

Table DS1 Characteristics of included studies				
Study (country)	Inclusion criteria	Assessment	Participants, <i>n</i>	Participant profile
Arnold, 1995 (UK) ²⁴	Women with a history of self-harm	Written questionnaire and semi-structured interview	76	100% (<i>n</i> =76) female; age range of 18 years to late 50s; 90% (<i>n</i> =68) had self-cut; 39% (<i>n</i> =30) reported no longer hurting themselves
Bolger <i>et al</i> , 2004 (Ireland) ³¹	Young people aged 14–20 years who attended A&E with suicidal ideas or self-harming behaviour	Face-to-face interview	89 Loss to follow-up: 58/89 (65%)	61% (<i>n</i> =54) female; 90% (<i>n</i> =80) presented to A&E owing to self-harm episode; 61% (<i>n</i> =67) presented after an overdose; 45% (<i>n</i> =40) had previous history of self-harm; 46% (<i>n</i> =41) had previous contact with mental health services
Brophy, 2006 (UK) ²³	Young people with experiences of self-harm	Consultation group, personal testimonies, online questionnaire	40 participants across five consultation sites; 142 participants completed an online survey; an unknown number provided personal testimonies; some 150 individuals joined a 'virtual consultation site'	Unknown
Burgess <i>et al</i> , 1998 (UK) ³⁸	Adolescents (aged 11–18 years) presenting to hospital after self-poisoning (overdoses of alcohol alone were excluded)	Quantitative questionnaire	33 Loss to follow-up: 3/33 (24%)	27% (<i>n</i> =9) had previous history of overdose
Bywaters & Rolfe, 2002 (UK) ³³	Young people and adults with a history of self-harm and friends or partners of people who had self-harmed	Recorded interview	24	80% (<i>n</i> =19) female; 21% (<i>n</i> =5) friends or partners; age range of 16–49 years (but most in late teens or early 20s)
Cardell & Pitula, 1999 (North America) ⁴³	Adult in-patients at risk of suicide placed under constant observation on hospital ward within the 2 weeks before interview	In-depth interview	20 Loss to follow-up: 0/20 (0%)	65% (<i>n</i> =13) female; mean age of 32 years; 60% (<i>n</i> =12) at state-owned psychiatric institution; 40% (<i>n</i> =8) at general medical centre with psychiatric in-patient units
Carrigan, 1994 (UK) ¹⁹	Individuals who had survived an episode of self-poisoning	Semi-structured interview	6 Loss to follow-up: 0/6 (0%)	50% (<i>n</i> =3) female
Cerel <i>et al</i> , 2006 (North America) ²⁵	Individuals who had made a suicide attempt and presented to A&E or their family members and friends who had accompanied an individual to A&E after suicidal behaviour	Survey (yes/no questions and one open-ended response)	719 participants (465 consumers; 254 family members)	306 of 355 (86%) female; 260 of 465 (56%) aged 25–44 years; 162 of 465 (35%) had an attempt within previous year; 293 of 465 (63%) presented after an overdose
Crockwell & Burford, 1995 (North America) ³²	Individuals with a history of self-harm by overdose during adolescence	Open-ended interview	3	100% (<i>n</i> =3) female; aged 16–23 years; 66% (<i>n</i> =2) were residents in a group care programme; 33% (<i>n</i> =1) undergoing counselling at a local community service agency
Dorer <i>et al</i> , 1999 (UK) ⁴⁰	Adolescents attending hospital following an overdose	Semi-structured interview	63 Loss to follow-up: 20/63 (32%)	83.7% (<i>n</i> =36) female; aged 8–17 years; mean age of 14.3 years; 32% (<i>n</i> =14) reported significant parental physical or mental illness; 23% (<i>n</i> =10) reported past physical or sexual abuse
Dower <i>et al</i> , 2000 (Australia) ³⁵	(a) Individuals presenting to A&E after self-harm; (b) aged 18–24 years; (c) evidence of or strong suspicion self-harm was deliberate or suicidally motivated	Psychosocial assessment, telephone or face-to-face interview and questionnaire	147 Loss to recruitment: 47/147 (32%)	47% (<i>n</i> =69) female; mean age of 21 years; 57% (<i>n</i> =83) received some form of treatment for a psychological problem in the past; 54% (<i>n</i> =79) had previous history of self-harm
Dunleavy, 1992 (UK) ³⁶	(a) Overdose patients on ward over 6 h; (b) not current psychiatric in-patients	Recorded interview	17	All aged over 16 years

(continued)

Table DS1 (continued)				
Study (country)	Inclusion criteria	Assessment	Participants, <i>n</i>	Participant profile
Harris, 2000 (UK) ²²	Individuals who regularly self-harmed	Letter to author	6	100% (<i>n</i> =6) female; aged 20–45 years; 100% (<i>n</i> =6) self-cut; participants reported harming for 5–39 years
Hengeveld <i>et al.</i> , 1988 (The Netherlands) ²⁹	Patients referred to hospital one or more times due to a suicide attempt (any type of self-injury)	Face-to-face and telephone interviews (open and closed questions)	173 Loss to follow-up: 64/120 (37%)	62% (<i>n</i> =108) female; aged 12–79 years; 43% (<i>n</i> =74) had previous history of self-harm; 79% (<i>n</i> =137) complied with psychiatric consultant's referral
Hood, 2006 (New Zealand) ³⁹	(a) Adolescents referred to community mental health centres because of suicidal behaviour (ranging from ideation to attempted suicide); (b) suicidal intent; (c) engaged in therapy and an agreement was made that suicidal behaviour had been effectively addressed; (d) not Maori or Pacific Islander	Semi-structured interview	10	50% (<i>n</i> =5) female; aged 14–19 years; mean age of 15.7 years; 70% (<i>n</i> =7) made a suicide attempt; 50% (<i>n</i> =5) required hospitalisation
Horrocks <i>et al.</i> , 2005 (UK) ¹⁴	(a) Individuals presenting to hospital after self-harm episode; (b) of fixed abode; (c) not aggressive with staff	Non-directive, free association narrative	45	60% (<i>n</i> =27) female; aged 18–56 years; approximately 75% (<i>n</i> =34) presented after an overdose; 73% (<i>n</i> =33) received a psychosocial assessment
Hume & Platt, 2007 (UK) ³⁰	(a) Individuals presenting to hospital after a self-harm episode; (b) aged 16–50; (c) history of at least one previous episode within the last 3 years; (d) no learning difficulties or cognitive impairment; (e) medically fit; (f) not a habitual drug user following an overdose	Face-to-face semi-structured interview	14	43% (<i>n</i> =6) female; aged 20–49 years; majority presented after an overdose; all had at least two previous self-harm episodes
Kreitman & Chowdhury, 1973 (UK) ⁴⁴	Individuals making their first presentation to hospital after suicide attempt	Semi-structured interview	93	57 (61%) female; 51% (<i>n</i> =47) of individuals aged under 20 years
Nada-Raja <i>et al.</i> , 2003 (New Zealand) ²¹	Participants belonging to a cohort of 1037 children born in Dunedin between 1 April 1972 and 31 March 1973 with complete data for self-harm behaviour and help-seeking	Face-to-face semi-structured interview	965	49% (<i>n</i> =471) female; 100% (<i>n</i> =965) 26 years old; 3% (<i>n</i> =25) reported one or more self-harm episodes in the previous year; 15 of 25 (60%) reported an overdose; 9 of 25 (36%) reported self-cutting; 12% (<i>n</i> =119) reported lesser forms of self-harm behaviours in the previous year; 14% (<i>n</i> =138) only reported substance misuse to deal with emotional pain; 71% (<i>n</i> =683) reported no self-harm behaviours in the previous year
National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health, 2004 (London, UK) ¹⁰	Individuals with a history of self-harm	Focus group, one individual interview	5	100% female
National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health, 2004 (Nottingham, UK) ¹⁰	Individuals with a history of self-harm	Focus group	7	100% (<i>n</i> =7) female; aged 21–44 years
Palmer <i>et al.</i> , 2006 (UK) ²⁶	Individuals presenting to general hospital after a self-harm episode in the last 18 months	Waiting time and outcome data, paper and online surveys	Quantitative data on waiting times and outcomes: 1818 'patient pathways' recorded Qualitative and quantitative data regarding service user experience: 206 participants	Participants in qualitative study: 86% (<i>n</i> =177) female. 29% (<i>n</i> =60) were first-time users of emergency services following self-harm. 94% (<i>n</i> =194) were White British

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Study (country)	Inclusion criteria	Assessment	Participants, <i>n</i>	Participant profile
Perseus <i>et al</i> , 2003 (Sweden) ³⁴	(a) Patients who had been in dialectical behavioural therapy treatment for 12 months or longer with a history of self-harm and diagnosed with borderline personality disorder; (b) dialectical behavioural therapists	Semi-structured interview	14 participants: 10 patients, 4 therapists	Patients: 100% (<i>n</i> =10) female. Aged 22–49 years. 90% (<i>n</i> =9) had a diagnosis of depression, 90% (<i>n</i> =9) anxiety disorders, 30% (<i>n</i> =3) eating disorders, 20% (<i>n</i> =2) social phobia. Several individuals reported substance misuse. Contact with psychiatric services ranged from 4 to 14 years. Therapists: 50% (<i>n</i> =2) female. 25% (<i>n</i> =1) psychiatrist and senior cognitive psychotherapist, 25% (<i>n</i> =1) registered nurse and junior cognitive psychotherapist, 50% (<i>n</i> =2) attendants in psychiatric care and junior cognitive psychotherapists. Work in psychiatric care ranged from 12 to 23 years.
Pitula & Cardell, 1996 (North America) ⁴²	In-patients at risk of suicide under constant observation	Open-ended interview	14	57% (<i>n</i> =8) female; aged 21–47 years
Rotheram-Borus <i>et al</i> , 1999 (North America) ¹³	Female adolescents presenting to A&E departments after a suicide attempt	Questionnaire	140	100% (<i>n</i> =140) female; 88% (<i>n</i> =123) were Latin American; 89% (<i>n</i> =125) experienced an overdose; 31% (<i>n</i> =43) had made a previous attempt
Smith, 2002 (UK) ⁴¹	Individuals who self-injure who were in contact with the voluntary sector	Unstructured interview, transcript verification	18 participants (3 consumers; 15 staff members)	Consumers: no details provided. Staff members: 60% (<i>n</i> =9) nurses; 20% (<i>n</i> =3) occupational therapists; 13% (<i>n</i> =2) psychotherapists; 7% (<i>n</i> =1) psychiatrist.
Suominen <i>et al</i> , 2004 (Finland) ¹⁶	Individuals presenting to general hospital after suicide attempt	Questionnaire	53 Loss to follow-up: 0/53 (0%)	57% (<i>n</i> =30) female; mean age of 36.4 years; 92% (<i>n</i> =49) presented after an overdose
Treloar & Pinfold, 1993 (UK) ¹⁵	Individuals admitted to acute medical and surgical unit of district general hospital	Questionnaire	105	63% (<i>n</i> =66) female
Warm <i>et al</i> , 2002 (North America) ³⁷	Self-defined individuals who self-harmed	Internet questionnaire	243	84% (<i>n</i> =205) female; mean age for females 21 years, males 23 years; 97% (<i>n</i> =236) had self-cut; 54% (<i>n</i> =131) had prior history of self-harm; 17% (<i>n</i> =41) reported of alcoholism; 15% (<i>n</i> =36) reported drug misuse; 21% (<i>n</i> =50) were from the UK; 55% (<i>n</i> =133) were from the USA
Whitehead, 2002 (UK) ¹⁷	(a) Admitted to local general hospital following an overdose; (b) aged 18–65 years; (c) deemed fit for psychosocial interview; (d) able to give informed consent; (e) participation judged to be non-deleterious by clinical staff or research interviewer; (f) had not been assessed more than twice in 12 months before entering the study	Questionnaire and interview	20	70% (<i>n</i> =14) female; aged 19–60 years; 100% (<i>n</i> =20) presented after an overdose; 70% (<i>n</i> =14) had history of previous overdose; 50% (<i>n</i> =10) diagnosed with depression, 90% (<i>n</i> =18) anxiety disorder
Wiklander <i>et al</i> , 2003 (Sweden) ¹⁸	(a) Individuals who have attempted suicide admitted to specialised ward for people at risk of suicide; (b) spoke Swedish; (c) discussed shame reactions during interview	Semi-structured interview	13 Loss to follow-up: 7/13 (54%)	38.4% (<i>n</i> =5) female; aged 22–53 years; 54% (<i>n</i> =7) presented after an overdose; 62% (<i>n</i> =8) had history of self-harm; 85% (<i>n</i> =11) diagnosed with major depression, 23% (<i>n</i> =3) alcohol dependence and 31% (<i>n</i> =4) anxiety disorder
Wolk-Wasserman, 1985 (Sweden) ²⁰	Suicide attempters admitted to intensive care unit	Semi-structured interview	40	43% (<i>n</i> =17) diagnosed with alcohol misuse and 35% (<i>n</i> =14) drug misuse; 93% (<i>n</i> =37) exhibited depressive symptoms

Online supplement

Search terms relevant to the experiences of care of individuals who self-harm

- (1) suicide/ OR suicide, attempted/ OR overdose/ OR exp self-injurious behavior/
- (2) exp suicidal behavior/ OR automutilation/ OR drug overdose/
- (3) suicide OR attempted suicide/ OR self destructive behavior/ OR self inflicted wounds OR self mutilation/ OR drug overdoses/
- (4) suicide/ OR suicidal ideation/ OR suicide, attempted/ OR self-injurious behavior/ OR injuries, self inflicted/ OR overdose/
- (5) suicide/ OR suicide attempted/ OR exp self injurious behavior/
- (6) (self-harm\$ OR self?harm\$ OR self-injur\$ OR self?injur\$ OR self-mutilat\$ OR self?mutilat\$ OR suicid\$ OR self-destruct\$ OR self?destruct\$ OR self-poison\$ OR self?poison\$ OR (self adj2 cut\$) OR cutt\$ OR overdose\$ OR self-immolat\$ OR self?immolat\$ OR self-inflict\$ OR self?inflict\$ OR auto-mutiat\$ OR auto?mutilat\$).tw.
- (7) 1 OR 2 OR 3 OR 4 OR 5 OR 6
- (8) nursing methodology research/
- (9) qualitative studies/ OR ethnological research/ OR ethno nursing research/ OR focus groups/ OR grounded theory/ OR phenomenological research/ OR exp qualitative validity/ OR phenomenology/ OR ethnography/ OR exp observational methods/ OR life experiences/
- (10) (ethnon: OR emic OR etic OR ethnograph: OR participant obser: OR constant comp: OR focus group: OR grounded theory OR narrative analysis OR thematic analysis OR lived experience OR life experience: OR user experience: OR patient experience: OR inside\$ perspective\$ OR discourse analysis OR content analysis OR social constructi\$ OR semi-structured OR group interview\$).tw.
- (11) (qualitative research OR qualitative stud\$ OR qualitative approach OR qualitative method\$ OR qualitative analysis).tw.
- (12) phenomolog\$.tw.
- (13) 8 OR 9 OR 10 OR 11 OR 12
- (14) 7 AND 13
- (15) remove duplicates from 14
- (16) exp *health surveys/ OR *health care surveys/
- (17) exp *surveys/
- (18) *health survey/ OR *short survey/
- (19) (survey\$ OR question\$).ti.
- (20) (survey\$ OR question\$).ab.
- (21) (experien\$ OR attitude\$).ti.
- (22) (experien\$ OR attitude\$).ab.
- (23) (assisted adj suicide).mp. [mp=ab, hw, ti, sh, it, tn, ot, dm, mf, rw, ty, id]
- (24) suicide/
- (25) euthanasia.mp. [mp=ab, hw, ti, sh, it, tn, ot, dm, mf, rw, ty, id]
- (26) *patient attitude/
- (27) 16 OR 17 OR 18 OR 19 OR 20
- (28) 21 OR 22 OR 26
- (29) 23 OR 24 OR 25
- (30) 7 AND 27 AND 28
- (31) 30 NOT (29 OR 15)
- (32) remove duplicates from 31

All terms were adapted for each database searched in order to retrieve the most relevant studies.