whether the intervention was shown to be effective, and to explore whether particular contextual factors appeared to be of importance for effective implementation of nurse-led triage.



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- Results**
- In these seven studies of nurse-led triage in musculoskeletal disease, reported benefits included decreased out-patient waiting times, high patient and physician satisfaction levels, greater morale and personal development of health professionals, more appropriate referrals, and greater efficiency.

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- Conclusion**
- We found very few published examples of nurse-led triage in musculoskeletal disease.
 - Further work is ongoing to evaluate other sources of data (e.g. 'gray literature', colloquial evidence) and to explore whether particular contextual factors are of importance for effective implementation of nurse-led triage.

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