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Age equality in UK healthcare policy and decision-making: A scoping review

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We use this protocol and it's working

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Abstract

The review investigates whether—and how—age influences the provision of healthcare in the United Kingdom, including the justifications (or lack thereof) for age-based decisions, and the resulting impacts across the life course. The aim is to understand whether healthcare policies and decisions treat individuals differently based on age, and what normative reasoning underpins such differences.

We searched nine databases on 24th October 2024, with an update on 26th September 2025: Medline(OvidSP) [1946-], HMIC(OvidSP)[1979 to July 2024], EconLit[EBSCOHost], PAIS International, Policy File, ASSIA, Sociological Abstracts 6 Sociology Database[Proquest] and Overton <https://www.overton.io/> . We searched Google on 25th October 2024, screening the 1st 100 results for each search string, if the 1st 50 references weren't relevant we stopped. The search strategy included title, abstract, author keywords and subject headings for our key concepts of age-related decision making, health policy and ethics. We applied a geographical search filter developed by information specialists at NICE. Non-English studies and references published before 2009 were excluded. The results were exported to Endnote for deduplication and storage and transferred to Covidence for screening.

Manual searches were also conducted to capture grey literature outside academic databases, this particularly focused on decision-making guidance and frameworks in NHS units.

Guidelines

1. Search the following databases and platforms: EconLit (EBSCOHost), HMIC (OvidSP), Medline (OvidSP), Overton, PAIS International 6 Policy File Index (Proquest), Sociology Collection: ASSIA, Sociological Abstracts 6 Sociology Database (Proquest), and perform web searching.
2. Record the coverage, date, and number of hits for each database/platform.
3. Remove duplicates from the search results.
4. Exclude studies based on the following criteria: Non-UK studies and studies published before 2009.
5. Calculate and record the final total of included studies.

Coverage, Date, Hits Table:

Coverage | Date | Hits

--- | --- | ---

1886-current | 10/24/2024 | 34

1979 to July 2024 | 10/24/2024 | 160

1946-present | 10/24/2024 | 484

| 10/24/2024 | 44

1990-current | 10/24/2024 | 149

1952-current | 10/24/2024 | 129

| 10/25/2024 | 21

1021

107

295

619

Medline (Ovid MEDLINE) Search Strategy:

1. Age Factors/
2. Ageism/
3. healthy aging/
4. (age-related or age-based).ti,ab,kf.
5. ((age adj3 (discriminat* or bias or prejudice)) or (ageist or ageism)).ti,ab,kf.
6. ((age or aged or ageing or aging or young or youth or child* or p?ediatric*) adj3 (barrier? or limit? or "cut off?")).ti,ab,kf.
7. (age adj5 (assumption? or presumption? or supposition? or presupposition? or belief? or attitude*)).ti,ab,kf.
8. life change events/
9. transition to adult care/ or transitional care/
10. exp Climacteric/
11. (life adj (change or course or span or stage?)).ti,ab,kf.
12. ((transfer* or transition*) and (p?ediatric? or child* or adolescen* or teen* or youth or young) and adult and (care or health* or service?)).ti,kf.
13. (menopaus* or premenopaus* or perimenopaus* or postmenopaus*).ti,ab,kf.
14. 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 or 10 or 11 or 12 or 13
15. resource allocation/ or health care rationing/

16. exp Health Policy/
17. Health Priorities/
18. health services accessibility/ or access to primary care/
19. delivery of health care/ or health care reform/ or healthcare disparities/ or value-based health care/
20. (decision making/ or judgment/) and (health* adj (system? or policy or policies)).mp.
21. ((health* or care or service?) and (system? or policy or policies or reform? or allocat* or ration* or reorgan* or re-organi* or priorit?ation or priority setting or priorities or priorit?ing or access* or decision making or judgment?)).ti,kf.
22. ((health* or care or service?) adj5 (system? or policy or policies or reform? or allocat* or ration* or reorgan* or re-organi* or priorit?ation or priority setting or priorities or priorit?ing or access* or decision making or judgment?)).ab.
23. (age adj5 (ration* or priority setting or priorities or priorit?ation or priorit?ing)).ti,ab,kf.
24. (scarce or scarcity).ti,ab,kf.
25. 15 or 16 or 17 or 18 or 19 or 20 or 21 or 22 or 23 or 24
26. health equity/ or right to health/ or universal health care/
27. es.fs.
28. (ethic* or bioethic*).ti,kf,jw. or bioethic*.ab. or ethic*.ab. /freq=2
29. (fair* or equity or equitable or equalit* or inequit* or inequitable or inequalit*).mp,jw.
30. 26 or 27 or 28 or 29
31. 14 and 25 and 30
32. exp United Kingdom/
33. (national health service* or nhs*).ti,ab,in.
34. (english not ((published or publication* or translat* or written or language* or speak* or literature or citation*) adj5 english)).ti,ab.
35. (gb or "g.b." or britain* or (british* not "british columbia") or uk or "u.k." or united kingdom* or (england* not "new england") or northern ireland* or northern irish* or scotland* or scottish* or (wales or "south wales" not "new south wales") or welsh*).ti,ab,jw,in.
36. (bangor or "bangor's" or cardiff or "cardiff's" or newport or "newport's" or st asaph or st asaph's or st davids or swansea or "swansea's").ti,ab,in.
37. (aberdeen or "aberdeen's" or dundee or "dundee's" or edinburgh or "edinburgh's" or glasgow or "glasgow's" or inverness or (perth not australia*) or ("perth's" not australia*) or stirling or "stirling's").ti,ab,in.
38. (armagh or "armagh's" or belfast or "belfast's" or lisburn or "lisburn's" or londonderry or "londonderry's" or derry or "derry's" or newry or "newry's").ti,ab,in.
39. (bath or "bath's" or (Birmingham not alabama*) or ("birmingham's" not alabama*) or bradford or "bradford's" or brighton or "brighton's" or bristol or "bristol's" or carlisle* or "carlisle's" or (cambridge not massachusetts* or boston* or harvard*)) or (canterbury not zealand*) or ("canterbury's" not zealand*) or chelmsford or "chelmsford's" or chester or "chester's" or chichester or "chichester's" or coventry or "coventry's" or derby or "derby's" or durham not (carolina* or nc)) or ("durham's" not (carolina* or nc)) or ely or "ely's" or exeter or "exeter's" or gloucester or "gloucester's" or hereford or "hereford's" or hull or "hull's" or lancaster or "lancaster's" or leeds* or leicester or "leicester's" or lincoln not nebraska*) or ("lincoln's" not nebraska*) or liverpool not (new south wales or nsw)) or ("liverpool's" not (new south wales or nsw)) or (london not (ontario* or ont or toronto*)) or ("london's" not (ontario* or ont or toronto*)) or manchester or "manchester's" or (newcastle not (new south wales* or nsw)) or ("newcastle's" not (new south wales or nsw)) or norwich or "norwich's" or

nottingham or "nottingham's" or oxford or "oxford's" or peterborough or "peterborough's" or plymouth or "plymouth's" or portsmouth or "portsmouth's" or preston or "preston's" or ripon or "ripon's" or salford or "salford's" or salisbury or "salisbury's" or sheffield or "sheffield's" or southampton or "southampton's" or st albans or stoke or "stoke's" or sunderland or "sunderland's" or truro or "truro's" or wakefield or "wakefield's" or wells or westminster or "westminster's" or winchester or "winchester's" or wolverhampton or "wolverhampton's" or worcester not (massachusetts* or boston* or harvard*) or ("worcester's" not (massachusetts* or boston* or harvard*)) or york not ("new york*" or ny or ontario* or ont or toronto*) or ("york's" not ("new york*" or ny or ontario* or ont or toronto*))))).ti,ab,in.

40. 32 or 33 or 34 or 35 or 36 or 37 or 38 or 39

41. (exp africa/ or exp americas/ or exp antarctic regions/ or exp arctic regions/ or exp asia/ or exp oceania/) not (exp great britain/ or europe/)

42. 40 not 41

43. 31 and 42

HMIC (Health Management Information Consortium) Search Strategy:

1. exp age factors/
2. age discrimination/ or age equality/
3. exp age differences/
4. (age-related or age-based).mp.
5. ((age adj3 (discriminat* or bias or prejudice)) or (ageist or ageism)).mp.
6. ((age or aged or ageing or aging or young or youth or child* or p?ediatric*) adj3 (barrier? or limit? or "cut off?"))).mp.
7. (age adj5 (assumption? or presumption? or supposition? or presupposition? or belief? or attitude*)).mp.
8. life change events/
9. exp Climacteric/
10. (life adj (change or course or span or stage?)).mp.
11. ((transfer* or transition*) and (p?ediatric? or child* or adolescen* or teen* or youth or young) and adult and (care or health* or service?)).mp.
12. (menopaus* or premenopaus* or perimenopaus* or postmenopaus*).mp.
13. or/1-12
14. resource allocation/ or exp rationing/
15. exp Health Policy/
16. exp priorities/ or priority setting/
17. exp access to services/
18. exp health service reform/ or exp service provision/
19. ((health* or care or service?) and (system? or policy or policies or reform? or allocat* or ration* or reorgan* or re-organ* or priorit?ation or priority setting or priorities or priorit?ing or access* or decision making or judgment?)).ti.
20. ((health* or care or service?) adj5 (system? or policy or policies or reform? or allocat* or ration* or reorgan* or re-organ* or priorit?ation or priority setting or priorities or priorit?ing or access* or decision making or judgment?)).ab.
21. (age adj5 (ration* or priority setting or priorities or priorit?ation or priorit?ing)).mp.
22. (scarce or scarcity).mp.

23. or/14-22
24. ethics/ or values/
25. bioethics/ or medical ethics/
26. health inequalities/
27. (ethic* or bioethic*).ti,jx. or bioethic*.ab. or ethic*.ab. /freq=2
28. (fair* or equity or equitable or equalit* or inequit* or inequitable or inequalit*).mp,jx.
29. or/24-28
30. 13 and 23 and 29

Scopus Search Strategy:

S1: ((TI,AB,IF(age) NEAR/3 (TI,AB,IF(discriminat*) OR TI,AB,IF(bias) OR TI,AB,IF(prejudice))) OR (TI,AB,IF(ageist) OR TI,AB,IF(ageism)) OR ((TI,AB,IF(age) OR TI,AB,IF(aged) OR TI,AB,IF(ageing) OR TI,AB,IF(aging) OR TI,AB,IF(young) OR TI,AB,IF(youth) OR TI,AB,IF(child*) OR TI,AB,IF(p?ediatric*)) NEAR/3 (TI,AB,IF(barrier?) OR TI,AB,IF(limit?) OR TI,AB,IF("cut off*")))) OR (TI,AB,IF(age) NEAR/5 (TI,AB,IF(assumption?) OR TI,AB,IF(presumption?) OR TI,AB,IF(supposition?) OR TI,AB,IF(presupposition?) OR TI,AB,IF(belief?) OR TI,AB,IF(attitude*))) OR (TI,AB,IF(life) PRE/0 (TI,AB,IF(change) OR TI,AB,IF(course) OR TI,AB,IF(span) OR TI,AB,IF(stage?))) OR ((TI(transfer*) OR TI(transition*)) AND (TI(p?ediatric*) OR TI(child*) OR TI(adolescen*) OR TI(teen*) OR TI(youth) OR TI(young))) AND TI(adult) AND (TI(care) OR TI(health*) OR TI(service?))) OR (TI,AB,IF(menopaus*) OR TI,AB,IF(premenopaus*) OR TI,AB,IF(perimenopaus*) OR TI,AB,IF(postmenopaus*))) OR (TI,AB,IF(life) PRE/0 (TI,AB,IF(change) OR TI,AB,IF(course) OR TI,AB,IF(span) OR TI,AB,IF(stage?))) OR ((TI(transfer*) OR TI(transition*)) AND (TI(p?ediatric*) OR TI(child*) OR TI(adolescen*) OR TI(teen*) OR TI(youth) OR TI(young))) AND TI(adult) AND (TI(care) OR TI(health*) OR TI(service?))) OR (TI,AB,IF(menopaus*) OR TI,AB,IF(premenopaus*) OR TI,AB,IF(perimenopaus*) OR TI,AB,IF(postmenopaus*)))

S2: (TI,AB,IF(health*) PRE/0 (TI,AB,IF(system?) OR TI,AB,IF(policy) OR TI,AB,IF(policies))) OR ((TI(health*) OR TI(care) OR TI(service?)) AND (TI(system?) OR TI(policy) OR TI(policies) OR TI(reform?) OR TI(allocat*) OR TI(ration*) OR TI(reorgani*) OR TI(re-organi*) OR TI(priorit?ation) OR TI("priority setting") OR TI(priorities) OR TI(prioriti?ing) OR TI(access*) OR TI("decision making") OR TI(judg?ment?))) OR ((AB(health*) OR AB(care) OR AB(service?)) NEAR/5 (AB(system?) OR AB(policy) OR AB(policies) OR AB(reform?) OR AB(allocat*) OR AB(ration*) OR AB(reorgani*) OR AB(re-organi*) OR AB(priorit?ation) OR AB("priority setting") OR AB(priorities) OR AB(prioriti?ing) OR AB(access*) OR AB("decision making") OR AB(judg?ment?))) OR (TI,AB,IF(ration*) OR TI,AB,IF("priority setting") OR TI,AB,IF(priorities) OR TI,AB,IF(priorit?ation) OR TI,AB,IF(prioriti?ing))) OR (NOT(scarce) OR NOFT(scarcity)) | 90043

S3 | (TI(ethic*) OR TI(bioethic*)) OR AB(bioethic*) OR (TI,AB,IF(fair*) OR TI,AB,IF(equity) OR TI,AB,IF(equitable) OR TI,AB,IF(equalit*) OR TI,AB,IF(inequit*) OR TI,AB,IF(inequitable) OR TI,AB,IF(inequalit*)) | 91452

S4 | [S5] AND [S6] AND [S7] | 149

Scopus Search Strategy (continued):

([S9] AND [S10] AND [S11]) AND location.exact("United Kingdom--UK" OR "England" OR "Europe" OR "Ireland" OR "Scotland" OR "Wales")

([S9] AND [S10] AND [S11]) NOT location.exact("United States--US" OR "Canada" OR "Australia" OR "China" OR "New York" OR "India" OR "Mexico" OR "New Zealand" OR "Uganda" OR "Denmark" OR "Latin America" OR "Venezuela" OR "Africa" OR "California" OR "Florida" OR "Japan" OR "Michigan" OR "Texas" OR "Appalachian Mountains" OR "Arizona" OR "Asia" OR "Baltimore Maryland" OR "Bangladesh" OR "Beijing China" OR "British



Columbia Canada" OR "Canberra Australian Capital Territory Australia" OR "Chicago Illinois" OR "Colorado" OR "Delhi India" OR "Detroit Michigan" OR "Dhaka Bangladesh" OR "East Asia" OR "Finland" OR "France" OR "Ghana" OR "Idaho" OR "Illinois" OR "Iran" OR "Italy" OR "Karnataka India" OR "Kuwait" OR "Lithuania" OR "Long Island New York" OR "Malawi" OR "Malta" OR "Manitoba Canada" OR "Middle East" OR "Mississippi" OR "New Jersey" OR "New Mexico" OR "New South Wales Australia" OR "Nicaragua" OR "North Carolina" OR "Northern California" OR "Norway" OR "Poland" OR "Portugal" OR "Qatar" OR "San Francisco California" OR "Saskatchewan Canada" OR "South Africa" OR "South Asia" OR "South Korea" OR "Spain" OR "Sub-Saharan Africa" OR "Turkey" OR "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics--USSR" OR "Vancouver Island" OR "Victoria Australia" OR "Vietnam")
[S12] NOT [S14]
[S13] OR [S15]

Materials

Database

- EconLit (EBSCOHost)
- HMIC (OvidSP)
- Medline (OvidSP)
- Overton
- PAIS International 6 Policy File Index (Proquest)
- Sociology Collection: ASSIA, Sociological Abstracts 6 Sociology Database (Proquest)
- Web searching

- 1 Record the following information for each database and platform searched: database name, platform used, coverage period, date of search, and number of hits retrieved.
- 2 Remove duplicate records from the combined search results.
- 3 Exclude studies that are non-UK or published before 2009. Document the number of excluded studies for each criterion (e.g., Non-UK studies: 88, Pre2009: 207).
- 4 Calculate and record the final total number of included studies after deduplication and exclusions (e.g., Final total: 619).
- 5 Export the deduplicated search results to Endnote for storage, then transfer the records to Covidence for screening.

Medline (Ovid MEDLINE) Search Strategy

- 6 Construct and execute the Medline (Ovid MEDLINE) search using the following steps:
- 7 Combine the following search terms and subject headings to capture age-related concepts, health policy, ethics, and UK-specific studies. Use the provided line numbers to structure the search logic:
 - 7.1 1. Search for age-related concepts using subject headings and keywords (lines 1-13).
 - 7.2 2. Search for health policy and resource allocation concepts using subject headings and keywords (lines 15-25).
 - 7.3 3. Search for ethics, equity, and fairness concepts using subject headings and keywords (lines 26-30).
 - 7.4 4. Combine the results from the age-related, health policy, and ethics searches (line 31: 14 and 25 and 30).
 - 7.5 5. Apply UK-specific filters using subject headings and keywords (lines 32-39).

- 7.6 6. Combine UK-specific filters (line 40: 32 or 33 or 34 or 35 or 36 or 37 or 38 or 39).
- 7.7 7. Exclude non-UK regions by subtracting global regions (line 41: (exp africa/ or exp americas/ or exp antarctic regions/ or exp arctic regions/ or exp asia/ or exp oceania/ not (exp great britain/ or europe/)).
- 7.8 8. Apply the final UK filter (line 42: 40 not 41).
- 7.9 9. Combine the main search (step 4) with the UK filter (step 8) to produce the final set of results (line 43: 31 and 42).

HMIC (Health Management Information Consortium) Search Strategy

- 8 Construct and execute the HMIC (Health Management Information Consortium) search using the following steps:
 - 8.1 1. Search for age-related concepts using subject headings and keywords (lines 1-12).
 - 8.2 2. Search for health policy and resource allocation concepts using subject headings and keywords (lines 14-22).
 - 8.3 3. Search for ethics, equity, and fairness concepts using subject headings and keywords (lines 24-28).
 - 8.4 4. Combine the results from the age-related, health policy, and ethics searches (line 30: 13 and 23 and 29).

Scopus Search Strategy

- 9 Construct and execute the Scopus search using the following steps:
 - 9.1 1. Search for age-related concepts using the following logic (S1): ((TI,AB,IF(age) NEAR/3 (TI,AB,IF(discriminat*) OR TI,AB,IF(bias) OR TI,AB,IF(prejudice))) OR (TI,AB,IF(ageist) OR TI,AB,IF(ageism)) OR ((TI,AB,IF(age) OR TI,AB,IF(aged) OR TI,AB,IF(ageing) OR TI,AB,IF(aging) OR TI,AB,IF(young) OR TI,AB,IF(youth) OR TI,AB,IF(child*) OR TI,AB,IF(p? ediatric*)) NEAR/3 (TI,AB,IF(barrier?) OR TI,AB,IF(limit?) OR TI,AB,IF("cut off*")))) OR

(TI,AB,IF(age) NEAR/5 (TI,AB,IF(assumption?) OR TI,AB,IF(presumption?) OR TI,AB,IF(supposition?) OR TI,AB,IF(belief?) OR TI,AB,IF(attitude*))) OR (TI,AB,IF(life) PRE/0 (TI,AB,IF(change) OR TI,AB,IF(course) OR TI,AB,IF(span) OR TI,AB,IF(stage?))) OR ((TI(transfer*) OR TI(transition*)) AND (TI(p?ediatric*) OR TI(child*) OR TI(adolescen*) OR TI(teen*) OR TI(youth) OR TI(young)) AND TI(adult) AND (TI(care) OR TI(health*) OR TI(service?))) OR (TI,AB,IF(menopaus*) OR TI,AB,IF(premenopaus*) OR TI,AB,IF(perimenopaus*) OR TI,AB,IF(postmenopaus*))).

- 9.2 2. Search for health policy and resource allocation concepts using the following logic (S2): (TI,AB,IF(health*) PRE/0 (TI,AB,IF(system?) OR TI,AB,IF(policy) OR TI,AB,IF(policies))) OR ((TI(health*) OR TI(care) OR TI(service?)) AND (TI(system?) OR TI(policy) OR TI(policies) OR TI(reform?) OR TI(allocat*) OR TI(ration*) OR TI(reorgani*) OR TI(re-organi*) OR TI(priorit?ation) OR TI("priority setting") OR TI(priorities) OR TI(prioriti?ing) OR TI(access*) OR TI("decision making") OR TI(judg?ment?))) OR ((AB(health*) OR AB(care) OR AB(service?)) NEAR/5 (AB(system?) OR AB(policy) OR AB(policies) OR AB(reform?) OR AB(allocat*) OR AB(ration*) OR AB(reorgani*) OR AB(re-organi*) OR AB(priorit?ation) OR AB("priority setting") OR AB(priorities) OR AB(prioriti?ing) OR AB(access*) OR AB("decision making") OR AB(judg?ment?))) OR (TI,AB,IF(ration*) OR TI,AB,IF("priority setting") OR TI,AB,IF(priorities) OR TI,AB,IF(priorit?ation) OR TI,AB,IF(prioriti?ing))) OR (NOT(scarce) OR NOFT(scarcity)).
- 9.3 3. Search for ethics, equity, and fairness concepts using the following logic (S3): (TI(ethic*) OR TI(bioethic*)) OR AB(bioethic*) OR (TI,AB,IF(fair*) OR TI,AB,IF(equity) OR TI,AB,IF(equitable) OR TI,AB,IF(equalit*) OR TI,AB,IF(inequit*) OR TI,AB,IF(inequitable) OR TI,AB,IF(inequalit*)).
- 9.4 4. Combine the results from the age-related, health policy, and ethics searches (S4): [S1] AND [S2] AND [S3].
- 9.5 Record the number of results retrieved for each Scopus search set: S1, S2, S3, and S4. For example, S1: 2492, S2: 34788, S3: 109216, S4: 34.

10

Set#	Searched for	Results
S5	((TI,AB,IF(age) NEAR/3 (TI,AB,IF(discriminat*) OR TI,AB,IF(bias) OR TI,AB,IF(prejudice))) OR (TI,AB,IF(ageist) OR TI,AB,IF(ageism))) OR ((TI,AB,IF(age) OR TI,AB,IF(aged) OR TI,AB,IF(ageing) OR TI,AB,IF(aging) OR TI,AB,IF(young) OR TI,AB,IF(youth) OR TI,AB,IF(child*) OR TI,AB,IF(p? ediatric*)) NEAR/3 (TI,AB,IF(barrier?) OR TI,AB,IF(limit?) OR TI,AB,IF("cut off?")) OR (TI,AB,IF(age) NEAR/5 (TI,AB,IF(assumption?) OR TI,AB,IF(presumption?) OR TI,AB,IF(supposition?) OR TI,AB,IF(presupposition?) OR TI,AB,IF(belief?) OR TI,AB,IF(attitude*)) OR (TI,AB,IF(life) PRE/0 (TI,AB,IF(change) OR TI,AB,IF(course) OR TI,AB,IF(span) OR TI,AB,IF(stage?)) OR ((TI(transfer*) OR TI(transition*)) AND (TI(p? ediatric?) OR TI(child*) OR TI(adolescen*) OR TI(teen*) OR TI(youth) OR TI(young)) AND TI(adult) AND (TI(care) OR TI(health*) OR TI(service?))) OR (TI,AB,IF(menopaus*) OR TI,AB,IF(premenopaus*) OR TI,AB,IF(perimenopaus*) OR TI,AB,IF(postmenopaus*)) OR (TI,AB,IF(life) PRE/0 (TI,AB,IF(change) OR TI,AB,IF(course) OR TI,AB,IF(span) OR TI,AB,IF(stage?))) OR ((TI(transfer*) OR TI(transition*)) AND (TI(p? ediatric?) OR TI(child*) OR TI(adolescen*) OR TI(teen*) OR TI(youth) OR TI(young)) AND TI(adult) AND (TI(care) OR TI(health*) OR TI(service?)))) OR ((TI,AB,IF(menopaus*) OR TI,AB,IF(premenopaus*) OR TI,AB,IF(perimenopaus*) OR TI,AB,IF(postmenopaus*))	3443
S6	(TI,AB,IF(health*) PRE/0 (TI,AB,IF(system?) OR TI,AB,IF(policy) OR TI,AB,IF(policies))) OR ((TI(health*) OR TI(care) OR TI(service?)) AND (TI(system?) OR TI(policy) OR TI(policies) OR TI(reform?) OR TI(allocat*) OR TI(ration*) OR TI(reorgani*) OR TI(re-organi*) OR TI(prioriti?ation) OR TI("priority setting") OR TI(priorities) OR TI(prioriti?ing) OR TI(access*) OR TI("decision making") OR TI(judg?ment?))) OR ((AB(health*) OR AB(care) OR AB(service?)) NEAR/5 (AB(system?) OR AB(policy) OR AB(policies) OR AB(reform?) OR AB(allocat*) OR AB(ration*) OR AB(reorgani*) OR AB(re-organi*) OR AB(prioriti?ation) OR AB("priority setting") OR AB(priorities) OR AB(prioriti?ing) OR AB(access*) OR AB("decision making") OR AB(judg?ment?))) OR (TI,AB,IF(age) NEAR/5 (TI,AB,IF(ration*) OR TI,AB,IF("priority setting") OR TI,AB,IF(priorities) OR TI,AB,IF(prioriti?ation) OR TI,AB,IF(prioriti?ing))) OR (NOFT(scarce) OR NOFT(scarcity))	90043
S7	(TI(ethic*) OR TI(bioethic*)) OR AB(bioethic*) OR (TI,AB,IF(fair*) OR TI,AB,IF(equity) OR TI,AB,IF(equitable) OR TI,AB,IF(equalit*) OR TI,AB,IF(inequit*) OR TI,AB,IF(inequitable) OR TI,AB,IF(inequalit*))	91452

Flow diagram showing the number of results for each Scopus search set: S1 (2492), S2 (34788), S3 (109216), S4 (34).

Visualize the number of results for each Scopus search set (S1, S2, S3, S4) using a flow diagram or chart.

- 10.1 Combine additional Scopus search sets as needed. For example, S8: [S5] AND [S6] AND [S7], and record the number of results (e.g., S8: 149).
- 10.2 Combine further Scopus search sets as needed: for example, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, and S16. Document the logic and results for each set.
- 10.3 Combine Scopus search sets S9, S10, and S11 using the logic: [S9] AND [S10] AND [S11].
- 10.4 Apply a location filter to the combined Scopus search sets: [S9] AND [S10] AND [S11] AND location.exact("United Kingdom--UK" OR "England" OR "Europe" OR "Ireland" OR "Scotland" OR "Wales").

- 10.5 Exclude records from the combined Scopus search sets that match non-target locations: [S9] AND [S10] AND [S11] NOT location.exact("United States--US" OR "Canada" OR "Australia" OR "China" OR "New York" OR "India" OR "Mexico" OR "New Zealand" OR "Uganda" OR "Denmark" OR "Latin America" OR "Venezuela" OR "Africa" OR "California" OR "Florida" OR "Japan" OR "Michigan" OR "Texas" OR "Appalachian Mountains" OR "Arizona" OR "Asia" OR "Baltimore Maryland" OR "Bangladesh" OR "Beijing China" OR "British Columbia Canada" OR "Canberra Australian Capital Territory Australia" OR "Chicago Illinois" OR "Colorado" OR "Delhi India" OR "Detroit Michigan" OR "Dhaka Bangladesh" OR "East Asia" OR "Finland" OR "France" OR "Ghana" OR "Idaho" OR "Illinois" OR "Iran" OR "Italy" OR "Karnataka India" OR "Kuwait" OR "Lithuania" OR "Long Island New York" OR "Malawi" OR "Malta" OR "Manitoba Canada" OR "Middle East" OR "Mississippi" OR "New Jersey" OR "New Mexico" OR "New South Wales Australia" OR "Nicaragua" OR "North Carolina" OR "Northern California" OR "Norway" OR "Poland" OR "Portugal" OR "Qatar" OR "San Francisco California" OR "Saskatchewan Canada" OR "South Africa" OR "South Asia" OR "South Korea" OR "Spain" OR "Sub-Saharan Africa" OR "Turkey" OR "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics--USSR" OR "Vancouver Island" OR "Victoria Australia" OR "Vietnam").
- 10.6 Subtract results from set S14 from S12: [S12] NOT [S14].
- 10.7 Combine results from sets S13 and S15 using OR logic: [S13] OR [S15].
- 10.8 Record the number of results for the following Scopus search sets: S12 NOT S14 (e.g., 384 results) and S13 OR S15 (e.g., 23 results).
- 11
 - 11.1 Record the number of results for the following Scopus search sets: 273, 111, and 129.
 - 11.2 For the UK-limited search terms, record the number of selected results for each search string as follows: title: age AND health* (23), abstract:age AND discrimination AND health* (6), abstract:age AND bias AND health* (0), abstract:ageism AND health* (0), abstract:age AND health* AND equity (1), abstract:age AND health* AND equality (2), abstract:age AND health* AND inequity (0), abstract:age AND health* AND inequality (3), abstract:age AND health* AND equitable (0), abstract:age AND health* AND inequitable (0), abstract:age AND health* AND ethics (0), abstract:age AND health* AND ethical (0), abstract:age AND health* AND bioethics (0), abstract:age AND health* AND bioethical (0), abstract:age AND health* AND fair (0), abstract:age AND health* AND fairness (0),

abstract:age AND health* AND value* (1), abstract:age AND health* AND policy (4), abstract:age AND health* AND reform* (2), abstract:age AND health* AND ration* (0), abstract:age AND health* AND priority (0), abstract:age AND health* AND priorities (2), abstract:age AND health* AND prioritisation (0), abstract:age AND health* AND scarcity (0). Record the total number of selected results (44).

- 11.3 For web-based UK-limited search terms, record the number of selected results for each search string and site as follows:
- age AND (barriers OR limits OR bias OR discrimination) AND (health OR healthcare) site:nhs.uk, 1st 100 screened: 7 selected
 - age AND (barriers OR limits OR bias OR discrimination) AND (health OR healthcare) site:gov.uk, 1st 50 screened: 0 selected
 - age AND (barriers OR limits OR bias OR discrimination) AND (health OR healthcare) site:org.uk, 1st 100 screened: 3 selected
 - young AND (barriers OR limits OR bias OR discrimination) AND (health OR healthcare) site:nhs.uk, 1st 100 screened: 4 selected
 - young AND (barriers OR limits OR bias OR discrimination) AND (health OR healthcare) site:gov.uk, 1st 100 screened: 1 selected
 - young AND (barriers OR limits OR bias OR discrimination) AND (health OR healthcare) site:org.uk, 1st 100 screened: 1 selected
 - age AND (rationing OR "priority setting" OR "prioritisation") AND (health OR healthcare) site:nhs.uk, 1st 100 screened: 1 selected
 - age AND (rationing OR "priority setting" OR "prioritisation") AND (health OR healthcare) site:gov.uk, 1st 50 screened: 0 selected
 - age AND (rationing OR "priority setting" OR "prioritisation") AND (health OR healthcare) site:org.uk, 1st 100 screened: 4 selected
 - young AND (rationing OR "priority setting" OR "prioritisation") AND (health OR healthcare) site:nhs.uk, 1st 50 screened: 0 selected
 - young AND (rationing OR "priority setting" OR "prioritisation") AND (health OR healthcare) site:gov.uk, 1st 50 screened: 0 selected
 - young AND (rationing OR "priority setting" OR "prioritisation") AND (health OR healthcare) site:org.uk, 1st 50 screened: 0 selected
- Record the total number of selected results for web-based searches (21).

Protocol references

Ayiku L, Levay P, Hudson T, Finnegan A. The NICE UK geographic search filters for MEDLINE and Embase (Ovid): Post-development study to further evaluate precision and number-needed-to-read when retrieving UK evidence. *Research Synthesis Methods*. 2020 <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/jrsm.1431>

References to any search filter used:

<https://sites.google.com/a/york.ac.uk/issg-search-filters-resource/home>

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