**20391** records identified through database searching:

Medline: 2770

CINAHL: 714

Embase: 3977

AMED: 62

PsycINFO: 204

Web of Science: 6921

Scopus: 5743

**8225** additional records identified through other sources:

British Library: 4456

NICE: 3734

Open Grey: 35

**17644** records screened after duplicates removed

**20** full-text papers assessed for eligibility

**20** papers included:

* qualitative studies: 3
* quantitative observational studies: 2
* mixed methods studies: 1
* clinical case reports and opinion pieces: 12
* service description: 2

17624 records excluded

**7** papers excluded because:

* patients were not in CCUs: 3
* no information on transfer: 4

**Identification**

**Screening**

**Eligibility**

**Identified**

**7** additional full-text papers retrieved from reference lists

Figure 1 Paper selection results