



Public Health
England

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Weekly Care Homes Evidence Digest

Prevention and control of COVID-19 in home care/care homes settings
23rd July 2020

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

Publication date	Title / URL	Journal / Article type	Digest
13.07.2020	Guidance for the Prevention of the COVID-19 Epidemic in Long-Term Care Facilities: A Short-Term Prospective Study	Journal of Nutrition, Health and Aging / Article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective was to compare the guidance applied for the prevention of the COVID-19 epidemic between the LTCFs having been contaminated by COVID-19 and LTCFs having not been contaminated. 124 LTCFs participated (93.9%). 30 LTCFs (24.19%) were contaminated with COVID-19. Public LTCFs, LTCFs which organized staff compartmentalization within zones, and LTCFs with a staff who self-assessed a higher quality implementation of the preventive measures were significantly more likely to avoid contamination by the COVID-19 outbreak.
13.07.2020	High depression and anxiety in people with Alzheimer's disease living in retirement homes during the covid-19 crisis	Psychiatry Research / Article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We investigated the effects of measures against Covid-19 on the mental health of participants with Alzheimer's disease (AD) who live in retirement homes in France. Fifty-eight participants consented to participate in the study. The participants rated their depression and anxiety during and before the Covid-19 crisis. Participants reported higher depression ($p = .005$) and anxiety ($p = .004$) during than before the Covid-19 crisis. These increases can be attributed to the isolation of the residents and/or to the drastic changes in their daily life and care they receive.
15.07.2020	Do COVID-19 control guidelines for Long-term care facilities include oral health care orientations?	Journal of the American Geriatrics Society / Research Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutionalized people are often dependent on others for assistance with daily activities, including oral hygiene. This procedure is performed most often by caregivers who may not have received proper training and may represent an additional risk of the virus spreading since the high viral load in the upper respiratory tract of infected individuals. The guidelines from 59 selected publications focused on preventing COVID-19 from entering, spreading within, and spreading to outside the facility. Only one publication

			<p>addressed the challenges of oral health care for older adults in LTCF.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations for oral hygiene as part of the guidelines for pandemic management should ensure the safety of workers and the older adults.
15.07.2020	David Oliver: Was the prime minister justified in blaming care homes for poor covid-19 practice?	BMJ / Views & Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On 6 July the UK prime minister, Boris Johnson, told journalists that “too many care homes didn’t really follow procedures” during the covid-19 pandemic. • The ONS reported 19 394 covid-19 related deaths of care home residents in England and Wales from 2 March to 12 June—29.3% of all deaths of care home residents in that period, and 56% of care homes in England had reported at least one covid-19 case. • Author claims to have seen no credible evidence to back up Johnson’s assertion that care homes weren’t following correct procedures. Says care homes were left with a shortage of PPE and no access to testing. In May some local authorities were reported to have pressured care homes into accepting hospital transfers and threatened to withhold funding or access to equipment.
15.07.2020	Presymptomatic Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 Amongst Residents and Staff at a Skilled Nursing Facility: Results of Real-Time PCR and Serologic Testing	Clinical Infectious Diseases / Article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High rates of asymptomatic infection suggest benefits to routine testing in congregate care settings. • SARS-CoV-2 screening was undertaken in a single nursing facility without a known case of COVID-19, demonstrating an 85% prevalence among residents and 37% among staff. • Serology was not helpful in identifying infections.
16.07.2020	A Double Burden of Exclusion? Digital and Social Exclusion of Older Adults in Times of COVID-19	Journals of Gerontology Series B / Article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The COVID-19 pandemic has excluded older adults from a society based on physical social contact. Vulnerable populations like older adults also tend to be excluded from digital services because they opt not to use the internet, lack necessary devices and network connectivity, or inexperience using the technology. Older adults who are frail and are not online, many of whom are in long-term care

			<p>facilities, struggle with the double burden of social and digital exclusion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This paper discusses the potential outcomes of this exclusion and provides recommendations for rectifying the situation, with a particular focus on older adults in long-term care facilities.
16.07.2020	The road to renewal: five priorities for health and care	The Kings Fund / Article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets out priorities to help guide the approach to renewal across health and care, including: • The government must urgently address short-term funding pressures and bring forward proposals for longer-term investment and reform as an immediate priority; • Reform must be underpinned by better pay, conditions and training for the social care workforce; • Improve recruitment and retention to address shortages in the short and longer term; • Introduce better support for staff wellbeing; • Prioritise developing cultures of compassion, inclusion and collaboration.
17.07.2020	Exploring the challenges faced by frontline workers in health and social care amid the COVID-19 pandemic: experiences of frontline workers in the English Midlands region, UK	Journal of Interprofessional Care / Article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This paper was set out to explore the challenges faced by different frontline workers in health and social care during the COVID-19 pandemic. • Forty (N = 40) in-depth one-to-one semi-structured interviews were undertaken with support workers (n = 15), nurses (n = 15), and managers (N = 10). Health and social care workers were drawn from domiciliary care and care homes (with and without nursing services). • Found that lack of pandemic preparedness, shortage of PPE, anxiety and fear amongst professionals, challenges in enforcing social distancing, challenges in fulfilling social shielding responsibility, anxiety and fear amongst residents and service users, delay in testing, evolving PPE guidance and shortage of staff were challenges faced by frontline health and social care workers.

17.07.2020	Left behind in the time of COVID-19: a report into nursing care homes in Belgium	Médecins Sans Frontières	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MSF gives a detailed account of our intervention in nursing care homes in Belgium during the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic, describing the situation a real humanitarian crisis. The report contains a list of concrete recommendation to avoid the repetition of this drama if a second wave of the new coronavirus hits the country.
20.07.2020	Mitigation of a COVID-19 Outbreak in a Nursing Home Through Serial Testing of Residents and Staff	Clinical Infectious Diseases / Article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nursing homes and long-term care facilities represent highly vulnerable environments for respiratory disease outbreaks, such as COVID-19. We describe a COVID-19 outbreak in a nursing home that was rapidly contained by using a universal testing strategy of all residents and nursing home staff.
20.07.2020	Lessons from Mass-Testing for COVID-19 in Long Term Care Facilities for the Elderly in San Francisco	Clinical Infectious Diseases / Article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19 can cause significant mortality in the elderly in Long Term Care Facilities (LTCF). We describe four LTCF outbreaks where mass testing identified a high proportion of asymptomatic infections (4-41% in health care workers and 20-75% in residents), indicating that symptom-based screening alone is insufficient for monitoring for COVID-19 transmission.
July 2020	Why, in almost all countries, was residential care for older people so badly affected by COVID-19?	Observatoire Social Européenne / Opinion Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In many countries, residential care for older people was one of the settings not prepared for a pandemic. In industrialised countries, the impact of COVID-19 has been most severe in residential care and for their residents. International data from 19 countries show that, where there have been at least 100 deaths in total, the percentage of care home residents as a share of total deaths ranges from 24% in Hungary to 82% in Canada. Statistics were reported very late in some countries, and so government responses were also delayed. Discusses reasons why nursing home residents were not protected from outbreaks, and why the homes had difficulty dealing with outbreaks. These reasons have to do with the characteristics of the population, the primary focus on

			hospitals, the place of residential care for older persons in the health system and the lack of quality monitoring.
July 2020	Reimagining the future of health and social care. How to learn the lessons from the Covid-19 crisis for a next generation health and care system	Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) & Accenture / Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on consultations with those in the health and social care sector, the report explores three feasible scenarios for change: system stasis, pandemic NHS, and care horizon. The purpose of these scenarios is to inform the possible direction and necessary pace of change for the health and social care system going forward.
July 2020	Exploring the Relationship between Care Homes and Excess Deaths in the COVID-19 Pandemic: Evidence from Italy	IZA Institute of Labor Economics / Discussion Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We explore the relationship between the spatial distributions of excess deaths and care home facilities during the COVID-19 outbreak in Italy. Using registry-based mortality data (January 1st- March 31st, 2015-2020) for Lombardy, one of the areas hit most severely, we estimate that municipalities with care homes present significantly higher excess death rates among the elderly (+41%). We find that this effect is not driven by the size of care homes and of the vulnerable population that they host. Rather, our results suggest that the excess deaths did not occur only within care homes and these facilities acted as one of the possible catalysts in the diffusion of COVID-19 in the whole elderly population of their surrounding territory.

Guidance

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
Updated 17.07.2020	Coronavirus (COVID-19): interim guidance on the extended use of face masks in hospitals and care homes	Scottish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance on the extended use of medical face masks by staff within residential healthcare settings such as acute adult (inc. mental health) and community hospitals and care homes.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The guidance also contains advice for visitors to care homes and hospitals, including those attending for an appointment.
Updated 17.07.2020	Testing Guidelines for Nursing Homes: Interim SARS-CoV-2 Testing Guidelines for Nursing Home Residents and Healthcare Personnel	Centers for Disease Control & Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This document is intended to provide guidance on the appropriate use of testing among nursing home residents.
Updated 20.07.2020	COVID-19: how to work safely in domiciliary care in England	Public Health England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This resource is intended for care workers and providers delivering visiting homecare including extra care housing (i.e. where care workers visit individuals in their place of residence). contains recommendations on the use of PPE for a range of relevant contexts. provides explanation concerning recommendations and addresses frequently asked questions. Includes specialist advice relating to care for people with learning disabilities and/or autism. contains case scenarios designed to illustrate appropriate use of PPE in practice.
Updated 20.07.2020	COVID-19: how to work safely in care homes	Public Health England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The guidance includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPE recommendations for care home staff; FAQs on the use of PPE in care homes; Examples which help to identify the correct use of PPE when undertaking activities that require physical contact or activities which do not require physical contact but are carried out in close proximity to residents; Guide to putting on and taking off PPE for care homes.
Updated 21.07.2020	COVID-19: Guidance for Nursing and Residential Care Homes in Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland Department of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This guidance is aimed at Health and Social Care Trusts and registered providers of accommodation for people who need personal or nursing care. In addition, there are also important messages for relatives and friends of those in nursing and residential homes.

22.07.2020	Visiting care homes during coronavirus	Department of Health & Social Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This guidance is for directors of public health, care providers and others who'll be involved in planning to enable visits to care homes. It sets out: • the principles of a local approach to visiting arrangements and dynamic risk assessment; • guidance for providers establishing their visiting policy; • guidance for providers taking decisions on visiting for particular residents or groups of residents; • infection control precautions; • communicating with relatives and others about the visiting policy and visiting decisions.
23.07.2020	CQC coronavirus update for adult social care providers	Care Quality Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A regular update for providers and professionals working in adult social care, sharing the latest guidance on COVID-19 and CQC's approach during this period. • As well as links to guidance from a variety of organisations, it includes information on inspections, on the latest visiting arrangements, innovation in health and social care, future strategy, and accessibility resources to help communicate about COVID-19.

Statistical Reports

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
21.07.2020	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 up to week ending 17 July.
21.07.2020	Notifications of deaths of residents related to COVID-19 in adult care homes: 1 March to 17 July 2020	Welsh Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The data presented here are based on the Notifications of Service User Deaths received by Care Inspectorate Wales from adult care homes which relate to their residents. The location of death may be in the care home, in hospital or another location.
22.07.2020	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, including:

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing for COVID-19 in adult care homes in Scotland split by care homes with confirmed Covid-19 and without confirmed Covid-19, presented by NHS Health Board; • Deaths reported to Care Inspectorate - the number of deaths reported by adult care homes, including COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 related deaths.
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Editorials and News

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
16.07.2020	Could we have done better with COVID-19 in nursing homes?	European Geriatric Medicine / Editorial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term care facilities were simply not prepared for the outbreak, and they were “abandoned” at the time when all health care settings struggled with shortage of PPE and testing. • Therefore, right now is the time to analyse which features of LTC did and did not work, and specify which measures may be undertaken in the nearest weeks, and in the future. • Considers: Organization and structure limitations; Lack of infection control; Education via e-learning; Insufficient human resources; Emotional burden of the staff; Ethical crisis; Lack of plan for a crisis situation.
16.07.2020	CIPFA and NHS Providers call for joined up policy making across health and care	NHS Providers & Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy / News	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIPFA and NHS Providers are today coming together to call on government to see health and social care as wholly interdependent services supporting people from cradle to grave. National policy decisions impacting the resilience of one service have implications for the other. • Policy decisions about NHS funding must take into account the impact on social care, and vice versa. If local authorities do not receive adequate funding from government to balance their books, they may be forced to retender critical community and public health services.

<p>21.07.2020</p>	<p>Joint Statement by the Older People's Commissioner for Wales and Equality and Human Rights Commission in Wales</p>	<p>Older People's Commissioner for Wales and Equality and Human Rights Commission in Wales</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint letter sent to Welsh Government regarding shared concerns including examples of inappropriate blanket healthcare decisions on issues such as Do Not Attempt Resuscitation notices, the slow response by the Welsh Government to make testing widely available to care home residents and staff, and the apparent discharge of Covid-19 positive older people from hospitals into care homes. • Considering how we can best use our powers to scrutinise the decisions and actions that been taken during this pandemic. • Calling for the Welsh Government's recently announced action plan for care homes to set out the measures it will take, working with others, to support those living and working in care homes and ensure that the rights of older people are protected and promoted.
<p>22.07.2020</p>	<p>Families and friends to be reunited with loved ones in care homes as visits restart</p>	<p>Department of Health & Social Care / Press Release</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care home residents will start to be reunited with their friends and family, where safe. • Local directors of public health will, with their authorities, lead the decision-making process for care home visits. • Thorough risk assessments will take place based on specific care homes and the community context. • Appropriate safety precautions will be required, including face coverings, and social distancing measures.
<p>22.07.2020</p>	<p>Rapid PCR testing for COVID-19 being trialled in London care homes</p>	<p>Queen Mary University of London / News</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queen Mary University of London is leading a clinical trial of a new rapid COVID-19 testing system that delivers results in under an hour. • Working with the East London Health and Care Partnership, up to 2,000 staff and residents in 50 care homes are being recruited to see how effective rapid daily COVID-19 testing is at reducing rates of infection, hospitalisation and deaths.