

Systematic Map 1 – Summary report:

Mapping the literature on the extent and impact of parental mental health problems on the family, on the interventions available and the acceptability, accessibility and effectiveness of interventions.

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A project conducted by SCIE with consultancy from the Eppi Centre.¹

Objectives

Systematic maps aim to describe the existing literature in a broad topic area and can be analysed in depth or more superficially as appropriate to individual projects. The resulting overview offers policymakers, practitioners and researchers an explicit and transparent means to identify narrower policy and practice-relevant review questions. This is a summary report of the map and contains main findings of interest.

The search was conducted in 2005.

The map provides an overview of and access to research on the following review areas:

- the extent and detection of parental mental health problems in the UK and Northern Ireland
- the impact of parental mental health problems on the wider family
- the accessibility, acceptability and effectiveness of available and potential service interventions for parents with mental health difficulties in the UK.

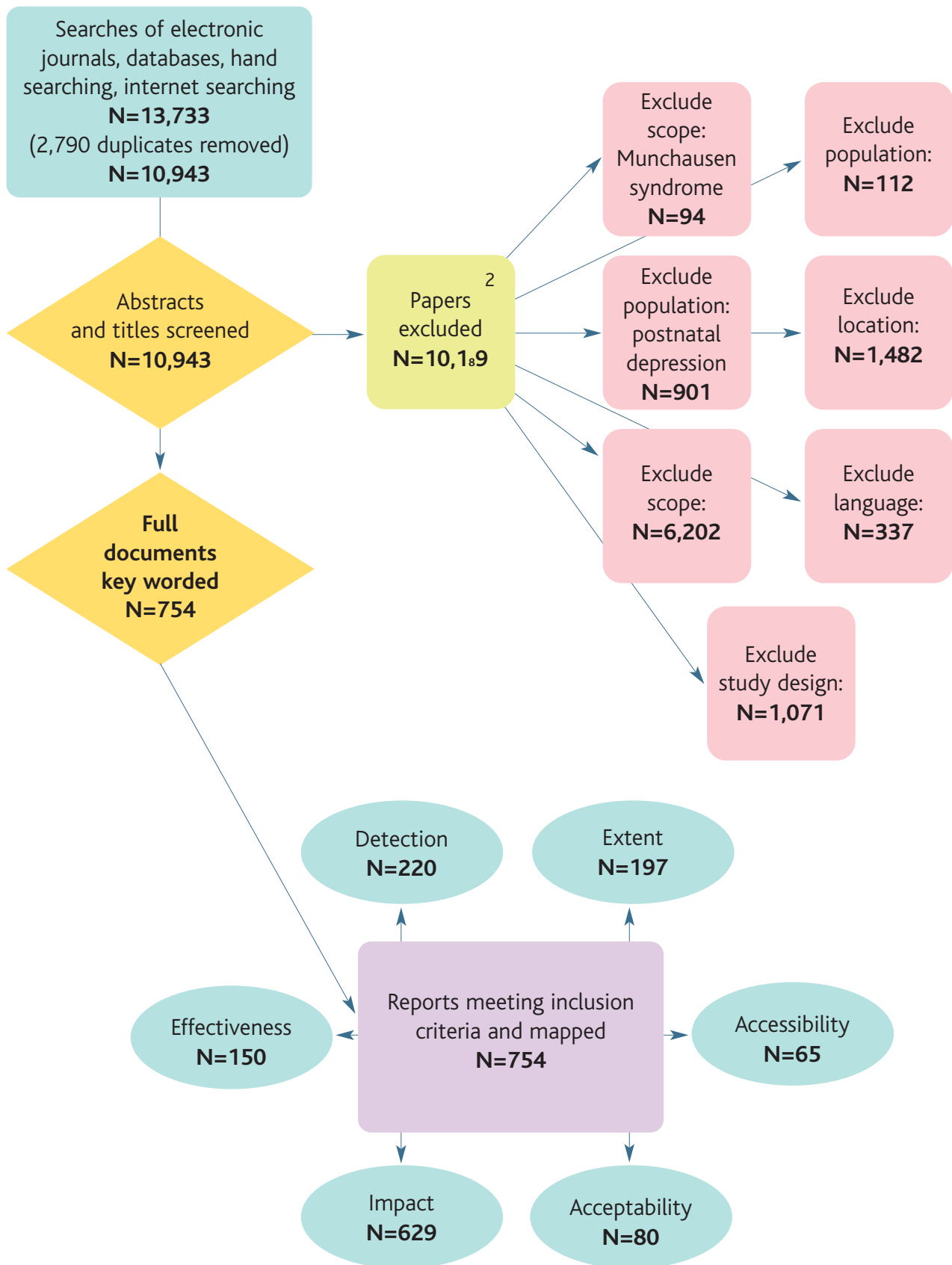
NB This project has mapped and categorised the literature in the field. No quality assessment of the literature has been undertaken.

Stages of mapping

- 1. AGREE RESEARCH QUESTION**
 - input from subject specialists
- 2. METHODS DEVELOPMENT**
 - developing inclusion criteria and search strategy
- 3. INFORMATION RETRIEVAL/MANAGEMENT**
 - developing software filters for records
 - saving results to Eppi- Reviewer
 - quality checks
- 4. SCREENING (1) TITLES/ABSTRACTS**
 - quality checks
- 5. RETRIEVAL OF PAPERS**
- 6. SCREENING (2) FULL PAPER**
 - quality checks
- 7. KEYWORDING/CODING PAPERS ONLINE**
 - development of coding tools
 - quality control
 - debriefing
- 8. SEARCHABLE DATASET**
 - data-cleaning
 - upload of records
 - analysis of records
- 9. SEARCHABLE DATABASE OF SYSTEMATIC MAP OF RESEARCH**

¹Eppi-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London, UK.

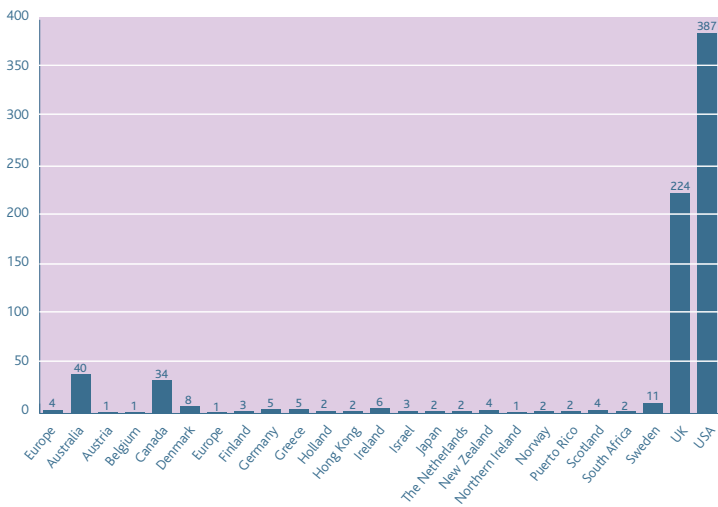
Flow of literature



²Not all categories mutually exclusive.

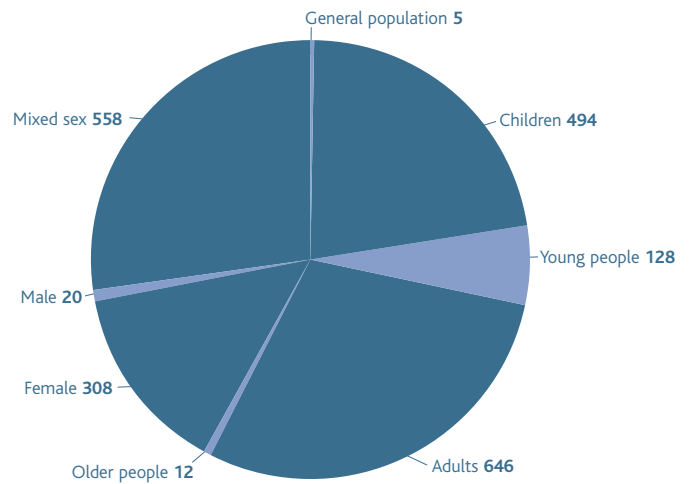
Findings: Overall composition of the map

Country



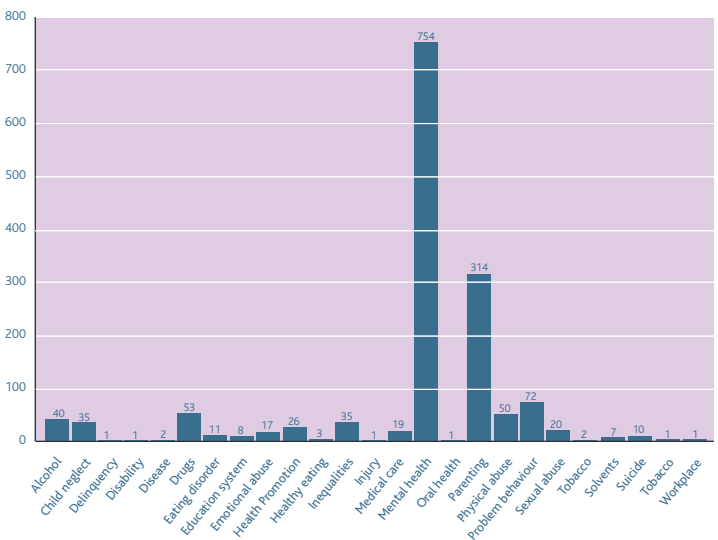
The largest proportion of included research was from the USA and UK as most of the databases and journals searched are US or UK based. Also, only English language reports were included due to high translation costs. There are reports published in English from Scandinavian countries and from Australia and Canada in the map.

Population 1



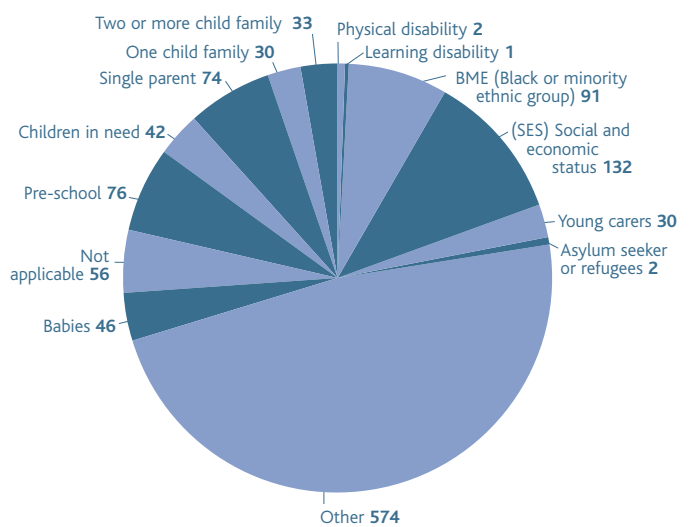
Studies were coded with more than one population type if appropriate – eg *adults* and *mixed sex* for a report based on both parents. The largest population type reported was adults. Where studies focused on whole families, studies were coded as focusing on adults and children. There were very few reports focused on males only which highlight a gap in the research.

Focus



Where studies focused on specific additional problems, this was captured in the coding to enable possible analysis of multiple problems experienced by families. In addition to mental health and parenting as the main topic focus, problem behaviour, drugs, physical abuse, alcohol, child neglect and inequalities were topics included in studies in the map.

Population 2



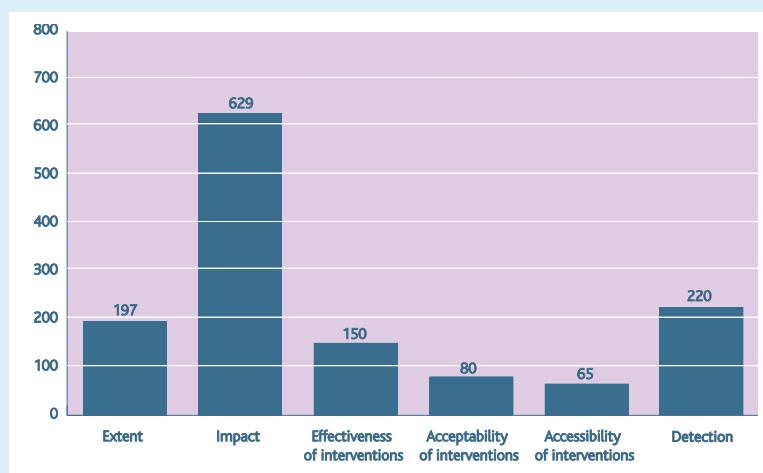
This figure adds more demographic detail, enabling subgroups of studies to be identified. Categories include socio-economic status (132 studies), young carers (30), single parents (74), children 'in need' (42), preschool children (76) and babies (46). 574 studies were coded as 'other'. This was used where information did not fit the established framework. Examples are specific mental disorders, prisoners, and relationship types eg grandparents.

Findings

Studies in the map cover all aspects of the question defined at the outset of the project. The highest number relate to the impact of parental mental health on the family, indicating that more research in the English language has been conducted on this than the other topics. For these other areas, numbers of studies range from 60 to 197, demonstrating that a significant quantity of research knowledge is available in these areas.

Gaps in research

- Few studies in the map focused on male participants only – a gap in the primary research that should be considered in future primary research commissioning.
- There is a lack of systematic reviews that specifically consider the accessibility of interventions.
- There is more literature in the map on depressive disorders than other conditions.
- There are few studies in the map coded as employment advice, housing or financial advice. This may reflect a gap in the research literature in relation to the effectiveness, accessibility or acceptability of these interventions.



Number of reports by map specific topic

The largest number of reports assesses the impact of PMH followed by those looking at the extent of PMH. Of the intervention specific reports, 150 are focused on effectiveness, with the lowest number coded as addressing the accessibility of interventions specifically.

Main messages

- The map provides an overview of research on parental mental health issues and the family. It can be divided into sub sections of intervention effectiveness, accessibility, acceptability as well as more general research on the effects of parental mental health on the family.
- The map is a research tool. It can be searched using key word and free text terms. Topics can be cross tabulated, and frequency data for all keywords obtained.
- The map includes published research literature and so does not reflect practice that is not evaluated and published. Gaps in the map may reflect a lack of evaluation, or specific gaps in the evidence base.
- Further analysis is available and should be conducted for any project drawing on the map.
- No quality appraisal has been conducted on the reports in the map. It is always advisable to quality appraise research reports before using findings.

The full report of this project will be available online from SCIE

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