

Background

The Innovative Models Promoting Access-to-Care Transformation (IMPACT) research program is an Australian-Canadian collaboration that aims to identify, refine and trial 'world's best practice' interventions in six local areas to improve access to primary care for vulnerable populations. One such intervention is a health service broker.

Aims & Objectives

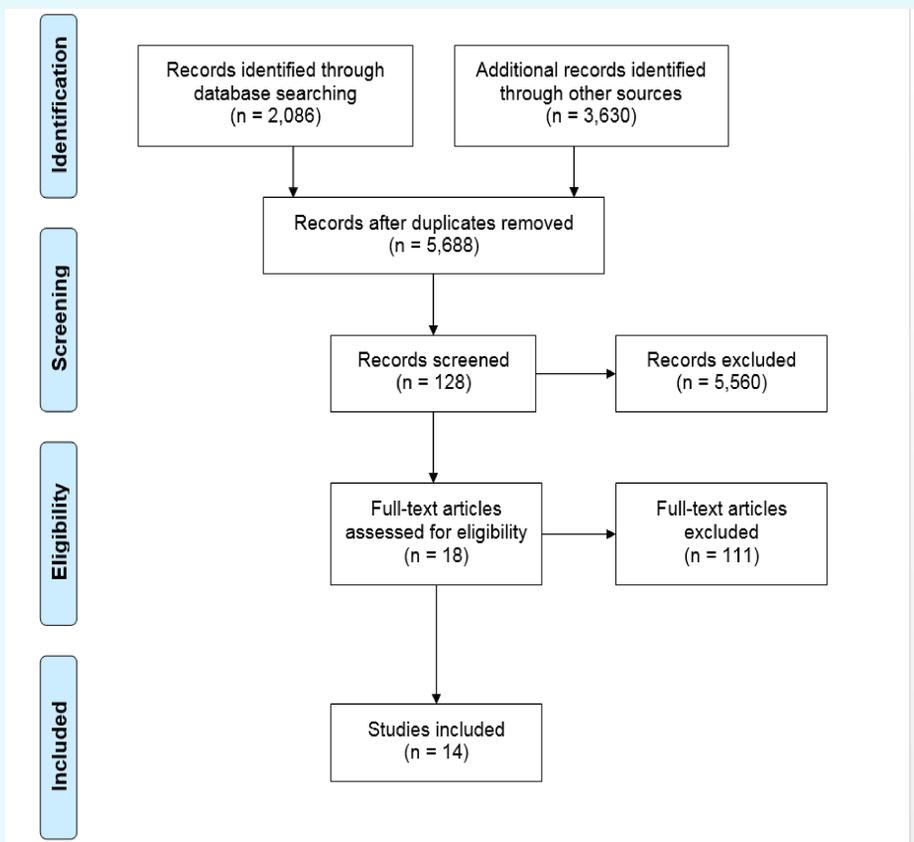
This poster presents the methodology and preliminary findings of a scoping review to examine and map the use of health service brokers to link individuals to primary health care services. The objectives are to explore:

- How brokers have been defined and described
- Characteristics of the broker programs
- How brokers have been used with different populations
- The extent to which patient-centred care has influenced broker programs

Methods

- We used Arksey & O'Malley's (2005) five-staged scoping study framework to review the literature
- We searched for evidence in electronic databases, grey literature and reference lists of key sources

Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram for the Scoping Review



- Inclusion criteria were **participants** living in the community who did not have a regular source of primary care, and the **concept** of a health service broker as a person or a process creating a link between the participant and a primary care service

Findings

How have brokers been described?

Health service brokers have been defined and described using various terms, including:

- Peer or patient navigators to connect, link, establish or re-engage
- Community health workers to improve access
- Lay navigator to set patients up in a medical home
- Healthcare access navigation into care

What are their characteristics?

Health service brokers are relationship-based, to build trust with those seeking care, and develop partnerships with key stakeholders. They are:

- Flexible to the needs of the population
- Trained, professional and committed
- Assisting the primary care provider to build capacity to work with a specific population
- Focused on reducing barriers to care

How have brokers been used?

- Engage people living with HIV into care
- Navigate taxi drivers into care
- Help patients who use the emergency department for non-emergency conditions find a primary care provider
- Link recently released HIV-positive jail inmates to a community health provider
- Help patients connect to primary care after a psychiatric crisis
- Connect the homeless with a permanent health care provider

Are brokers patient-centred?

The studies reported elements of patient-centred practice embedded in the programs. These elements included tailoring the process, addressing the patient's priorities, goal setting and supporting patients to achieve goals, developing respectful relationships, and making the linkages to primary care providers together with the patient.

Next Steps

Over the next six months, we will use the findings of this scoping review to strengthen the implementation of a pilot health service broker intervention to link people with a disability to ongoing primary care. The patient-centredness of the intervention will also be measured from the perspective of the participants.