



Public Health  
England

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## Weekly Care Homes Evidence Digest

### Prevention and control of COVID-19 in home care/care homes settings

14<sup>th</sup> May 2021

#### Summary

This weekly digest contains a selection of evidence published in the last 7 days, in relation to the prevention and control of COVID-19 in home care/care home settings. We search a number of Covid-19 review repositories, an existing PHE Covid-19 evidence digest, Ovid Medline and Embase, Social Care Online, medRxiv (pre-print server) and various websites. We select peer reviewed and non-peer reviewed publications (pre-prints), as well as systematic reviews, guidance and evidence summaries.

The digest is produced by PHE [Knowledge and Library Services](#) (KLS), in conjunction with a small editorial team.

We do not accept responsibility for the availability, reliability or content of the items included in this resource and do not necessarily endorse the views expressed within them. Our intent is to highlight early emerging research findings as well as research that has been subject to peer review and wider scrutiny.

This week's digest includes: from China, further evidence on effective coping strategies for nursing staff in response to Covid-19; from the USA, the value of familial and relational ethical considerations in advanced care planning in nursing homes during the Covid-19 pandemic; an international review of the current evidence for comprehensive infection control interventions in reducing morbidity and mortality from Covid-19 and other respiratory infections in long term care facilities; and another international review of how innovations in response to Covid-19 can improve quality of life in long term care facilities. From the UK, practical limitations of lateral flow testing strategies in preventing outbreaks of Covid-19 in care homes; further evidence from the VIVALDI study on the risk of re-infection with Covid-19 in care homes; and a call for more systematic national data capture systems to better understand the impact of Covid-19 on care home residents and settings. Finally, summaries of recently published reports, guidance and statistics.

We now have a search facility for the Weekly Care Homes Evidence Digest. This can be achieved by using Endnote Software and accessing the monthly backups of the Research Digest. This will give access to the content of all previous weekly Digests and allow simple searches e.g. on authors, abstracts

(where these are captured) and titles. Please note that this is not a substitute for a proper literature search. If you would like to access this facility please contact [gareth.durling@phe.gov.uk](mailto:gareth.durling@phe.gov.uk).

An ongoing series of PHE rapid reviews on a range of Covid-19 related research questions can be also found at <https://phelibrary.kohapfts.co.uk/covid19rapidreviews/>.

## Peer-Reviewed Articles

Publication date	Title / URL	Journal / Article type	Digest
05.05.2021	The hidden stigma of aging and COVID-19: aggravating factors and strategies to mitigate the impact of the pandemic in older adults, a text mining analysis	Aging & Mental Health / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The authors applied a text mining technique to retrieve and clusterize major topics and terms associated with mental health in older adults amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, and provide a framework of recommendations to address these emerging challenges.</li> <li>The most prevalent terms were divided in five topics: home (33%), suicide (32%), apps (15%), loneliness (12%) and physical activity (9%). Additionally, a section focused on low- and middle-income countries was included.</li> </ul>
05.05.2021	Nursing home staff perceptions of challenges and coping strategies during COVID-19 pandemic in China	Geriatric Nursing / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nursing staff experienced high levels of stress during the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> <li>The main stressors were associated with staff roles and responsibilities, worries about resident and staff safety, and the heavy workloads.</li> <li>Nursing staff perceived that effective coping strategies included approachability of management, peer support, and teamwork.</li> <li>Nursing assistants required more practical guidance regarding COVID-19 prevention and control measures and relationship building with residents and their families.</li> </ul>
05.05.2021	Dying well in nursing homes during COVID-19 and beyond: The need for a relational and familial ethic	Bioethics / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applies a relational and familial ethic to address concerns relating to nursing home deaths and advance care planning during Covid-19 and beyond.</li> <li>While we must be vigilant about preventing unnecessary deaths caused by coronavirus outbreaks in nursing homes, some deaths of our elders are inevitable. Thus, it is essential that advanced care planning occurs in a way that upholds the familial and relational aspects of elders' lives that often matter to them the most.</li> <li>Authors' hope is to allow for deaths that are as meaningful as possible for both the elderly and the family members who survive them.</li> </ul>

<b>06.05.2021</b>	Dying from COVID-19 in nursing homes-sex differences in symptom occurrence	BMC Geriatrics / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The objective of this study was to describe sex and age differences and the impact of a dementia diagnosis on symptom occurrence during the last week in life for persons dying from COVID-19 in nursing homes.</li> <li>The authors concluded that residents with a dementia diagnosis had fewer symptoms reported before death compared to those without dementia and that clinical presentation of fatal COVID-19 differs between women and men in nursing homes. Residents with fatal COVID-19 present with more unspecific and less prominent symptoms when also suffering from dementia.</li> </ul>
<b>07.05.2021</b>	Are presymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infections in nursing home residents unrecognized symptomatic infections? Sequence and metadata from weekly testing in an extensive nursing home outbreak	Age & Aging / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As it is unknown to which extent presymptomatic residents and staff contribute to the spread of the virus, the aim of this observational study is to assess the contribution of asymptomatic and presymptomatic residents and staff in SARS-CoV-2 transmission during a large outbreak in a Dutch NH.</li> <li>The authors concluded that symptoms in residents and staff are insufficiently recognized, reported or attributed to a possible SARS-CoV-2 infection. However, residents without (recognized) symptoms showed the same potential for viral shedding as residents with symptoms. Weekly testing was an effective strategy for early identification of SARS-Cov-2 cases, resulting in fast mitigation of the outbreak.</li> </ul>
<b>07.05.2021</b>	Multi-component rehabilitation after covid-19 for nursing home residents	Journal of the American Medical Directors Association / Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports on authors experience in nursing home residents previously affected by COVID-19, using a nutritional supplementation program together with rehabilitative indications.</li> <li>The authors conclude that a multi-component nutritional supplementation containing HMB and physical 68 rehabilitation were able to significantly improve disability and reducing the risk of pressure sores in 69 very old nursing home residents previously affected by COVID-19.</li> </ul>
<b>08.05.2021</b>	Care-home outbreaks of COVID-19 in Scotland March to May 2020: national linked data cohort analysis	Age and Aging / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two-fifths of older people's care-homes in Scotland experienced an outbreak of COVID-19 during March to May 2020. However, there was considerable heterogeneity in the size (1 to 63 residents), duration (1 to 93 days) and mortality impact of these outbreaks, with four clusters of outbreak pattern identified.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other key findings include the risk of a COVID-19 outbreak increased with increasing care-home size and rising community prevalence and no statistically significant predictors of outbreak size could be identified from available routine linked data</li> </ul>
<b>08.05.2021</b>	Reducing Morbidity and Mortality Rates from COVID-19, Influenza and Pneumococcal Illness in Nursing Homes and Long-Term Care Facilities by Vaccination and Comprehensive Infection Control Interventions	Geriatrics / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The COVID-19 pandemic identifies the problems of preventing respiratory illnesses in seniors, especially frail multimorbidity seniors in nursing homes and Long-Term Care Facilities (LCTFs).</li> <li>Medline and Embase were searched for nursing homes, long-term care facilities, respiratory tract infections, disease transmission, infection control, mortality, systematic reviews and meta-analyses.</li> <li>For seniors, there is strong evidence to vaccinate against influenza, SARS-CoV-2 and pneumococcal disease, and evidence is awaited for effectiveness against COVID-19 variants and when to revaccinate. There is strong evidence to promptly introduce comprehensive infection control interventions in LCFTs.</li> </ul>
<b>09.05.2021</b>	The Impact of COVID-19 on Social Isolation in Long-term Care Homes: Perspectives of Policies and Strategies from Six Countries	Journal of Aging & Social Policy / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In this perspective the authors highlight the dominant COVID-19 long-term care policies from six countries, and proposes five strategies to address or mitigate social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic that can also be applied in a post-pandemic world.</li> <li>The study concludes that; While well meaning, these policies have exacerbated the ongoing social isolation crisis present in long-term care homes prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> </ul>
<b>09.05.2021</b>	COVID-19 cases and death in nursing homes: the role of racial/ethnic composition of facilities and their communities	Journal of the American Medical Directors Association / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The objectives of the study are: To examine the extent to which the racial/ethnic composition of nursing homes (NHs) and their communities affects the likelihood of COVID-19 cases and death in NHs; and whether and how the relationship between NH characteristics and COVID-19 cases and death varies with the racial/ethnic composition of the community in which a NH is located.</li> <li>The racial/ethnic composition of NHs and their communities were both associated with the likelihood of having COVID-19 cases and death in NHs.</li> <li>The racial/ethnic composition of the community played an independent role in the likelihood of COVID-19 cases/death in NHs, even after accounting for the COVID-19 infection rate in the community (i.e. daily cases per 1000 people in the county)</li> </ul>

10.05.2021	Loneliness and social disconnectedness in the time of pandemic period among Brazilians: evidence from the ELSI COVID-19 initiative	Aging & Mental Health / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This study aimed at estimating the pre-pandemic and pandemic prevalence of loneliness and investigating the association of loneliness with social disconnectedness during social distancing strategies in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic period.</li> <li>• Social disconnectedness included information on social contacts through virtual talking (i.e. telephone, Skype, WhatsApp, or social media) and outside-home meetings with people living in another household. Covariates included sociodemographic and health related characteristics.</li> <li>• The authors conclude that individuals with virtual talking disconnectedness and without outside-home disconnectedness present increased loneliness during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Stimulating virtual talking connectedness might have the potential to diminish loneliness despite steep outside-home disconnectedness.</li> </ul>
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## Preprints

Publication date	Title / URL	Journal / Article type	Digest
06.05.2021	Enhanced Lateral Flow Testing Strategies in Care Homes Are Associated with Poor Adherence and Were Insufficient to Prevent COVID-19 Outbreaks: Results from a Mixed Methods Implementation Study	SSRN / Preprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study explored implementation of staff and visitor testing protocols using lateral flow devices</li> <li>• 1, 638 LFD rapid tests were performed on 407 staff. Protocol adherence was poor, and six care homes had outbreaks during the study.</li> <li>• Compared to non-pilot care homes, there was no evidence of significant difference in the proportion of homes with outbreaks, or the size of outbreaks. More focus is needed on the contextual and behavioural factors that influence protocol adherence.</li> </ul>
07.05.2021	Antibody response after one and two doses of the BNT162b2	Authorea / Preprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 22 French nursing homes were included in this study to examine impact of first and second vaccination dose on residents</li> <li>• Authors conclude a single vaccine jab is sufficient to reach immunity in residents with prior COVID-19 infection.</li> </ul>

	vaccine in nursing home residents: The CONsort-19 study		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most residents without prior COVID-19 are seropositive for S-protein IgG after the second jab, but around 30% have low levels of S-protein IgG.</li> <li>• Whether residents with no or low post-vaccine immunity are at higher risk of symptomatic COVID-19 requires further analysis.</li> </ul>
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## Reports and other publications

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
06.05.2021	Vivaldi 2: COVID-19 reinfection in care homes study report	DHSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a summary of reinfection following a sample study of residents and staff in care homes.</li> <li>• Sets out the results of a study of 682 residents and 1,429 members of staff in care homes undertaken between 1 October 2020 and 1 February 2021.</li> </ul>
10.05.2021	The elderly caregiver questionnaire for COVID-19 (ECQC-24)	Rahman, Hanif A.; et al.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper introduces a new tool called the elderly caregiver questionnaire for COVID-19 (ECQC-24) that helps to assess caregiver attributes toward best possible care for elderly during this pandemic.</li> </ul>

## Guidance

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
Updated 11.05.2021	Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing for hospices	DHSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets out how hospices can access COVID-19 testing for staff and patients on-site, for staff visiting patients in their own homes, and for visitors to hospices.</li> </ul>
Updated 11.05.2021	Coronavirus (COVID-19): providing home care	DHSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information for those providing personal care to people living in their own home during the coronavirus outbreak.</li> </ul>

## Statistics

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
11.05.2021	Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional	ONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provisional counts of the number of deaths registered in England and Wales, by age, sex and region, in the latest weeks for which data are available. Includes the most up-to-date figures available for deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19).</li> </ul>
11.05.2021	Number of deaths in care homes notified to the Care Quality Commission, England	ONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly updated provisional counts of deaths caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) by local authority</li> </ul>
11.05.2021	Care home resident deaths registered in England and Wales, provisional	ONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provisional counts of the number of care home resident deaths registered in England and Wales, by region, including deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19), in the latest weeks for which data are available.</li> </ul>
12.05.2021	Coronavirus (COVID-19): adult care homes - additional data	Scottish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly data on COVID-19 in adult care homes in Scotland.</li> </ul>

## Editorials and News

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
10.05.2021	More restrictions eased for care homes	DHSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From Monday 17 May care home residents will be able to have more named visitors and more opportunities to make visits out with no need to self-isolate when they return.</li> </ul>

<p><b>11.05.2021</b></p>	<p>What COVID-19 Innovations Can Teach Us About Improving Quality of Life in Long-Term Care</p>	<p>Bowers, Barbara J.; et al</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Editorial reports on a review of topics related to innovation and nursing home quality of life in the context of COVID-19</li> <li>• The creativity demonstrated by LTC staff across the globe suggests great potential for improving resident quality of life on a more permanent basis</li> <li>• Therefore pandemic-inspired innovations should be tried, tested, and modified as necessary</li> </ul>
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