



Health Services Research

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Definition

The multidisciplinary field of scientific investigation that studies how social factors, financing systems, organizational structures and processes, health policies, health technologies and personal behaviors affect access to health care, the quality and cost of health care, and ultimately the health and well-being of individuals, families, communities and populations (adapted from [AcademyHealth](#)).

Discussion

Health services research involves the integration of statistical, epidemiological, and social and behavioral research techniques in the study of health services, including randomized controlled trials, qualitative research, health care surveys, systematic reviews and meta-analysis. Examples of research topics include evaluation of practice variations, guideline adherence, and diffusion of innovation; quantitative and qualitative analysis of inequalities in health status and health care; assessment of patient attitudes to health, health seeking behavior, acceptance of health care, willingness to pay, and compliance with treatment.

Scope and emphasis

Collected comprehensively.

Special considerations

NLM develops and makes available numerous resources on health services research through its [National Information Center on Health Services Research and Health Care Technology Assessment](#).