



Public Health
England

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Weekly Care Homes Evidence Digest

Prevention and control of COVID-19 in home care/care homes settings
18th February 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 the USA, a review of the current understanding of the factors determining the transmission dynamics of SARS-CoV-2 in long term care facilities; and from Germany, a comparison of official and public perspectives on priority groups for COVID-19 vaccination. From the UK, reflections on the public health benefits of COVID-19 testing in outbreak free care homes; and a national cross-sectional study of the factors associated with SARS-CoV-2 infection and outbreaks in English long term care facilities. Finally, summaries of other recently published reports, guidance and statistics.

Peer-Reviewed Articles

Publication date	Title / URL	Journal / Article type	Digest
13.01.2021	COVID-19 testing in outbreak free care homes: What are the public health benefits?	Journal of Hospital Infection / study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 care home outbreaks represent a significant proportion of COVID-19 morbidity and mortality in the UK. • National testing initially focused on symptomatic care home residents, before extending to asymptomatic cohorts. • The aim was to describe the epidemiology and transmission of COVID-19 in outbreak free care homes.
11.02.2021	Positive no-touch surfaces and undetectable SARS-CoV-2 aerosols in long-term care facilities: an attempt to understand the contributing factors and the importance of timing in air sampling campaigns	American journal of Infection Control / study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term care facilities (LTCF) are environments particularly favourable to coronavirus disease (SARS-CoV-2) pandemic outbreaks, due to the at-risk population they welcome and the close proximity of residents. Yet, the transmission dynamics of the disease in these establishments remain unclear.
11.02.2021	Perceived declining physical and cognitive fitness during the COVID-19 state of emergency among community-dwelling Japanese old-old adults	Geriatrics & Gerontology International / study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has caused sudden changes in lifestyle. • This study examined the associations of participation in an exercise class before the COVID-19 pandemic and the exercise habits and disruption to the rhythms of daily life during the COVID-19 state of emergency with perceived declining physical and cognitive fitness among community-dwelling old-old adults.
11.02.2021	Factors associated with SARS-CoV-2 infection and outbreaks in long-term care facilities in England: a national cross-sectional survey	The Lancet Healthy Longevity / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports on national cross-sectional survey of all LTCFs providing dementia care or care to adults aged 65 years or older in England between May 26 and June 19, 2020 • Key findings are that resident and staff infection rates were significantly lower in LTCFs that paid staff statutory sick pay compared with those that did not, and that each one unit increase in the staff-to-bed ratio was associated with a reduced probability of infection in residents

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased transmission from residents was associated with an increased number of new admissions to the facility and poor compliance with isolation procedures.
11.02.2021	The association of dementia with COVID-19 mortality: Evidence based on adjusted effect estimates	Journal of Infection / study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patients with dementia may be particularly vulnerable in the ongoing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The authors concluded that dementia conferred a relevant risk of adverse outcomes among COVID-19 patients There are several published papers investigating the association between dementia and the risk of mortality among COVID-19 patients, but the conclusions are not consistent
12.02.2021	Nursing home oversight during the COVID-19 pandemic	Journal of the American Geriatrics Society / study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory oversight has been a central strategy to assure nursing home quality of care for decades. In response to COVID-19, traditional elements of oversight that relate to resident care have been curtailed in favor of implementing limited infection control surveys and targeted complaint investigations. The study seeks to describe the state of nursing home oversight during the pandemic to facilitate a discussion of whether and how these activities should be altered going forward.
12.02.2021	An Advance Care Planning Long-Term Care Initiative in Response to COVID-19	Journal of the American Geriatrics Society / study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes a systematic approach to address advance care planning (ACP) during a COVID-19 outbreak and its impact on the incidence of new do-not-hospitalize (DNH) directives among long-term care (LTC) residents.
12.02.2021	Persistent Challenges of COVID-19 in Skilled Nursing Facilities: The Administrator Perspective	Journal of the American Geriatrics Society / study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) have borne enormous burdens from COVID-19, accounting for 40% of COVID-19 deaths in the United States (U.S.). SNFs have faced tremendous operational, clinical, and financial burdens during the pandemic. There is little systematic evidence about the experience of SNFs from the perspective of SNF leadership. This study assessed SNF administrator views of challenges after the first wave of COVID-19 cases and what they anticipated for the future.
15.02.2021	Ischemic Stroke: An Underestimated Complication of COVID-19	Aging and Disease / study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has spread rapidly as a pandemic around the world. More studies have focused on the complication of COVID-19, especially ischemic stroke.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The study proposes several pathophysiological processes and possible mechanisms underlying ischemic stroke after COVID-19 for early prevention and better treatment of COVID-19-related stroke.
15.02.2021	Caregiver support and place of death among older adults	Journal of the American Geriatrics Society / study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As home becomes the most common place of death in the United States, information about caregiver support and place of death is critical to improve patient and caregiver experiences at end of life. The study seeks to examine (1) the association between family care availability and place of death; and (2) caregiving intensity associated with place of death. 38.9% of older adults died at home, followed by hospital (33.1%), and nursing or hospice facility (28.0%).

Preprints

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16.02.2021	Changes in health behaviors, mental and physical health among older adults under severe lockdown restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic in Spain	MedRxiv / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study aimed to examine main changes in health behaviors, mental and physical health among older adults under severe lockdown restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic in Spain Among this demographic, mental health was moderately affected. However, authors contend that if another lockdown were imposed on this or future pandemics, public health programs should specially address the needs of older individuals with male sex, greater social isolation, poor housing conditions and chronic morbidities, because of their greater vulnerability to the enacted movement restrictions
17.02.2021	Allocation of COVID-19 vaccination: When public prioritization preferences differ from official regulations	PsyArXiv / study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As vaccines against COVID-19 are scarce, many countries have developed vaccination prioritization strategies focusing on ethical and epidemiological considerations. However, public acceptance of such strategies should be monitored to ensure successful implementation. In an experiment with N = 1,379 German participants, we investigated whether the public's vaccination allocation preferences matched the prioritization strategy approved by the German government. Results revealed different allocations.

Reports and other publications

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
11.02.2021	Stories from social care leadership: Progress amid pestilence and penury	Richard Humphries, Nicholas Timmons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult social care is the often forgotten and invisible part of the welfare state. For the past decade the sector has been under acute financial pressure. Funding is both public and private, and there is a bewildering array of providers, commissioners, representative bodies and voices involved.
11.02.2021	Caring for those caring for older adults	Katz, Morgan J	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflects upon the study <i>Factors associated with SARS-CoV-2 infection and outbreaks in long-term care facilities in England: a national cross-sectional survey</i>, and argues that staff caring for our ageing adult population are both overlooked and underpaid despite a vital contribution to broader public health

Guidance

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
Updated 16.02.21	COVID-19: guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable	Public Health England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information for shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable from COVID-19

Statistics

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
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15.02.2021	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC): Surveillance data from public online national reports on COVID-19 in Long-Term Care facilities	ECDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In February 2021, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) started collecting surveillance data on cases and fatal cases of COVID-19 among people who live in long-term care facilities in European Union or European Economic Area (EU/EEA) countries. • For this, ECDC developed, with of COVID-19 EU/EEA countries, a surveillance protocol for retrospective or prospective reporting of weekly aggregate national data.
16.02.2021	Notifications to Care Inspectorate Wales related to COVID-19 in adult care homes: 1 March 2020 to 12 February 2021	Welsh Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notifications related to COVID-19 in adult care homes during the coronavirus pandemic for 1 March 2020 to 29 January 2021.
16.02.2021	Number of deaths in care homes notified to the Care Quality Commission, England	Office for National Statistics, Care Quality Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisional counts of deaths in care homes caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) by local authority.
17.02.2021	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
11.02.2021	The hunt for good leadership in social care	Richard Humphries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early in the Covid-19 pandemic, Don Berwick reminded us of the intense demands the crisis was making of leaders • This applies no less to those leading social care services – in care homes, home care services and other less visible settings

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This piece is the findings of interviews with 40 people in seven very different parts of England about the nature of leadership in the sector
12.02.2021	Why did a German newspaper insist the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine was ineffective for older people—without evidence?	Hristio Boytchev	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting information from single anonymous sources that turns out to be false could erode public confidence in the vaccines that are crucial to controlling the covid-19 pandemic.
17.02.2021	Covid-19 and the deaths of care home residents	Sarah Scobie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid-19's impact on care homes has been well documented. Nearly a year since the start of the pandemic, this explainer from Sarah Scobie looks in more detail at new data on the deaths of care home residents. • The numbers have exposed the fragile state that the care sector was in before the pandemic, as well as the shortcomings in the response to Covid, which are covered in an accompanying blog from Natasha Curry.
17.02.2021	Beyond Covid-19 wave two: what now for care homes?	Natasha Curry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With Covid-19 having a particularly hard impact on care homes, Natasha Curry takes a closer look at why they were hit so badly last spring, whether they have fared any better this winter, and the importance of what happens next. • Her blog accompanies an explainer from Sarah Scobie, which looks in detail at the numbers of deaths of care home residents.