



Public Health
England

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Weekly Care Homes Evidence Digest

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

17th September 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 Germany, further evidence of the psychological benefits of frequent contact via the internet between older people and their friends and relatives during the COVID-19 pandemic; from the USA, a cross-sectional estimate of unreported cases and deaths from COVID-19 in nursing homes; reflections on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on older people, with a call to action for the adoption of a comprehensive person-centred care model across the fields of gerontology and geriatric medicine; evidence of the need for better training on disaster preparedness for social workers learning from the COVID-19 pandemic; from Hong Kong, potential benefits of a Telecare case management programme for housebound older people; from the Republic of Ireland, further evidence of the burden of depressive symptoms amongst older people during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly those aged ≥ 70 years and/or living alone; from France, evidence from a nursing home outbreak of SARS-CoV-2 (Alpha variant) suggesting that vaccination alone may not be sufficient to prevent COVID-19 among residents and that other prevention measures should not be abandoned yet in these settings; from Belgium, evidence of waning immunity following COVID-19 vaccination in nursing home residents; and from Germany, a Cochrane Library rapid review suggesting that non-pharmacological

measures implemented in long-term care facilities can prevent SARS-CoV-2 infections and their consequences for residents and staff, but with a call for more high quality research.

From the UK, the value of National Early Warning Scores (NEWS) in surveillance of COVID-19 in care homes; and a webinar exploring the potential impact of mandatory COVID-19 vaccination of care home staff.

Finally, summaries of other recently published reports, guidance and statistics.

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

Peer-Reviewed Articles

Publication date	Title / URL	Journal / Article type	Digest
09.09.2021	Frequency of contact with friends and relatives via internet and psychosocial factors in middle-aged and older adults during the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings from the German Ageing Survey	International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data were taken from the short survey of the German Ageing Survey (June/July 2020, 3,134 individuals in the analytical sample). Results of the study include: With regard to covariates, better psychosocial factors were associated with medium education (compared to low education), living with partner in the same household (compared to singles), better self-rated health, and favorable COVID-19 factors (in terms of decreased feeling that the Corona crisis is a threat for oneself, not having an infection with the coronavirus and an increased feeling that you can influence an infection with the coronavirus yourself). Authors conclude that data suggest that individuals with a high frequency of contact with friends and relatives via internet reported better psychosocial factors.
09.09.2021	Co-Occurring Dehydration and Cognitive Impairment during COVID-19 in Long-term Care Patients	Journal of the American Medical Directors Association / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The study setting was a 514-bed NH in New York City. Subjects were all symptomatic NH residents with a positive COVID-19 PCR or antibody test between March 1 and June 1, 2020. The relative risk of dehydration in residents with either moderate-severe cognitive impairment or COVID-19-associated delirium was 1.37 relative to residents with neither (95% confidence interval (CI) 1.11-1.59; p =.003). This relationship remained significant after adjusting for demographic and clinical characteristics.
09.09.2021	Estimates of COVID-19 Cases and Deaths Among Nursing Home Residents Not Reported in Federal Data	Jama Network Open / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In this cross-sectional study of 15 307 US nursing homes, approximately 44% of COVID-19 cases and 40% of COVID-19 deaths that occurred before the start of reporting were not reported in the first NHSN submission in sample states, suggesting there were more than 68 000 unreported cases and 16 000 unreported deaths nationally.
09.09.2021	Effect of a Telecare Case Management Program for Older	Jama Network Open / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This randomized clinical trial was conducted among 68 older adults in Hong Kong from May 21 to July 20, 2020, with a last follow-up date of October 20, 2020.

	Adults Who Are Homebound During the COVID-19 Pandemic		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants in the telecare group received weekly case management from a nurse supported by a social service team via telephone call and weekly video messages covering self-care topics delivered via smartphone for 3 months. Authors conclude that participants who received the telecare program were statistically no different from the control group with respect to changes in self-efficacy, although scores in both groups improved. After the intervention, the telecare group had better medication adherence and quality of life than the control group, although the small sample size may limit generalizability.
12.09.2021	The COVID-19 Pandemic Reignites the Need for Person-Centered Gerontological Approach	Gerontology and Geriatric Medicine / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This article presents views from academics and practitioners across an interdisciplinary spectrum, arising from a webinar hosted by Georgetown University Program in Aging & Health. Authors examine the necessary commute between critical gerontological theory and the practice of humanistic gerontology. Further, this article disentangles humanism and person-centered care to balance autonomy and safety for older adults in congregate living situations and focuses on specific populations: people with dementia and their care partners.
12.09.2021	“Please Don’t Let Academia Forget about Us:” An Exploration of Nursing Home Social Work Experiences during COVID-19	Journal of Gerontological Social Work / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This study used a study cross-sectional survey distributed via social media focusing on 1) prior training on disaster preparedness, 2) any content social workers wish had been a part of their education, and 3) suggestions for educators/academics to serve social workers on the frontlines. Data in this study are based on a sample of 63 (N=63) nursing home social workers. Findings revealed that most social workers had little to no training in disaster preparedness, and shared areas of future education initiatives. Participants also shared the need for bridging the research to practice gap through open access articles and support from academics.

12.09.2021	Depressive symptoms among older adults pre- and post-COVID-19 pandemic	Journal of the American Medical Directors Association / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This observational study with 6-year follow-up included over 3,000 community-dwelling adults aged ≥ 60 years participating in The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA). • Mixed-effects multilevel models were used to describe trends in depressive symptoms across 3 waves of TILDA; Waves 4 (2016), 5 (2018) and a final wave conducted July–November 2020. • The prevalence of clinically significant depressive symptoms at Waves 4 and 5 was 7.2% (6.5–7.9) and 7.2% (6.5–8.0) respectively. This more than doubled to 19.8% (18.5–21.2) during the COVID-19 pandemic. • There was no change in CES-D scores between Waves 4 and 5 ($\beta=0.09$ (-0.04 – 0.23)) but a large increase in symptoms was observed during the pandemic ($\beta=2.20$ (2.07–2.33)).
13.09.2021	Investigation of an Outbreak of COVID-19 in a French Nursing Home With Most Residents Vaccinated	Jama Network Open / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study reports an outbreak that occurred in a 77-bed NH located in Biscarosse, France, in which a vaccine campaign was conducted using the BNT162b2 vaccine in January and February 2021. • This cohort study's findings suggest that an outbreak of COVID-19 can occur among fully vaccinated NH residents. The study found evidence of transmission among vaccinated residents, but few individuals who were infected developed severe disease and 1 patient, who was unvaccinated, died.
13.09.2021	Dynamics of the cellular and humoral immune response after BNT162b2 mRNA Covid-19 vaccination in Covid-19 naive nursing home residents	The Journal of Infectious Diseases / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term humoral and cellular immune responses are diminished after BNT162b2 mRNA Covid-19 vaccination in Covid-19 naive nursing home residents, a population particularly vulnerable to the disease. We found both responses to decline after four weeks and remain lower than those of healthcare workers after twenty-four weeks, with an estimated half-life of the antibody response of 47 days.
13.09.2021	National Early Warning Scores and COVID-19 deaths in care homes: an ecological time-series study	BMJ Open / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The objectives of this study are: To investigate whether National Early Warning Scores (NEWS/NEWS2) could contribute to COVID-19 surveillance in care homes. • Authors conclude: NEWS could contribute to COVID-19 disease surveillance in care homes during the pandemic. Oxygen saturation,

			respiratory rate and temperature could be prioritised as they appear to signal rise in mortality almost as well as NEWS.
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Guidance

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
Updated 10.09.2021	Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations to Prevent SARS-CoV-2 Spread in Nursing Homes CDC	CDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated outbreak response guidance to promote use of contact tracing approach. Alternative broad-based approaches to outbreak response at a facility-wide or unit level are also described. Updated expanded screening testing recommendations for healthcare personnel (HCP). Updated recommendations for quarantine of fully vaccinated residents. Updated visitation guidance.

Evidence Summaries

Publication Date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
15.09.2021	Non-pharmacological measures implemented in the setting of long-term care facilities to prevent SARS-CoV-2 infections and their consequences: a rapid review	Jan M Stratil, Renke L Biallas, Jacob Burns et al	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The objectives of this Cochrane Rapid Review are: To assess the effects of non-pharmacological measures implemented in long-term care facilities to prevent or reduce the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 infection among residents, staff, and visitors.

Statistics

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
14.09.2021	Number of deaths in care homes notified to the Care Quality Commission, England	ONS, CQC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provisional counts of deaths in care homes caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) by local authority. Published by the Office for National Statistics and Care Quality Commission.
14.09.2021	Care home resident deaths registered in England and Wales, provisional	ONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provisional counts of the number of care home resident deaths registered in England and Wales, by region, including deaths involving coronavirus (COVID-19), in the latest weeks for which data are available.
14.09.2021	Notifications to Care Inspectorate Wales related to COVID-19 in adult care homes: 1 March 2020 to 8 September 2021	Welsh Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report provides provisional counts of the number of adult care homes reporting one or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 and provisional counts of deaths in care homes. This is based on notifications by care home providers to Care Inspectorate Wales. The location of death may be in the care home, in hospital or another location.
15.09.2021	Coronavirus (COVID-19): adult care homes - additional data	Scottish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly data on COVID-19 in adult care homes in Scotland.

Editorials and News

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
16.09.2021	COVID-19 vaccination as a condition of deployment: Workforce and HR issues	Care Provider Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This webinar explores the workforce and HR implications of implementing mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for staff in adult social care homes

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• From 11 November 2021, anyone working or volunteering in a care home will need to be fully vaccinated against coronavirus (COVID-19), unless exempt.• This CPA webinar will bring together sector experts to consider: recruitment, retention and redeployment; developing and amending contracts; legal obligations; risks and mitigations.
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