

The Social Work Leadership Institute's Evidence-Based Database

Jeannine Melly, MPH

Edward Mullen, DSW

Patricia J. Volland, MSW, MBA

Joseph Shuluk, BA

The New York Academy of Medicine's Social Work Leadership Institute

The New York Academy of Medicine (NYAM)

The New York Academy of Medicine is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit institution that has been advancing the health of people in cities since 1847.

The Social Work Leadership Institute (SWLI)

A national program that supports healthy aging by ensuring America's older adults receive the care they need to stay independent and in charge that of their lives.

Social Work Leadership Institute (SWLI)

The Social Work Leadership Institute supports healthy aging by ensuring that America's older adults receive the care they need to stay independent and in charge of their lives — and that their caregivers also get the support they deserve.

SWLI works to achieve the goals of supporting improved **long-term care services, care coordination** and **workforce development**

SWLI Goals

To achieve the goals of supporting improved long-term care services, care coordination and workforce development SWLI engages:

Policy advocacy

N3C, CalSWEC, NYS DOH/SOFA, Federal and State Legislation

Research

EBD, Rush, In-Home Geriatric Care

Education

HPPAE

Leadership

NADD, Field Directors, students

Alliances and public-private partnerships with:

Academic institutions, government, professional groups, aging and social work organizations, public policy institutions, and direct care providers and caregivers.

SWLI's Evidence-Based Database

- Developed by an interdisciplinary team of professionals based at the New York Academy of Medicine's Social Work Leadership Institute
- Designed to provide access to available evidence on social work intervention outcomes particularly as related to serving the aging population
- Its targeted user audiences are public policy makers, academics, researchers, students, clinicians, & advocacy groups
- This work is funded by a generous grant to NYAM-SWLI from the Atlantic Philanthropies

Goals of the Evidence-Based Database

- Assist in translating research into policies and procedures
- Expand publicly accessible evidence-based databases
- Assess the overall strength of a body of evidence
- White papers
- Synthesis studies

Topics Included in Database

While the database focus is specific to interventions with older adults we considered it important to first examine what is known about the ***general effectiveness of social work interventions***

The second topic, specific to interventions with older adults, is ***care coordination***

The third topic will focus on interventions to enhance the professional ***workforce for geriatric social work practice.***

The Blueprint for Building the Database Overview

Step 1: Develop topic questions

Step 2: Construct search strategies

Step 3: Select databases and perform searches

Step 4: Manage and filter the search results

Step 5: Assess the study design

Step 6: Code the studies

Step 7: Review and record studies

Step 8: Disseminate the results

Building the Database:

Step 1: Develop Topic Questions

- Identify a topic with the assistance of the Advisory Board
- Develop a narrative to frame the topic
- Refine the topic narrative to formulate a concise investigative question

Building the Database:

Step 1: Develop Topic Questions

The following topics were developed based on policy questions.

Topic 1: What are the outcomes and costs regarding the effectiveness of general social work practices?

Topic 2: What are the outcomes and costs of care coordination (care management, transition-in-care, discharge planning) for older adults?

Topic 3: What are the outcomes and costs of interventions to enhance workforce development for services to older adults?

Building the Database:

Step 2: Construct a Search Strategy

- Engage a librarian or informational retrieval specialist
- Record the search strategy so that it is transparent and replicable
- Develop the search strategy by breaking down the area of inquiry into keywords
- Develop the search by defining such areas as population, intervention, comparisons, and outcomes
- Develop search limits, such as date of publication, language, or study design

Building the Database:

Step 2: Construct a Search Strategy

Example of Search Strategy for Care Coordination

Limits:

Publication Date from 1995, English, Aged: 65+ years

Subject Keywords:

care coordination

case management

care provision

gem

geriatric evaluation and
management

discharge planning or
transition

Quality Filters:

intervention

placebo

empirical research

clinical trials or randomized
controlled trial

qualitative study

Prospective

blinded

Building the Database:

Step 3: Select Databases and Perform Searches

- Identify relevant databases
- Create search strings using the keywords that were developed and possible synonyms
- Adjust search strings for each database
- Record the date of the search along with the number of the results
- Strive for sensitive and efficient searches

Building the Database:

Step 3: Select Databases and Perform Searches

Perform searches in relevant databases to identify the evidence

Design feeds to retrieve new articles as they are published

Example of databases searched for Care Coordination:

- SocIndex Fulltext
- Sociological Collection
- PsycINFO
- Social Work Abstracts
- CINAHL
- Medline
- Ageline
- Cochrane Database
- Campbell Collaboration
- C2 Spectr

Building the Database:

Step 4: Manage and Filter the Search Results

- Eliminate duplicate results
- Review all of the abstracts for relevancy and exclude those outside of the topic
- Load the final search results into a reference program, such as RefWorks or spreadsheet program such as Excel
- Record the origin and status of each citation
- Label citations with unique number for tracking
- Create folders with author name, labels, id numbers etc. to maintain a paper record

Building the Database:

Step 4: Manage and Filter the Search Results

- Identify published systematic reviews and meta-analyses including all primary studies that were evaluated within those reviews.
- Identify studies reporting outcomes of research studies pertaining to policy topic (e.g., care coordination).
- Develop a system to assign and track reviews
- Develop a system (preferably electronic) to code the studies as they are reviewed (see next steps)
- Maintain quality and consistency for each step

Building the Database:

Step 5: Assess the Study Design

- Construct pre-screening questions that are relevant to the topic to aid in identifying studies for inclusion or exclusion
- Use the system (preferably electronic) that was developed to code the assessment of the study design

SWLI constructed 3 forms for reviewing and coding different types of study design. The forms were refined based upon beta-testing

- **Experimental**
- **Non-experimental**
- **Synthesis Review Forms**

Building the Database:

Step 5: Assess the Study Design: *An Example*

Q2. Determine whether the article reports the results of a synthesis of research studies or reports a single research study.

Does the article report a **single research study**?

- Yes, answer Q3. (the article reports a study that used either an experimental, quasi-experimental or non-experimental design to measure outcomes.)
- No. *Use the Synthesis Form* (You can STOP here and press the continue button at the bottom of the page. The electronic version will automatically direct you to this form.)

Q3. If you answered Yes to Q2, determine whether the study reported in the article primarily used an experimental, quasi-experimental or non-experimental design to measure outcomes.

Was an experimental or quasi-experimental design used for all or part of the study (such as to examine at least one of the questions)?

- Yes, *use the experimental form* (You can STOP here and press the continue button at the bottom of the page. The electronic version will automatically direct you to this form.)
- No, answer Q4.

Q4. If you answered No to Q3, determine if the study reported in the article used a non-experimental design.

Was a non-experimental design (e.g. survey, qualitative methods) used for all or part of the study (such as to examine at least one of the questions)?

- Yes, *use the non-experimental form* (You can STOP here and press the continue button at the bottom of the page. The electronic version will automatically direct you to this form.)
- No, (this article should not be reviewed)

Building the Database:

Step 6: Code the Studies

- Senior reviewers should have a strong background in methodology
- Develop training for reviewers
 - ▶ Using senior reviewers to oversee training
 - ▶ Using style guidelines (APA)
 - ▶ Extracting information to fit into predefined categories
 - ▶ Develop a glossary
 - ▶ Not to interpret, but report
- Using 2 reviewers to code and a 3rd reviewer to resolve discrepancies

Building the Database:

Step 6: Code the Studies

Use the review forms that were developed to record key elements of each study that was selected for inclusion in the database

Capturing key elements in each article:

- Author, Journal, Date, Abstract, Standardized measures used, etc.
- Methodology
- Issues, settings and topics
- Study outcomes



Building the Database:

Step 7: Review and Record the Studies

The information extracted can include:

- Sample Characteristic
- Research Methods
- Interventions
- Outcome measures
- Randomization
- Follow-up periods
- Findings and conclusions
- Study limitations

Building the Database:

Step 7: Review and Record the Studies

- Use the screening questions to guide a reviewer to the appropriate form for review
- Use 2 reviewers for each study, preferably using an on-line program.
- Exclude or Include?
- Resolve discrepancies between reviews
- Post finished review into your online database

Building the Database:

Step 7: Review and Record the Studies: *Include/Exclude?*

The following screening questions will help direct you to use one of three forms to review an article examining Topic 2: *Care Coordination*. The review form you use will reflect the methodology of the article and can be either a Synthesis, Experimental, or Non-Experimental review form. (The electronic version of the review form will automatically direct you to the proper form depending upon your answers to the screening questions).

General Assessment on whether to include an article for review:

- Q1. Determine Inclusion. All (A-D) of the following reasons are needed to include the article for review.
- A) Include because the article reports the outcomes of a social work or related psychosocial intervention of any one of the following types:
 - Case Management/Care Management
 - Comprehensive Care Coordination
 - Interventions pertaining to continuity of patient care or some aspect of continuity of patient care.
 - Geriatric Assessment or an aspect of Geriatric Assessment
 - Multidisciplinary care team or some aspect of multidisciplinary care team
 - Transitional care services
 - Transfer or discharge planning
 - B) Include because some of the study subject reported in the article, who are receiving the intervention, are age 65 or older.
 - C) Include because the article was published in a journal between the years 1995 and 2008.
 - D) Include because the article is published in English.

OR

- Include because the article offers the following unique information relating to the topic:

- Exclude because the article does not meet the criteria listed above or because of another reason as follows:

Building the Database:

Step 7: Review and Record the Studies: *Sample Characteristics*

Age (check all that apply)

- Children (0-17)
- Adults (18-64)
- Older Adults
 - 65-84
 - 85 and older

Gender

- Male
- Female
- Transgender

Primary racial/ethnic group (check all that apply)

- Aboriginal (e.g. American Indian, Alaska Native, etc.) descent
- Asian/Pacific Islander descent
- Black/African descent
- Latino/Hispanic descent

- Families (couples, parents, children, other relatives)
- Other, specify: _____
- Not Stated
- No exclusion (i.e. did not exclude or include based on group/age)

- Not Stated
- No exclusion (i.e. did not exclude or include based on group/age)

- Multi-ethnic descent
- White descent
- Not Stated
- No exclusion (i.e. did not exclude or include based on group/ag

Building the Database:

Step 7: Review and Record the Studies: *Posting the Review*

Research methods	
Research design and type	◆ Experimental E
Methods of assignment to intervention groups	Random assignment
Countries where the sample was studied	United States
Service setting(s) where the sample was studied	Institution ◆ Not applicable Community ◆ Other: <i>Health Maintenance Organization's Research Center</i> ◆ Own home
Was a standardized measure, tool, or instrument used?	No
	Individual outcomes ◆ Physiologic measure - Physical health/medical outcomes (e.g., infection, skin breakdown, falls)

Building the Database:

Step 8: Disseminate the Results

SWLI's on-line Database:

- Initial website launched in 2005
- Evaluated in 2006
- Redesign completed in 2008, using the Advisory Committee and outside reviewers

Building the Database:

Step 8: Disseminate the Results

Translating research into policies and procedures

- Develop a searchable, on-line database of the reviews
- Publicize the website
- Marketing
- Emails
- Newsletters
- Collaborations with outside agencies
- Seminars

Population of SWLI's EBD

Currently available on SWLI EBD website:

- *Social Work Effectiveness:*
 - 2103 studies retrieved from searches
 - 19 systematic reviews identified
 - 317 abstracts posted
 - 115 reviews completed and posted
- *Care Coordination:*
 - 4402 studies retrieved from searches
 - 985 abstracts posted
 - 5 reviews completed and posted
- *Workforce Development:*
 - Search strategy under development

Additional Features offered on SWLI's EBD Website

- Basic or guided search option
- Print and Export functions
- Established links to NYAM's Grey Literature Collection
- Domestic and international links to relevant aging and social work outcomes web sites
- A glossary of key terminology from a controlled vocabulary of subject terms used to describe journal articles cited in the database.
- Role and Scope of the Evidence Database

Estimated Costs and Labor

- 2 years from initial funding to live populated site
- Staff:
 - ▶ Advisory Committee (bi-yearly meetings)
 - ▶ Project Director (5% time)
 - ▶ Senior Consultant (10% time)
 - ▶ Project Manager (85% time)
 - ▶ 2 senior reviewers (20% time)
 - ▶ 7 reviewers (8% time)
 - ▶ Librarian (5% time)
 - ▶ Web and application developer (90% time, then 60%)

Additional issues to consider

- Training costs
- Article retrieval costs
- Copyright issues
 - ▶ The articles are not made accessible only the reviews

SWLI's EBD

Using the search engine

The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window titled "SWLI - Center for Aging Policy (CAP) - Evidence Database - Mozilla Firefox". The address bar shows the URL "http://socialworkleadership.org/nsw/cap/search.php". The page content is titled "Search Evidence Database" and is divided into two main sections: "Basic Search" and "Guided Search".

Basic Search: This section contains a "Search For >" text input field, a "Search In >" dropdown menu currently set to "Reviewed Articles", and two buttons labeled "search" and "Reset". Below this, a note states: "Print and Export function is available after you perform a search."

Guided Search: This section is organized into two columns: "Search Term" and "Field to Search".

- Search Term:** Features two rows of search input fields. Each row starts with an "AND" dropdown menu and a red "[?]" icon.
- Field to Search:** Features three rows of dropdown menus, each set to "Keyword" and followed by a red "[?]" icon.
- Between the two columns, there are three rows of dropdown menus, each set to "all of these" and followed by a red "[?]" icon.

The browser's status bar at the bottom left shows "Done".

SWLI's EBD

Examining Search Results

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying http://socialworkleadership.org/nsw/cap/ebp2_detail.php?cit_id=159. The page title is "SWLI - Center for Aging Policy (CAP) - Evidence Database - Physician, nurse, and social worker collaboration i...".

The page features a navigation menu with the following links: [Welcome](#), [Help](#), [Links](#), [What's New](#), [Topics](#), [Glossary](#), [Role and Scope](#), [About Us](#), and [Comments/Suggestions](#). A search bar labeled "Search Database" is also present.

The main content area displays the following information:

Evidence Database

Physician, nurse, and social worker collaboration in primary care for chronically ill seniors

Author:	Sommers, L. S.; Marton, K. I.; Barbaccia, J. C.; <i>et al</i>
Article Title:	Physician, nurse, and social worker collaboration in primary care for chronically ill seniors
Journal Name:	<i>Archives of Internal Medicine</i>
Date, Volume, Issue, Page#:	06/26/2000 2000, Vol. 160, Iss. 12, p. 1825
Abstract:	"OBJECTIVES: To examine the impact of an interdisciplinary, collaborative practice intervention involving a primary care physician, a nurse, and a social

A sidebar on the left contains a list of navigation links: [About SWLI +](#), [Our Work](#), [Resources/Links +](#), [Contact Us](#), [Hartford Partnership Program for Aging Education \(HPPAE\) +](#), [Evidence Database +](#), [Deans and Directors](#), [Students +](#), [News and Events +](#), [Fundors and Partnerships +](#), and [Facts and Stats](#).

SWLI's EBD Policy Work: An Overview

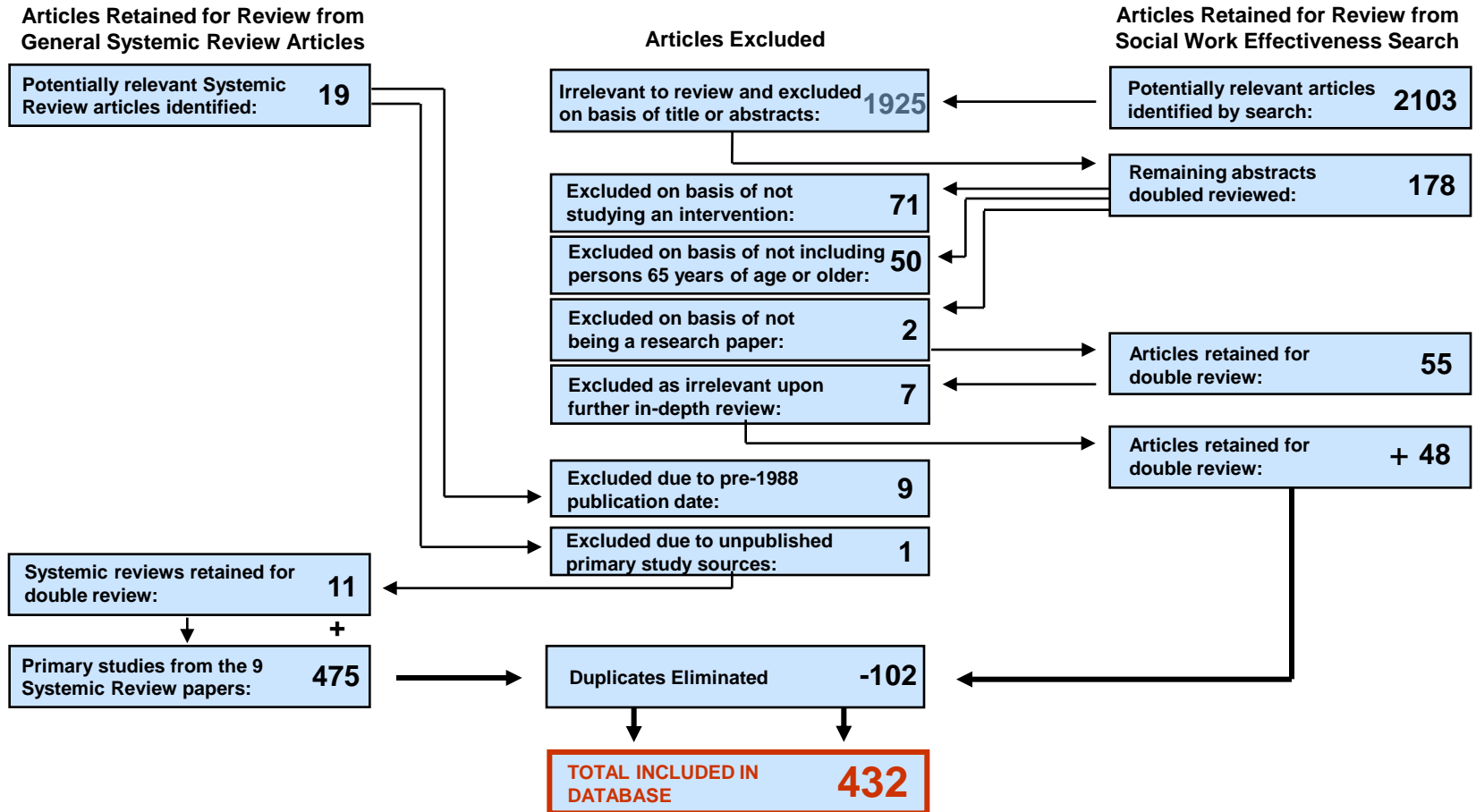
The articles on the EBDB provide an empirical foundation for policy advocacy undertaken by the Social Work Leadership Institute.

Using the database as a first review, SWLI has developed:

- Care Coordination papers
- Workforce research
- Briefing and white papers

Example of Inclusion/Exclusion Results

SWLI's Social Work Effectiveness Topic



Summary & Conclusions:

Social Work Effectiveness

Our analysis leads us to conclude:

- There is now a large body of evidence supporting the effectiveness of a wide range of social work interventions with a wide range of social problems and populations
- On average it is reasonable to conclude that approximately 2/3 of clients served by social workers benefit in measurable ways
- It is now possible to identify a wide range of social work interventions that can be considered evidence-based or empirically supported
- Most studies have contrasted alternative interventions using some form of comparison group design which permits conclusions to be drawn about relative effectiveness

Summary & Conclusions:

Social Work Effectiveness

Our analysis leads us to conclude:

- Few studies have included no-intervention control groups resulting in findings that do not permit conclusions to be drawn about absolute effectiveness of social work interventions studied
- Few studies have used designs or measures that examine cost-effectiveness or cost-benefit questions & such questions remain unanswered for the most part
- This analysis suggests that the overall findings are sufficiently encouraging to permit us to recommend that promising social work interventions with specific social problems and specific populations be more carefully studied with particular attention to questions of cost-effectiveness included

Using the EBD in SWLI's Policy Work:

A Current Project, Care Coordination White Paper

In order to enhance our work on care coordination, a white paper is being developed that will locate effective models based upon the review and analysis of experimental and quasi-experimental studies that have been included in our data base.

Please visit our website in early 2009 to sign up for alerts

www.socialworkleadership.org

Collaboration

- Advisory Committee members belong to the Campbell Collaboration.
- Collaborations are being explored with other related databases (FCA, HCBS, IASWR, etc).
- Members of the SWLI EBPD Advisory Committee are members of a variety of national and international Evidence-based Practice work.

2008 EBD Advisory Committee

Candyce S. Berger, PhD
Stony Brook University

Robert P. Connolly, MSW
CMS

Scott Miyake Geron, PhD
Boston University

Julia Littell, PhD
Bryn Mawr

Edward J. Mullen, DSW
Columbia University

Enola K. Proctor, PhD
Washington University in St. Louis

Victoria M. Rizzo, PhD
Columbia University

Aron Shlonsky, PhD
University of Toronto

Haluk Soydan, PhD
USC

Ronald Toseland, PhD
University at Albany

Joan Zlotnik, PhD
IASWR

SWLI-EBD Group

Patricia Volland, MSW, MBA

Director

Jeannine Melly, MPH

Project Director

Edward Mullen, DSW Chair

Advisory Committee

Joseph Shuluk, BA

Project Coordinator and Reviewer

Elizabeth Taylor, MLS

Reference Librarian

Oscar León Bernal, MA

Reviewer

Lin Fang, PhD

Reviewer

Jennifer Manuel, PhD

Reviewer

Colleen McGinn, MSSW

Reviewer

Carin Tinney, LMSW

Reviewer

Jarmin Yeh, MSSW, MPH

Reviewer