

iCAHE JC Critical Appraisal Summary

Journal Club Details

Date of submission	2013
Journal Club location	Modbury GP Plus
JC Facilitator	Debbie H
JC Discipline	Multi-D

Review Question/PICO/PACO

- P** rehabilitation patients
- I** receive input from allied health clinicians and also assistants/paramedical aides
- C** receive input from allied health clinicians
- O** amount of therapy time, participation in therapy groups, rate of recovery etc.

Article/Paper

Lizarondo, L, Kumar, S, Hyde, L, Skidmore, D 2010, 'Allied health assistants and what they do: A systematic review of the literature', *Journal of Multidisciplinary Healthcare*, 3; 43-53.

Please note: due to copyright regulations CAHE is unable to supply a copy of the critically appraised paper/article. If you are an employee of the South Australian government you can obtain a copy of articles from the [DOHSA librarian](#).

Article Methodology: Systematic Review

Returned JC on: 2013

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The International Centre for Allied Health Evidence (iCAHE)

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Ques No.	Yes	Can't Tell	No	Comments
1	✓			<p>Did the review address a clearly focused question?</p> <p>The aim of the systematic review was to provide evidence on the roles and responsibilities of AHAs as reported in the literature, and where possible, briefly describe the benefits of and barriers to utilizing Allied Health Assistants (AHAs) in current health care settings.</p>
2	✓			<p>Did the authors look for the appropriate sort of papers?</p> <p>A literature search was conducted using the electronic databases Cochrane, AMED, Medline, Ageline, Ovid, EMBASE, PEDro, PubMed, CINAHL, and Web of Science. Publication reference lists were used to search for additional relevant publications not found in the initial search.</p> <p>Is it worth continuing? YES</p>
3	✓			<p>Do you think the important, relevant studies were included?</p> <p>The search performed should have identified relevant studies to address the objective. Papers were only excluded if they did not meet the inclusion criteria (papers were excluded if they were not satisfying the inclusion criteria (n = 365), focused on education, training and competencies (n = 31), and related to supervision and ethical standards (n = 15)).</p>
4			✓	<p>Did the review's authors do enough to assess the quality of the included studies?</p> <p>The methodological quality of the included papers was not examined. This was justified with two reasons reported in the review. First, the review was aimed at exploring the evidence regarding the roles and responsibilities of AHAs rather than a review of evidence of effectiveness. Second, the diversity of the evidence sources found for this review did not allow the reviewers to identify a critical appraisal tool which would be applicable to a range of study designs.</p>
5	✓			<p>If the results of the review have been combined, was it reasonable to do so?</p> <p>A meta-analysis was not performed; however, a narrative summary was used to synthesize the results.</p>

6			<p>What are the overall results of the reviews?</p> <p><i>Bottom line results:</i> Majority of the included studies reported roles performed by general health care assistants or rehabilitation assistants who may not be specifically affiliated to a health discipline. Current AHAs duties have elements of direct patient care and indirect support via clerical and administrative tasks.</p> <p>The benefits from the introduction of AHA role reported in the review included: improved clinical outcomes, increased patient satisfaction, higher-level services, and more “free” time for allied health professionals to concentrate on patients with complex needs.</p> <p>The barriers of the use of AHAs reported in the review were related to blurred role boundaries which may raise issues associated with professional status and security.</p>
7			<p>How precise are the results?</p> <p>Precision of the results cannot be determined from the analysis in this review.</p>
8	Journal Club to discuss		<p>Can the results be applied to the local population?</p>
9			<p>Were all important outcomes considered?</p>
10			<p>Are the benefits worth the harms and costs?</p>

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