

Physician Burnout in Canada: A Scoping Review

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Abstract

The National Physician Health Survey recently reported that 30% of Canadian physicians are experiencing high levels of burnout.¹ Yet, our understanding of any burnout framework is often confounded by its underlying complexity. System factors, individual factors, and competency factors can all interact at varying degrees to either promote or challenge physician performance.² With a paucity in Canadian literature, exploring the data is becoming increasingly important to highlight target areas for future research, programming and supports.

Objectives

1. To amalgamate relevant peer reviewed and grey literature surrounding physician burnout in Canada from 2010 to current.
2. To utilize a priori thematic organizational table to create a map of the literature outlining the context in which burnout is studied within Canada.
3. To examine the literature for congruency and/or gaps of knowledge to determine areas of best fit for future research.

Research Questions

1. What is the prevalence of burnout among physicians in Canada and how is it being measured?
2. What factors or indicators are shown to be predictors of burnout (e.g. system, individual, competence)?
3. What gaps exist in the literature that can help inform future burnout research?

Methods

A preliminary literature search was conducted to inform the series of keywords, which were finalized once consensus was reached between two independent reviewers (JW & DW). A systematic search strategy was employed that utilized Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) and Boolean operators (Table 1).

Results

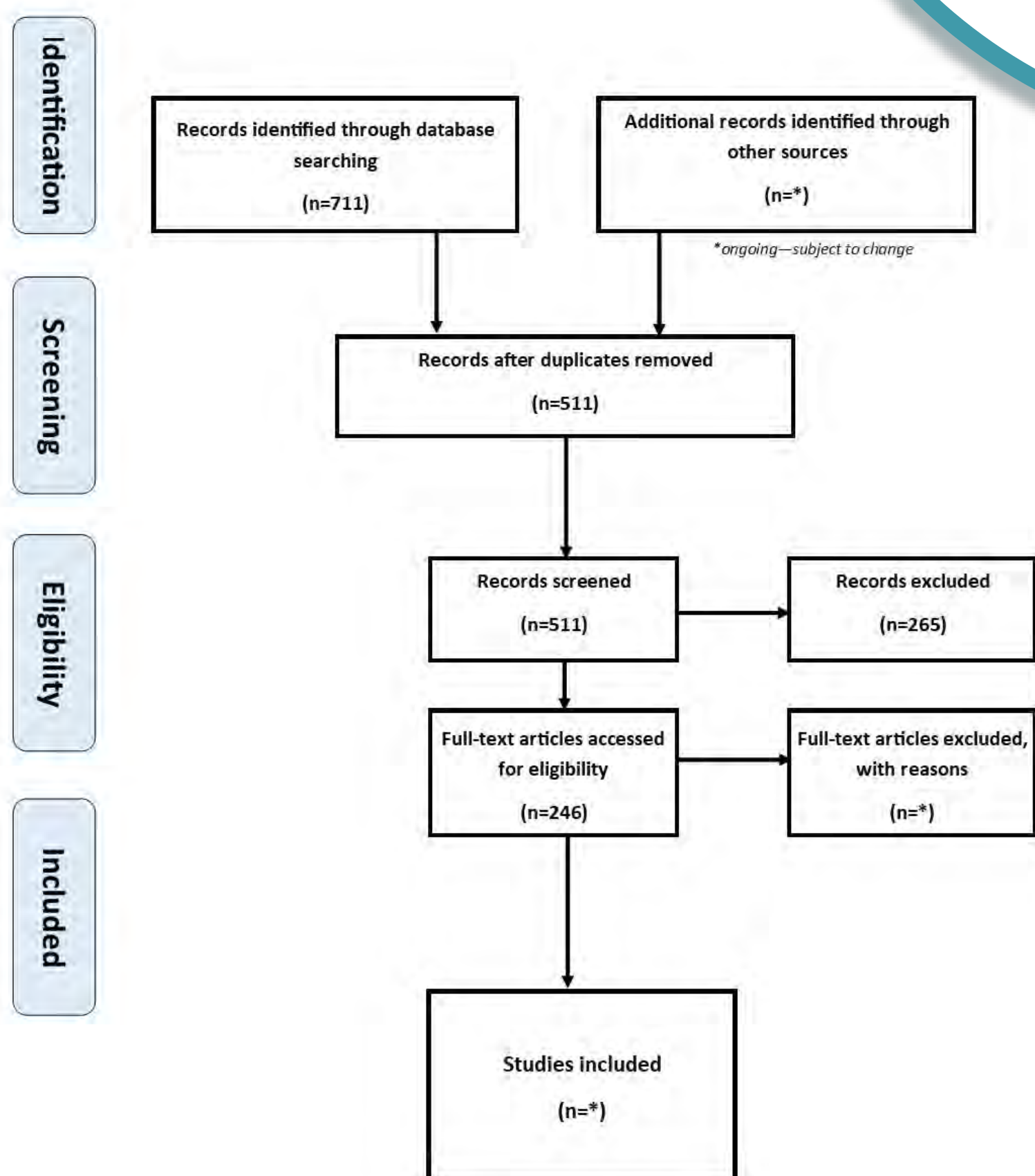


Table 1. Literature search strategy for physician burnout in Canada

Physicians*, doctors*, clinicians*, residents* [MeSH]

AND

Burnout*, moral injury*, compassion fatigue*, occupational stress*, quadruple aim*, work engagement*, job satisfaction* [MeSH]

AND

Canada*, Canadian*, in Canada* [MeSH]

Methods

The search strategy was run through seven literature databases (PubMed, PsycINFO, Medline, CINAHL, Embase, Web of Science, Cochrane) and Google, with the following inclusion criteria for screening:

- Physicians and/or residents practicing in Canada
- Published 2010-current

Discussion

The scoping review will help demarcate physician burnout literature in Canada, as well as inform future research, programming and supports. Establishing a foundation of the current knowledge surrounding burnout in Canada is critical to any future programming planning that will be aimed to support physicians.

References

1. Canadian Medical Association (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.cma.ca/sites/default/files/2018-11/nph-survey-e.pdf>
2. Rethans, J., et al. (2002). The relationship between competence and performance: Implications for assessing practice performance. *Medical Education* 36(10), 901-909. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2923.2002.01316.x>

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