

# See Us, Understand Us. Examining Newcomer Women's access and Utilization of Maternity Care in Canada: A Systematic Narrative Review

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## INTRODUCTION



- Access to adequate and quality maternity care is essential during the perinatal period, regardless of a woman's background.
- However, research suggests disparities in access and quality of maternity care provided to recent immigrant and refugee women in Canada.
- Potential factors influencing these disparities include socioeconomic position, cultural, psychosocial, geographical, among others.

## KEY SEARCH TERMS

Immigrants, refugees, newcomer\*, permanent residents, maternal health services, pregnancy, maternal-child care, Canada

## INCLUSION/EXCLUSION CRITERIA

### Inclusion Criteria for studies

- English language
- No limitation on publication date
- Studies conducted in Canada
- Studies including recent immigrants, refugees
- Studies with maternity care focus on access & utilization

### Exclusion Criteria for studies

- Studies conducted outside Canada
- No focus on maternity care
- Studies including non-recent immigrants, Canadian born women, Indigenous women

## OBJECTIVE

- This systematic narrative review aims to present current knowledge about newcomer women's maternity care experiences by highlighting barriers and facilitators of access and utilization.

## METHOD: SYSTEMATIC NARRATIVE REVIEW

180 articles retrieved from (CINAHL, PubMed, Medline)

Full text articles screened (n=121)

Full text articles met eligibility (n=36)

Full text articles included in review (n=11)

Title and abstract screening  
Screened out (n=59)

Duplicates (n=9)  
Exclusion for not meet inclusion criteria (n=50)

Full text articles screened out. Did not meet eligibility criteria (n=85)

Full text articles excluded (n=25)  
Lacking important data  
No relevant outcome reported  
Not specific to maternity care access & utilization

## RESULTS

### Summary of studies

- 11 studies met review criteria and all were Canadian studies
- 7 Qualitative studies and 2 quantitative studies
- 2 Mixed methods studies
- The studies were conducted in Alberta, Quebec, Saskatchewan and British Columbia provinces
- 7 studies had diverse newcomer women participants from different countries of origin
- 4 studies had homogenous newcomer women participants from same country of origin

### Facilitators & Barriers to maternity care access & utilization

- **Key Facilitators**
  - Empathetic professionals
  - Use of interpreters
  - Receiving information early
  - Coordination of care by professionals
- **Key Barriers**
  - Lack of social support and social isolation
  - Finances, childcare & transportation issues
  - Insensitivity of some providers
  - Lack of knowledge & understanding of cultural & religious perinatal beliefs
  - Communication & interpretation issues

## IMPLICATION

- Duration of residency in Canada affects maternity care experiences.
- Health professionals need to understand newcomer women's pre and post migration experiences.
- Immigration categories may affect accessibility of maternity care services.

## CONCLUSION

- Newcomer women face multiple barriers than facilitators in accessing and utilizing maternity care services.
- As a result highlighting existing disparities, and indicating a need to prioritize and address the specific social determinants of newcomer women's maternal health.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Funding for this study is supported by:

- Saskatchewan Centre for Patient-Oriented Research Award (SCPOR) in partnership with College of Medicine Graduate Student Award (CoMGRAD)
- SCPOR, Step Funding
- Saskatchewan Innovation & Opportunity Scholarship (SIOS)