

## Project Description

1. **Project Title:** The Inclusion of Policy Content and Recommendations within Gerontology and Geriatric Medicine Journals: A Bibliometric Analysis

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2. **Abstract:**

**Background:** Including policy content in scientific articles is an important step in the implementation of new practices and the evaluation of current practices. This study will examine the inclusion of policy content and recommendations within gerontology and geriatric medicine journals. **Methods:** A bibliometric analysis will be conducted examining author guidelines, solicitation of policy articles, and other related journal characteristics. The study will allow us to determine which journals are most likely to include policy as a crucial component of the research process.

3. **Significance:**

Discovering new treatments and preventive strategies through scientific research is not sufficient to improve health outcomes. The new evidence must be implemented within the healthcare system and policies/guidelines updated to support the new evidence-based discoveries. It can take years before a new practice is implemented. Yet, few scientific journals include articles that address the implementation of best practices and the related changes to policies and guidelines.

The challenges of implementation are particularly challenging within the field of Gerontology. Older adults with multiple, complex chronic conditions are often excluded from clinical trials (Carpenter et al. 2022) so that policies and guidelines are not updated to incorporate new treatments for older adults. Sometimes treatments which are effective for most adults are found to be of limited use for older adults and policies must be changed to discourage the use of treatments that may do more harm than good in older adults.

Several academic organizations state the importance of policy within their mission statements. For example, the American Geriatrics Society's vision "to maintain our health, safety, and independence as we age" is grounded in influencing programs and policies within the healthcare system (<https://www.americangeriatrics.org/where-we-stand>) and the Gerontological Society of America stresses the importance of translating research evidence into policy(<https://www.geron.org/Advocacy/GSA-Policy-Initiatives>). Yet, few scientific articles address policy content or recommendations.

4. **Goals and objectives:**

The objective of this research is to examine the extent to which policy content is addressed within gerontology and geriatrics journals. We will examine author guidelines and the types of articles that are solicited by each journal to determine if the journal is publishing or encouraging the publication of policy content or recommendation papers.

5. **Research methods:** We will conduct a bibliometric analysis of peer-reviewed journals within the field of gerontology and geriatric medicine. Variables will include mention of policy content in author guidelines, types of articles accepted for publication, publisher, impact factor, frequency of publication, as well as other relevant factors.

6. **Proposed method of data analysis:** Descriptive statistics will be used to describe the journals most likely to solicit articles with policy content. The statistical package, SAS, will be used to analyze the data.

7. **Summer Fellow contributions:** The summer fellow will contribute to the literature review, assist in collecting data from journal websites, and perform the descriptive analysis. The student will also draft an abstract to present at the NEOMED Student Research Symposium and prepare either a poster or oral presentation for the symposium.

### **Training/Mentoring Plan**

1. **Plan for training/mentoring:** Kris Baughman, PhD (associate professor of Family & Community Medicine at NEOMED) will be the primary contact and mentor for this project. In addition, the student will have the opportunity to work with Ruth Ludwick, PhD RN (professor emeritus from Kent State University's College of Nursing). Dr. Baughman will meet with the student to develop a work plan which will include the following: 1) review of the literature on implanting policies within the healthcare system and how to develop a research question and hypothesis, 2) training in collecting data from journal websites, 3) data management, 4) and how to analyze data using quantitative software. Follow-up meetings will be held at least weekly to discuss project progress, and to provide the student with any necessary guidance or information. The student will also be included in research team meetings.
2. **Description of resources available:** Workspace within the Department of Family & Community Medicine is available if needed but the student is also welcome to work from home. Statistical software will also be provided and meetings will occur in person or by zoom.
3. **Site where the research will be conducted:** The research will be conducted either at NEOMED or remotely.

**NOTE:** This summer fellowship is funded by the NEOMED Student Training in Aging-Related Research (NEOSTAR) program and offers the same stipend as the research office. **We encourage students interested in Geriatrics to apply and offer additional shadowing experiences with Geriatricians throughout the summer.**