

Project Title	Infant feeding during natural disasters: A systematic scoping review
Supervisor	Prof Deborah Davis
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Lead discipline (please select one)

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Midwifery | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Economics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allied Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Biostatistics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medicine | <input type="checkbox"/> Value-based Healthcare |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-clinical | <input type="checkbox"/> Epidemiology |

Outline of the project

The Australian 2019/20 bushfire crisis (eucalyptus forests) was unprecedented in duration, severity and scale. Mothers and infants have unique needs during, and in the aftermath of disasters such this and infant feeding is one of the most important. Infant feeding can be disrupted due to maternal distress, exposure to bush smoke, the need to evacuate and disruption to essential services including water and food supplies. Breastfeeding is one of the most important human behaviours for the survival, growth, development and health of infants and young children and it is critical that this is supported during times of disaster. Infant feeding can also be disrupted for formula fed babies. We know little about the needs of mothers in relation to infant feeding in times of natural disaster and it is here that this systematic scoping review contributes.

Proposed research methods

A systematic scoping review uses a systematic process for identifying relevant research on a specified topic. The research evidence identified is then appraised and synthesised resulting in a work that presents the state of the art in relation to evidence on a particular topic. Scoping reviews are useful when the topic has not been researched comprehensively and also help to identify gaps in the literature, clarify working definitions and conceptual boundaries relating to a topic. This scoping review will follow the methods detailed by the Joanna Briggs Institute

<https://wiki.joannabriggs.org/display/MANUAL/Chapter+11%3A+Scoping+reviews>

Preferred study discipline being undertaken by the student

Midwifery

Potential benefits to the student and to the department

The student will gain invaluable experience in conducting a systematic review of the literature including designing the search architecture, locating, appraising literature and synthesising research findings. In so doing the student will also gain in depth knowledge of the literature relating to infant feeding in times of natural disaster. Finally, in preparing a manuscript for publication the student will gain important skills in publication.

This work will contribute to the Mother and Child 2020 study (MC2020) in which the supervisor is an investigator. The Mother and Child 2020 (MC2020) study is a longitudinal cohort study focusing on the HealthANSWERS footprint (ACT and regional surrounds) which aims to assess the impacts of the 2019/20 bushfires and more recently the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) epidemic on the health and well-being of pregnant women, new mothers and their babies. This vacation study will contribute to this larger work by drawing together research evidence on what is currently known about the impact of natural disasters on infant feeding.

Department within ACT Health Directorate / Canberra Health Services where the student will be based

SYNERGY: Nursing & Midwifery Research Centre
University of Canberra and ACT Health

Please submit form to preclinical.research@act.gov.au