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## **Weekly Care Homes Evidence Digest**

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

**27<sup>th</sup> August 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.

## Peer-Reviewed Articles

Publication date	Title / URL	Journal / Article type	Digest
17.08.2021	COVID-19 prevention assessments: A promising tool for preventing outbreaks in long-term care homes	JAMDA / Research Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infection prevention and control (IPC) audits are a recommended tool for reducing the burden of communicable diseases in long-term care homes (LTCH). IPC audits are most effective when they integrate components of education, monitoring, and feedback.</li> <li>• In response to the pandemic, authors instituted a 66-item COVID-19 prevention assessment tool for all 93 LTCH in their region of approximately 1.9 million people in British Columbia, Canada, and evaluated this tool's association with LTCH outbreak severity using a modelling analysis.</li> <li>• While a higher number of unmet items on the assessment tool was significantly associated with outbreak severity, we found most items on the tool individually did not vary by severity. However, some item <i>categories</i> in the tool were associated with higher outbreak severity</li> <li>• The tool was adapted in both December 2020 and June 2021 to ensure it flagged items in associated with severe outbreaks</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
19.08.2021	Risk factors for excess deaths during lockdown among older users of secondary care mental health services without confirmed COVID-19: A retrospective cohort study	Int. J. Geriatric Psych. / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This retrospective cohort study compared patients treated between 23 March 2020 and 14 June 2020, deemed exposed to the pandemic/lockdown, to patients treated between 18 December 2019 and 10 March 2020, deemed to be unexposed. The aim was to investigate factors contributing to excess deaths of older patients during the initial 2020 lockdown beyond those attributable to confirmed COVID-19.</li> <li>• In the two cohorts, 3,073 subjects were exposed to lockdown and 4,372 subjects were unexposed; the cohorts were followed up for an average of 74 and 78 days, respectively.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After controlling for confounding by sociodemographic factors, smoking status, mental comorbidities, and physical comorbidities, patients with dementia suffered an additional 53% risk of death (HR = 1.53, 95% CI = 1.02–2.31), and patients with severe mental illness suffered an additional 123% risk of death.</li> <li>• These findings could inform future health service responses and policymaking to help prevent avoidable excess death during future outbreaks of this or a similar infectious disease.</li> </ul>
19.08.2021	COVID-19 transmission and case fatality in long-term care facilities during the epidemic first wave	J. Am. Geriatrics Soc. / Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The heterogeneity of COVID-19 impact raises the hypothesis that transmission inside Long Term Care Facilities merely reflects the infection dynamics in the surrounding community or COVID-19 more severely affect those institutionalized.</li> <li>• The authors estimated the cumulative incidence and the case fatality rate of SARS-CoV-2 infection in Portuguese LTCFs, considering age-adjusted comparisons to the general population.</li> <li>• A positive RT-PCR was observed in 416 (3.0%) individuals, 3.5% of residents and 2.4% of workers. Incidence proportions by LTCF varied from 0.3% to 100%. By 30 June 2020, 0.4% of the Portuguese population had been diagnosed with SARS-CoV-2 infection. The frequency in our sample (3.5%) was much higher even considering that undiagnosed cases in the general population roughly varied from three to six times those diagnosed<sup>6</sup> and LTCF population was extensively tested.</li> <li>• The large variation of the incidence and case fatality rates, here observed and previously reported in a systematic review,<sup>7</sup> suggests that adequate physical conditions, human resources, equipment and training, and local governance could better control COVID-19 transmission in these settings and prevent deaths among the institutionalized older populations.</li> </ul>
19.08.2021	Pre-Hospital Administration of Remdesivir during a SARS-CoV-2	Clin. Inf. Dis. / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of a 5-day course of remdesivir was associated with approximately 17-fold increased odds of survival among a sample</li> </ul>

	Outbreak in a Skilled Nursing Facility		<p>of 54 nursing home residents with SARS-CoV-2 infection during the course of an outbreak from October to December, 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remdesivir was well-tolerated; administration was logistically feasible in a pre-hospital environment.</li> </ul>
20.08.2021	Relationships between physical activity, social isolation, and depression among older adults during COVID-19: A path analysis	Geriatric Nursing / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are known significant relationships between greater physical activity and less depression, and greater social isolation and greater depression; therefore, it is important to understand these relationships among older adults during COVID-19.</li> <li>• The Physical Activity Scale for Elders, Geriatric Depression Scale, and PROMIS Social Isolation were administered. Path analysis was performed to evaluate the relationship between physical activity, social isolation, and depression.</li> <li>• Of 803 surveys received, higher social isolation predicted greater depression. This suggests older adults may suffer a high emotional price during times of imposed social distancing.</li> </ul>
20.08.2021	Caring for nursing home residents with COVID-19: a “hospital-at-nursing home” intermediate care intervention	Aging Clinical & Experimental Research / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper describes features and impact of an assistance model involving an intermediate care mobile medical specialist team (GIROT, ‘<i>Gruppo Intervento Rapido Ospedale Territorio</i>’) aimed at delivering “hospital-at-nursing home” care to NH residents with COVID-19 in Florence, Italy.</li> <li>• The GIROT activity involved 21 NHs (1159 residents) and 43 NHs (2448 residents) during pandemic Wave 1 (W1; March-April 2020) and Wave 2 (W2; October 2020-January 2021) respectively.</li> <li>• The percentage of infected residents was higher in W2 than in W1 (64.5% vs. 38.8%), while both hospitalization and lethality rates significantly decreased in W2 compared to W1</li> <li>• Authors conclude the “hospital-at-nursing home” patient-centred care model based on comprehensive geriatric assessment may</li> </ul>

			provide a valuable contribution in fighting COVID-19 in NH residents.
<b>20.08.2021</b>	Repeated Antigen Testing Among SARS-CoV-2–Positive Nursing Home Residents	Infection Control & Hosp. Epidemiol.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated antigen testing of 12 SARS-CoV-2–positive nursing home residents identified 9/9 (100%) culture-positive specimens up to 6 days after initial positive test.</li> <li>• Antigen positivity lasted 2–24 days.</li> <li>• Antigen positivity might last beyond the infectious period, but was reliable in residents with evidence of early infection.</li> </ul>
<b>23.08.2021</b>	Facility and Family Communication during the COVID-19 Visit Restriction: Early Perspectives of Family Members	J. Gertontol. Social Work / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the COVID-19 pandemic, family concerns regarding residents in long-term care facilities (LTCFs) increased due to a high proportion of COVID cases and deaths among residents and restrictions that made it impossible to visit. These changes created numerous challenges for facilities communicating with families, and between families and residents.</li> <li>• Authors implemented an online survey of family members or friends of residents in LTCFs from April 28 to June 19, 2020, using convenience sampling. A total of 174 responses nationwide reported the types of communications used, frequency of communication and alternative visits, and whether respondents had peace of mind, would recommend the facility, or were considering removing the resident from the facility</li> <li>• Results of hierarchical logistic regression showed that respondents felt greater peace of mind when there were multiple communication channels to contact the resident. Also, respondents had more negative perceptions of a facility when they were not informed about confirmed COVID cases.</li> <li>• The findings suggest multiple communication channels and transparency about COVID status were effective in keeping positive family perceptions about the facility.</li> </ul>

<p><b>24.08.2021</b></p>	<p>COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake Among Residents and Staff Members of Assisted Living and Residential Care Communities — Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program, December 2020–April 2021</p>	<p>JAMDA / Study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In December 2020, the United States' CDC launched the Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program to facilitate COVID-19 vaccination of residents and staff in long-term care facilities (LTCFs), including assisted living (AL) and other residential care (RC) communities.</li> <li>• This paper aimed to assess vaccine uptake in these communities and identify characteristics that might impact uptake.</li> <li>• In AL communities, a median of 67 residents and 32 staff members per 100 beds received a first dose of COVID-19 vaccine at the first on-site clinic</li> <li>• In RC, a median of 8 residents and 5 staff members per 10 beds received a first dose.</li> <li>• Among three states with available AL resident census data, median resident first-dose uptake at the first clinic was 93% in Connecticut, 85% in Georgia, and 78% in Tennessee.</li> <li>• Among both residents and staff, cumulative first-dose vaccine uptake increased with increasing social vulnerability related to housing type and transportation.</li> <li>• COVID-19 vaccination of residents and staff in LTCFs is a public health priority. On-site clinics may help to increase vaccine uptake, particularly when transportation may be a barrier. Ensuring steady access to COVID-19 vaccine in LTCFs following the conclusion of the Pharmacy Partnership is critical to maintaining high vaccination coverage among residents and staff.</li> </ul>
<p><b>25.08.2021</b></p>	<p>Job Resignation in Nursing Homes During the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Role of Quality of Employer Communication</p>	<p>J. Applied Gerontol.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purpose of this study was to investigate whether quality of employer communication related to COVID-19, and staff preparedness to care for residents with COVID-19 can mediate the effects of COVID-19-related stressors on NH employees' (N = 1,730) decision to resign.</li> <li>• Results from path analyses indicate that higher quality of communication and more optimal preparedness mediated the</li> </ul>

			<p>relationship between COVID-19-related stressors and likelihood of resignation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specifically, higher levels of COVID-19-related stressors were indirectly associated with reduced likelihood of resigning through the paths of more optimal communication and preparedness.</li> <li>• The authors' findings underscore the importance of effective employer communication during emergencies in Nursing Homes</li> </ul>
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### Reports and other publications

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
23.08.2021	Disproportionate attack rates of COVID-19 among older black adults	Yoshikawa, Thomas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Author writes to call attention to the disproportionately high attack rate of COVID-19 among minority ethnic populations in the United States, especially that of the black community.</li> <li>• Health disparities among blacks, i.e., hypertension, diabetes mellitus, cardiac diseases, and renal dysfunction, play important roles in susceptibility to infectious diseases in general, including COVID-19.</li> <li>• Most geriatricians are aware of the often atypical clinical manifestations of diseases, disorders, and disabilities with aging</li> <li>• In some states in the United States, African Americans represent more than 70% of deaths related to COVID-19.<sup>7, 8</sup> Most certainly, some of these deaths were related to delayed recognition of the illness by both the affected patient and treating clinician.</li> <li>• Author urges that, if an older person presents with a symptom complex that is not consistent with most diseases/disorders, consider COVID-19 until proven otherwise.</li> </ul>

23.08.2021	Two Canadian provincial initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic and their impact on nursing home staffing	Lanoix, Monique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, Québec was the hardest hit province in Canada with close to half the deaths due to the virus in the entire country</li> <li>• This letter examines the impact of two provincial orders, one banning staff from working at more than one facility, and the other requiring nursing home operators to turn over staff rosters, on nursing homes</li> </ul>
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### Evidence Summaries

Publication Date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
25.08.2021	Interventions against Social Isolation of Older Adults: A Systematic Review of Existing Literature and Interventions	Manjunath, Jaya; Manoj, Nandita; Alchalabi, Tania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social isolation is widespread among older adults, especially those confined to living in nursing homes and long-term care facilities. The authors completed a systematic review evaluating the effectiveness of 20 interventions used to combat social isolation in older adults</li> <li>• As the COVID-19 pandemic progresses, the issue of social isolation among all populations, particularly older persons, continues to grow. These older adults are at a higher risk of suffering negative consequences, and hence are asked to practice rigorous social distancing measures</li> <li>• The results of this review describe the current interventions against social isolation of older adult citizens. Overall, there are a wide range of interventions, including support groups, friendship programs, telephone calls and volunteering.</li> <li>• These interventions have been shown to improve loneliness scores, stress, overall quality of life and mental health. Based on the review, recommendations can be made for older adults to participate in these programs on a regular, long-term basis.</li> <li>• However, the authors note there is still a need for interventions to be developed that increase the individual independence of older persons.</li> </ul>

## Statistics

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
24.08.2021	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>
24.08.2021	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>
25.08.2021	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
25.08.2021	Mandating COVID-19 vaccine for nursing home staff: an ethical obligation	Dumyati, Ghinwa; Jump, Robin L.P.; Gaur, Swati	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This editorial notes that, as the SARS-CoV-2 Delta strain spreads across the United States, increased rates of COVID-19 vaccinations are fundamental to protect both residents and staff in long term care settings</li> <li>Noting that vaccine hesitancy remains a challenge, and that vaccine mandates are not a novel solution, the authors argue that mandatory vaccination of nursing home staff is a key method to protect staff and residents of Long Term Care Settings at a time when the SARS-CoV-2 Delta strain continues to spread across the United States</li> </ul>