

Background:

A recent survey of pharmacy professionals in the United Kingdom (UK), reported that only a minority of the pharmacy workforce is research-active, and the profession is underrepresented in the uptake of clinical research training opportunities (1). Conducting research has been acknowledged by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) as a key pillar of professional practice and is a requirement of the advanced and consultant pharmacist pathways (2). Despite pharmacists reporting an interest in research, this does not reflect in research engagement (3). There is a clear need to increase research within the profession in order to provide the most up-to-date evidence-based healthcare which in turn improves patient outcomes. It has also been reported that hospitals actively involved in research see improved health outcomes and lower mortality rates (4).

A number of barriers and facilitators to conducting research within the workplace have recently been identified and reported by NHS England (1). Examples of reported barriers were lack of funding, lack of protected time, lack of support and lack of opportunity for research. Recommendations are now needed as to what solutions should be put in place to overcome these barriers to increase research activity within the pharmacy profession. Identifying strategies for building research capacity for the pharmacy workforce is a key step to firmly embed research in to every step of the pharmacy workforce career pathway.

Method

- We conducted a rapid literature review to identify interventions used in the healthcare setting.
- We followed the Cochrane guidelines for conducting rapid reviews (5).
- The PICO (population, intervention, context and outcome) framework was used to outline the inclusion and exclusion criteria.
- Keywords and search terms were discussed with a subject librarian and search strategies were refined and tested. Keywords included: Pharmacy, Allied Health Professionals, nurses, midwives, research capacity, Interventions, research culture.
- Interventions were included where they had the aim of increasing research activity and where the outcome identified an increase in research output as a result of the interventions.
- Publication date was restricted to the last 10 years (2014 – 2024), corresponding to the date research became a required component of pharmacy practice.
- 3 databases were searched: Medline, Embase and PubMed.
- Endnote™ reference management software and Rayyan™, an electronic screening tool, were used to manage data.
- 10% of articles were independently reviewed at both title and abstract and full-text screening.
- Data extracted included author, publication year, country, population and measure of research activity.
- We followed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines when reporting our findings.

Aim:

To identify strategies for building the research capability and capacity of the pharmacy, Allied Health Professionals (AHPs), nursing and midwifery workforce through a rapid review of the literature.

Review Question:

What interventions have been developed to support research activity for pharmacists, allied health professionals, nurses and midwives?

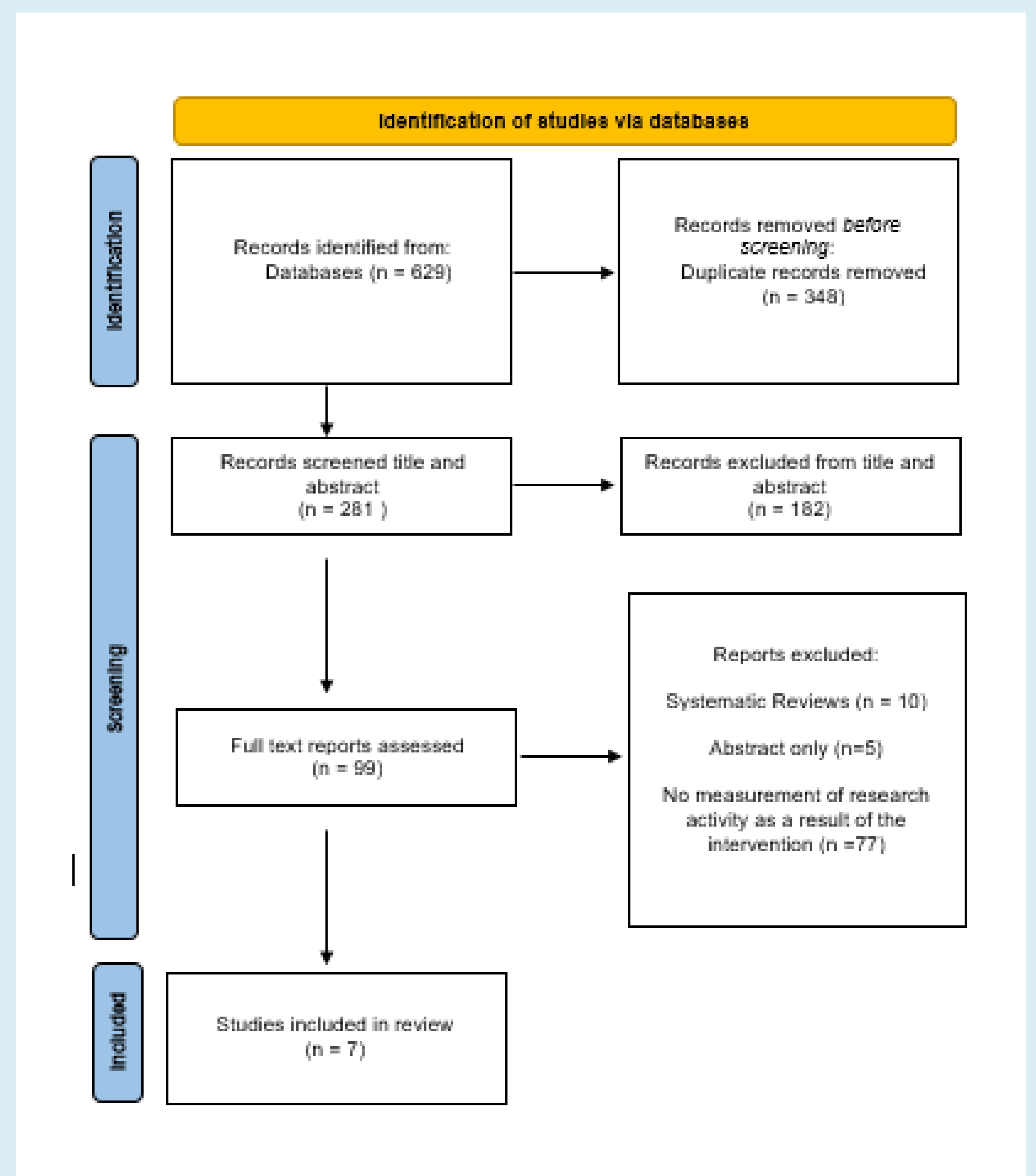


Figure 1: PRISMA diagram depicting the flow of information through the different phases of the rapid review.

Results

Table 1: Study demographics and overview of interventions identified.

Country/ ies	Population	Intervention
Australia	Nurses	Research Appreciation, Accessibility, and Application Model (RAAAM). Partnership between a hospital and a University. Provision of a research mentor within the clinical setting, staff access to University resource and development of research activities.
Canada	Nurses	Electronic Mentorship – uses technology such as email, online discussion to link mentees and mentors at any time and in any location worldwide.
Thailand	Nurses & AHPs	An academic-practice team approach to research capacity building. Research training courses. Small grants
Republic of Ireland (Dublin)	Advanced nurses	Small research groups working on research projects and supported by an academic and a research fellow.
UK (Leicester)	Nurses, AHPs and other Health care professionals including pharmacists).	Securing funds to support PhD fees 20 protected days over 6 months Fellowship programmes Peer support network
UK (Manchester) and Indonesia	Nurses, doctors and AHPs	Four days of workshops including small group teaching coupled with sustainable mentorship and supervision.
UK (Southampton)	Nurses & AHPs	Research internship programme at 5 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Interns were allocated research projects and mentored by experienced researchers.

- 629 returned articles after initial searches.
- 348 duplicates removed
- 281 title and abstracts screened
- 182 records excluded at title and abstract stage
- 99 full-text articles screened
- 7 studies were included in the final analysis
- All studies involved the nursing profession and only one study included pharmacists.
- Preliminary results showed all 7 studies involved mentorship or academic support as part of the interventions and two interventions involved securing funding.

Future work :

Mapping interventions identified from the literature to the COM-B model and Behaviour Change Wheel will enable behavioural targets to be identified (6). From this, a suite of potential interventions will be brought to stakeholders for discussion. Outcomes of this work will feed into the long-term strategy of Pharmacy Research Wales and the wider pharmacy profession to increase research capacity in the pharmacy workforce in Wales.

References

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