

Assessment of the elderly's functional ability to manage their medication: a systematic literature review

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Abstract

Background The evaluation of the elderly's ability to manage medication through the use of a validated tool can be a significant step in identifying inabilities and needs, with the objective of increasing their self-care skills, and promoting successful aging. **Aim of the review** To identify studies assessing the elderly's functional ability to manage their own medication. **Method** For the search strategy, the PICO method was used: P—Population (elderly), I—Instruments (tools for assessing medication management ability), C—Context (community) and O—Outcomes (functional ability to manage medication). The final search query was run in MEDLINE/PubMed, CINAHL Plus, ISI Web of Science and Scopus. The whole process was developed according to the PRISMA statement. **Results** The search retrieved 8051 records. In each screening stage, the selection criteria were applied to eliminate records where at least one of the exclusion criteria was verified. At the end of this selection, we obtained a total of 18 papers (17 studies). The results allow the conclusion to be drawn that studies use several different instruments, most of them not validated. The authors agree that medication management abilities decrease as cognitive impairment increases, even if a lot of studies assess only the physical dimension. DRUGS was the instrument most often used. **Conclusion** Older adults' ability to manage their medication should be assessed using tools specifically built and validate for the purpose. DRUGS (which uses the real regimen taken by the elderly) was the most widely used assessment instrument in the screened studies.

Keywords

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