DSEN ABSTRACT
Options to Support Appropriate Prescribing: A Scoping Review

Summary

- We conducted a scoping review of options to support appropriate prescribing.

Key messages

- Strategies, policies, and action plans provide the foundation for coordinated, system-level change in medication use.
- Programs, initiatives, and practical tools or resources are the end-effectors that drive ground-level, operational improvements—ideally leading to broader system-wide impact.

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What is the issue?

- Appropriate use of medications involves appropriate selection of medication management options; choosing a suitable medication if one is needed; and using medications safely and effectively.
- A comprehensive summary of system-level approaches related to appropriate use of medications including programs, strategies and policies within Canada and internationally was needed.

What was the aim of the study?

- The objective of this project was to examine and map the range of national and international system-level approaches related to appropriate use of medication.
- This included an assessment of the size and scope of approaches, the nature of the approach and characterization of key features and outputs.

How was the study conducted?

- This study was conducted using a scoping review methodology.
- The targeted search focused on unpublished literature available from January 2002 to October 2016 and the appropriate use of medications was considered for Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States.

What did the study find?

- The results of this scoping review included 199 identified approaches to appropriate use of medications, categorized by strategies or policies (n=29), organizations (n=41), programs or initiatives (n=94) and tools or resources (n=35).
- Results were shared with the requesting knowledge user. Specific information from countries with strengths related to the suggested approaches was highlighted for further review and specific areas for additional research were identified as next steps.
- The main challenge was the large amount of information available. As a result, its main limitation is comprehensiveness. Although the results include almost 200 approaches for multiple countries, it does not claim to be fully comprehensive.

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