



BSc (Hons) Health and Social Care

Module: Introduction to Independent Research Skills (BMHP5019)

Assessment title: Assessment 1 - Research Proposal

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Telehealth and Healthcare Access Among Older Adults with Long-Term Health Conditions in the UK: A Proposal for a Scoping Review

Review question:

What are the benefits of telehealth in improving healthcare access, supporting long-term condition management and promoting continuity of care for older adults in the UK, and what barriers do these individuals experience in accessing and using telehealth services, particularly in relation to digital literacy, affordability, accessibility and internet connectivity?

Aim and Objectives:

The aim is to map evidence on the benefits, barriers, and experience associated with telehealth use among older adults with long-term health conditions in the UK.

The objectives are.

- Identify reported benefits for healthcare access and condition management.
- Explore barriers associated with digital literacy, affordability, accessibility and internet connectivity.
- Examine the experiences of older adults and healthcare professionals and identify evidence gaps and implications for equitable, person-centred practice.

Rationale:

This review addresses equitable health and social care beyond technological innovation. NHS England (2023) highlights barriers including affordability, accessibility and limited digital skills. These challenges may increase health inequalities among older adults with long-term conditions. Although telehealth may support condition management, its benefits and limitations require consideration (Lewinski et al., 2022). Healthcare professionals should consider patients' preferences, digital abilities and accessibility needs while maintaining non-digital alternatives. A scoping review can map existing evidence, identify gaps and inform inclusive, person-centred telehealth services across the UK.

Methods:

A scoping review will follow JBI methodological guidance (Peters *et al.*, 2022). CINAHL, MEDLINE/PubMed will be searched for peer-reviewed primary studies and relevant reviews published in English between January 2021 and October 2026. Search terms will include

“telehealth”, “older adults”, “long-term conditions” and “United Kingdom”. Eligible studies must examine telehealth use among older adults with long-term conditions in UK health or social care settings. “Literature screening will be conducted across titles, abstracts, and full texts using predefined eligibility criteria. “Data will be charted systematically and synthesised descriptively and thematically. Search reporting will follow relevant recommendations from Rethlefsen *et al.* (2021), with data presentation informed by Pollock *et al.* (2023).

Ethical considerations:

Because this scoping review synthesises published literature without human participants, formal ethical approval may not be required, subject to institutional verification. However, rigorous ethical practice will be maintained through transparent reporting and balanced interpretation. The analysis will also evaluate how included papers address privacy, autonomy, accessibility, and digital exclusion in relation to equitable healthcare access.

References

Lewinski, A.A. et al. (2022) ‘Telehealth for the longitudinal management of chronic conditions: systematic review’, *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 24(8), e37100. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2196/37100>.

Munn, Z. et al. (2022) ‘What are scoping reviews? Providing a formal definition of scoping reviews as a type of evidence synthesis’, *JB I Evidence Synthesis*, 20(4), pp. 950–952. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.11124/JBIES-21-00483>.

NHS England (2023) Inclusive digital healthcare: a framework for NHS action on digital inclusion. Available at: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/inclusive-digital-healthcare-a-framework-for-nhs-action-on-digital-inclusion/>

Peters, M.D.J. et al. (2022) ‘Best practice guidance and reporting items for the development of scoping review protocols’, *JB I Evidence Synthesis*, 20(4), pp. 953–968. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.11124/JBIES-21-00242>.

Pollock, D. et al. (2023) ‘Recommendations for the extraction, analysis, and presentation of results in scoping reviews’, *JB I Evidence Synthesis*, 21(3), pp. 520–532. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.11124/JBIES-22-00123>.

Rethlefsen, M.L. et al. (2021) 'PRISMA-S: an extension to the PRISMA Statement for Reporting Literature Searches in Systematic Reviews', *Systematic Reviews*, 10, article 39. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13643-020-01542-z>.