

Development of the systematic search

The systematic search was developed with the aim of identifying peer reviewed research describing antecedents and outcomes of work engagement among healthcare workers in long-term care facilities for older adults. The concepts were categorized as follows:

Population	Context	Phenomenon of interest
Healthcare workers	Long-term care facilities	Work engagement

This structure then provided a basis for mapping subject headings and text words in each of the selected databases. Notes on some of the choices made during the mapping process:

The population category:

“Allied Health Personnel” was not included as a subject heading in Cinahl, as this included healthcare workers other than nurses, who have received specialized training. It was however included in Medline, as it there describes “[...] all health care workers who perform tasks which must otherwise be performed by a physician or other health professional”.

The context category:

Hospitals, Convalescent/ in Medline was not included, as this contains results about “hospitals which provide care to the patient for the period following an acute illness until health is restored”, and not long-term care. Text words like ‘mental health’, ‘community health’ and ‘municipal health’ were included and combined with ‘institution’ and its synonyms, to broaden the range of different kinds of institutions covered by the search.

The phenomenon of interest category:

Work engagement/ was previously indexed under Workplace/ (2006-2017) in Medline, therefore Workplace/ was included. The words ‘Job/work’ combined with ‘resources/demands’, and ‘work(ing) environment/factors’ were considered as potential text words in this category. The final decision was these would already be present (and relevant) if ‘work engagement’ or its synonyms were present. ‘Motivation’ as a subject heading in Medline and Cinahl was not linked to either ‘employees’ or ‘work’, and therefore excluded in the final search. Attitude of Health Personnel/ in Medline was considered too broad and was therefore excluded. The word ‘participation’ was not truncated as participat*, as the goal was to capture results about participation linked to engagement, and not the verb participating.

Final search strategy

The population and context categories were originally to be combined with Boolean OR, as preliminary test searches using only subject headings in Medline produced few results. Using OR between these two categories could then potentially lead to greater comprehensiveness. After inclusion of text words as well as additional subject headings, and after expanding the search to several databases, it became clear, however, that this was not feasible due to a large increase in results combined with diminishing relevance. The three categories were combined with Boolean AND in the final version. Updated searches were done using the same syntax combined with date-filters.