

de Carvalho Corôa, R. et al. (2024)

Involving patients and the public in scaling initiatives in health and social services: a few strategies

Scaling is a process that allows the transfer, spread or replication of an intervention from a controlled setting like pilot projects in research, to other settings which usually require **a change of scale**. It aims to increase the intended impacts of an intervention that has been proven effective to **ensure a larger and more diverse population has access to its benefits**. In healthcare, those benefits are often related to quality in care and equitable welfare of individuals and population.

In scaling initiatives in health and social services, **involving patients and the public is a critical success factor**. But how can we do it?

Roberta de Carvalho and France Légaré's research team conducted a scoping review to answer the question. They found **120 scaling initiatives** of health and social interventions involving patients and the public in the literature.



On what health and social care system level were those initiatives found?

88

initiatives were found at the **direct care level**, that is, through direct interactions with health professionals in the delivery of care. In this category, the most used strategies were **patient and public education and behavioural change interventions**.

For example, it could be the organization of information sessions for communities or the use of mass media for the diffusion of prevention messages.

Also,

103 took place in community-based primary health care

32 were developed by patients and the public

61

initiatives were found at the institutional **policy-making level**. This reveals the potential for involving patients and the public in councils committees to develop **system-level scaling policies and priorities**.

Patients and the public were less involved in levels farther from community-based primary care, which could suggest a lack of skills necessary for their involvement in other activities, such as :

training of healthcare professionals

5

Number of initiatives

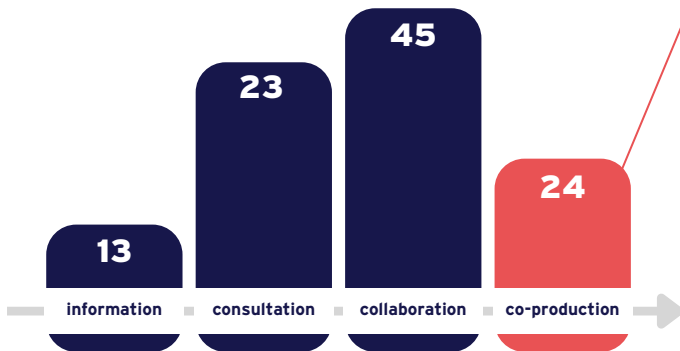
organization of health and social care

23



How involved were patients and the public, what were the goals and the results of the involvement in the listed initiatives?

Number of initiatives according to the involvement level



Co-production, requiring the **greatest involvement** from patients and the public, is not a well established practice in scaling. **Difficulties in communicating in plain language** can be a barrier to patient and public involvement.

Attention should be taken **not to indulge in creating new vocabularies** that increase the distance between them and the people they are trying to benefit.

In most cases, the **goal** behind involving patients and the public was to **enhance scaling effectiveness**. Fewer studies reported valuing the knowledge and experiences of patients and the public, or respecting their right or duty to participate in such activities.

More often than not, involvement of patients and the public in scaling of health and social interventions had an **impact** on :

	Number of initiatives
services provided	99
patients and public participants	94
the broader public	75



To keep in mind...

Despite the growing literature on scaling practices, the number of studies that were excluded from this review highlights that a significant number of studies still do not involve patients and the public in their initiatives (or do not report having done so).

Future qualitative studies on real experiences should document the challenges specific to different local contexts of involving patients and the public in initiatives to scale up health interventions.

Want to know more?

[Read the complete article > here](#)

Authors of the original paper | Roberta de Carvalho Corôa, Ali Ben Charif, Vincent Robitaille, Diogo G.V. Mochcovitch, Mamane Abdoulaye Samri, Talagbe Gabin Akpo, Amédé Gogovor, Virginie Blancette, Lucas Gomes Souza, Kathy Kastner, Amélie M. Achim, Robert K. D. McLean, Andrew Milat, France Légaré

Graphical synthesis | Joanie Bédard & Anne-Marie Cardinal