



Public Health
England

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Weekly Care Homes Evidence Digest

Prevention and control of COVID-19 in home care/care homes settings
21st January 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, recommendation for the prevention and management of COVID-19 in long term care facilities; from Italy, a risk stratification approach to understanding the impact of COVID-19 on older people in long term care facilities; from Belgium, evidence of the value of measures of frailty as a prognostic indicator for the impact of COVID-19 on the over 80s; caution from Canada, following a systematic review of the evidence on the importance of frailty alone as a prognostic indicator for the impact of COVID-19 on older people; from USA, further evidence and guidance on the importance of promoting healthy ageing during the COVID-19 pandemic. From the UK, a review of the relationship between CQC ratings and outbreaks of COVID-19 in Liverpool; an assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on mortality in care homes in Scotland; and a summary of the investigation of the international impact of new variants of COVID-19. Finally, summaries of other recently published reports, guidance and statistics.

Peer-Reviewed Articles

Publication date	Title / URL	Journal / Article type	Digest
12.01.2021	<p>COVID-19 outbreaks in care homes during the first wave: Are Care Quality Commission ratings a good predictor of at risk homes?</p>	<p>J. Hospital Infection / Study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An audit in April 2020 was performed identify associations between COVID-19 status and care quality ratings from the Care Quality Commission at care homes in Liverpool • Univariable logistic regression was performed to identify whether the CQC ratings were associated with a care home experiencing a COVID-19 outbreak, or a home having asymptomatic cases • Over half of the care homes (53.2%, n=41), had laboratory-confirmed clinical cases and 39 (95.1%) of these were reported as outbreaks. A small number of care homes (10.4%, n=8) had asymptomatic cases and over a third had no clinical or asymptomatic cases (36.4%, n=28). There was no significant difference between the overall Care Quality Commission rating of Liverpool and English care homes (p=0.57). There was no significant association between any of the Care Quality Commission rating domains and the presence of COVID-19 outbreaks and/or asymptomatic cases • Authors conclude that infection prevention and control components of CQC ratings should be strengthened to identify care homes at a potential risk of infectious disease outbreaks that may require targeted support
13.01.2021	<p>Sense of coherence mediates the relationship between digital health literacy and anxiety about the future in aging population during the COVID-19 pandemic: a path analysis</p>	<p>Aging & Mental Health / Study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study aimed to analyse the relationships of SOC with anxiety, digital health literacy (DHL), information, and financial satisfaction among older adults during the outbreak • 266 older adults were included, with 43.2% expressed anxiety about the future • Authors conclude SOC had direct negative effect on anxiety and mediated the relationships between anxiety and DHL/financial satisfaction • Strategies should be developed to enhance SOC and DHL among older adults, as these capacities may help to manage anxiety during the pandemic

<p>14.01.2021</p>	<p>The COVID Rehabilitation Paradox: why we need to protect and develop Geriatric Rehabilitation Services in the face of the pandemic</p>	<p>Age and Aging / Study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older multimorbid persons often fall seriously ill due COVID-19 and again often need special rehabilitation measures to participate in social life. • Geriatric rehabilitation is a multiprofessional service geared to these needs but capacities in geriatric rehabilitation are currently being reduced despite increasing demand - reasons for this are complex and not restricted to the current situation. • This article highlights the current situation leading to the COVID rehabilitation paradox and shows ways to learn from it for the future.
<p>15.01.2021</p>	<p>Life during COVID-19 lockdown in Italy: the influence of cognitive state on psychosocial, behavioral and lifestyle profiles of older adults</p>	<p>Aging & Mental Health / Study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study investigated how cognition influenced their understanding of the pandemic, socio-behavioural responses and lifestyle adaptations during lockdown, and how these factors affected mood or memory • With increasing cognitive deficits, understanding of the pandemic and the ability to follow lockdown policies, adapt to lifestyle changes, and maintain remote interactions decreased. • Participants with dementia were more depressed; sleeping and health problems independently increased the likelihood of depression; >40% with health problems avoided healthcare mainly due to fear of contagion.
<p>15.01.2021</p>	<p>Age is not the only risk factor in COVID-19: the role of comorbidities and of long staying in residential care homes</p>	<p>BMC Geriatrics / Study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 presents a highly transmissible disease with a tremendous impact on elderly people, but few studies focus on very elderly patients (over 80 years old). This study examines the clinical presentation and outcome of the disease in both this 'Very Elderly' group of patients, and 'Elderly' (over 65s), admitted to the Sant'Andrea University Hospital of Rome, March – May 2020 • Study found that Very Elderly patients had an increased mortality rate, also due to the frequent occurrence of multiple comorbidities. • Additionally, the study found patients coming from Long Stay Residential Care Homes appeared to be highly susceptible and vulnerable to develop severe manifestations of the disease • There were considerable differences between Elderly and Very Elderly patients in terms of inflammatory activity, severity of disease, adverse clinical outcomes. To establish a correct risk stratification, comorbidities and information about provenience from LSRCHs should be considered.

<p>15.01.2021</p>	<p>Home Care Aide Safety Concerns and Job Challenges During the COVID-19 Pandemic</p>	<p>New Solutions / Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study examines experiences of agency-employed home care aides during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to identify ways to mitigate concerns • Study used innovative journaling approach with thirty-seven aides as well as in-depth interviews with fifteen aides and leadership representatives from nine home health agencies in New York and Michigan, USA. • Workers described a range of concerns around workplace safety including uncertainty around whether a client had COVID-19, inadequate access to personal protective equipment and safe transportation, as well as fundamental changes to interactions with clients. Agencies also faced challenges acquiring personal protective equipment for their aides • The authors identify resources needed to support home care aides and home health agencies both during a public health crisis and in the future
<p>15.01.2021</p>	<p>Recommendations for the management of COVID-19 pandemic in long-term care facilities</p>	<p>Zeitschrift für Gerontologie + Geriatrie / Recommendations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term care facilities (LTCF) and their vulnerable residents are particularly affected by COVID-19. Estimates from various countries suggest that 3–66% of all COVID-19 deaths were residents of LTCF, of which 80% died in their facilities • Despite these significant numbers, recommendations for LTCF for the prevention and medical care of residents during the COVID-19 pandemic are still lacking • These recommendations are based on the existing literature and the expertise of the authors who are specialists in geriatric medicine. The recommendations are addressed to LTCF management, operators, clinicians in LTCFs, and politicians, to provide necessary framework conditions
<p>18.01.2021</p>	<p>High Prevalence of Elder Abuse During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Risk and Resilience Factors</p>	<p>Am. J. Geriatric Psychology / Study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study examines, for the first time, the prevalence of and the risk and resilience factors associated with elder abuse victimization during the coronavirus disease 2019(COVID-19) pandemic in the United States. • Survey of 897 older persons sheltering at home during pandemic found prevalence of elder abuse was one in five older persons (21.3%), an 83.6% increase compared to prevalence estimates pre-pandemic

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic-related financial strain was associated with increased risk of elder abuse, whereas a stronger sense of community and greater adherence to physical distancing measures were associated with reduced risk of abuse • Authors conclude older persons' clear needs for safety and security from abuse and harm must be considered in public health action planning during the ongoing pandemic
18.01.2021	COVID 19 and dementia: experience from six European countries	Int. J. Geriatric Psychiatry / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The International Dementia Alliance (IDEAL) is a group of dementia specialists from six European countries. This IDEAL paper offers a summary of experience of COVID-19 effects on populations in England, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland, highlighting the differential response from health and social care systems and the measures taken to maximise support for older people and those with dementia. • Common themes include recognition of the atypical presentation of COVID-19 in older people (and those with dementia) the need to pay particular attention to the care of people with dementia in care homes; the recognition of the toll that isolation can bring on older people and the complexity of the response by health and social services to minimise the negative impact of the pandemic. • Potential new ways of working identified during the pandemic could serve as a positive legacy from the crisis.
19.01.21	Mental health multimorbidity among caregivers of older adults during the COVID-19 epidemic	Am. J. Geriatric Psychology / Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study investigates mental health status and associated factors among caregivers of older adults during the COVID-19 epidemic in China. 916 respondents participated during March 2020 • Anxiety and depression were common among caregivers of older adults during the COVID-19 epidemic. Being female and having community-level COVID-19 contact were independent risk factors for experiencing multiple mental health problems • Pre-existing mental disorders increased risk of multimorbidity among caregivers, but enhanced access to positive media information decreased it

<p>20.01.2021</p>	<p>Reframing hospital to home discharge from “Should we?” to “How can we?”: COVID-19 and beyond</p>	<p>J. Am. Geriatrics Society / Commentary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to outline a shift in perspectives of rehabilitation providers on discharge decision-making during the COVID-19 pandemic by incorporating greater integration of caregivers in the discharge planning • Argues caregiver involvement and shared decision-making have emerged as greater priorities during the pandemic as patients, caregivers, and providers are faced with complex discharge decisions that require timely action. • Further research is needed to identify and evaluate effective, standardized approaches to hospital discharge planning in the context of the pandemic to ensure safe and cost-effective transitions of care, and this may include implementing and evaluating models of care that integrate environmental modifications, paid caregivers, and informal caregiver support
<p>20.01.2021</p>	<p>Promoting Healthy Aging During COVID-19</p>	<p>J. Am. Geriatrics Society / Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The American Geriatrics Society’s Healthy Aging Special Interest Group here presents the significant difficulties and obstacles faced by older adults during this unprecedented time • Second, they provide guidance to practicing geriatrics healthcare professionals overseeing the care of older adults. We provide a framework for clinical evaluation and screening related to the five aforementioned domains, that uniquely impact older adults • Finally, they we provide strategies that could enhance healthy aging in the era of COVID-19

Preprints

<p>Publication date</p>	<p>Title / URL</p>	<p>Journal / Article type</p>	<p>Digest</p>
<p>15.01.2021</p>	<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Care-Home Mortality and Life Expectancy in Scotland</p>	<p>MedRxiv / Study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care-home residency was identified via a national primary care registration database linked to national mortality data. Life expectancy was estimated using Makeham-Gompertz models, to (i) describe yearly life expectancy from Nov 2015 to Oct 2020 (ii) compare life expectancy (during 2016-2018) between care-home residents and the wider Scottish population and (iii) apply care-home life expectancy

			<p>estimates to COVID-19 death counts to estimate years of life lost (YLL)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Among care-home residents, life expectancy in 2015/16 to 2019/20 ranged from 2.7 to 2.3 years for women and 2.3 to 1.8 years for men. Life expectancy was lowest in 2019/20. Age-sex specific life expectancy in 2016-2018 in care-home residents was lower than in the Scottish population (10 and 2.5 years in those aged 70 and 90 respectively). Rather than using national life tables, applying care-home specific life expectancies to COVID-19 deaths yields, mean YLLs for care-home residents were 2.6 and 2.2 for women and men respectively • Study thus concludes prioritising care-home residents for vaccination is justified not only in terms of total deaths, but also in terms of years of life lost.
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Reports and other publications

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
11.01.2015	Importance of Geriatric Health Care in India during Covid 19 Pandemic	Nag, Kaushik; Karmakar, Nabarun; and Datta, Anjan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book chapter studies need to support and protect India's physically and economically vulnerable population, particularly the elderly, during the COVID-19 pandemic. • India has nearly 120 million elderly people with various physical, mental, social, economic, and spiritual problems, and the Indian Ministry of Health has established geriatric centres and clinics in most Indian states. However, Routine care clinics cannot handle the burden of geriatric population to address their co-morbidities. • The authors contend that rapid training of healthcare professionals from geriatric care disciplines and home nursing is now extremely important. They argue that the Indian Government must provide financial support to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other agencies helping the geriatric population by providing affordable health care

<p>15.01.2021</p>	<p>Rates of COVID-19 Among Residents and Staff Members in Nursing Homes — United States, May 25–November 22, 2020</p>	<p>Centers for Disease Control</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report demonstrates that rates of COVID-19 among US nursing home residents and staff members increased during June and July 2020, and again in November. Trends in reported COVID-19 cases among nursing home residents and staff members were similar to trends in incidence of COVID-19 in surrounding communities
<p>18.01.2021</p>	<p>Enhanced Health in Care Homes: A guide for care homes</p>	<p>Care Provider’s Alliance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NHS Long Term Plan contained a commitment to roll out the Framework for Enhanced Health in Care Homes (V2) (EHCH) across England between 2020 and 2024 • This document explains what EHCH programme is, how to make it work in the best way possible for people living in care homes and the people who care for them, and what everyone involved can expect from it • This guide is intended for Registered Managers of care homes and care home staff in England but may be of interest to a wider group, including health care professionals
<p>18.01.2021</p>	<p>Premorbid Frailty is a better Prognostic Indicator than Age in Oldest-old Hospitalized with COVID-19</p>	<p>Piers, Ruth; et al.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter reports on multicentre cohort study of 711 over-80s hospitalised with COVID-19 • The study determined that neither age category nor residence, but pre-morbid frailty was associated with in-hospital mortality, but the association between frailty and in-hospital mortality was more pronounced in oldest-old without respiratory failure. Hospitalized patients with CFS 8-9 had high odds of dying, even when there was no respiratory failure • The authors note that this finding may support that hospital referral of people with CFS 8-9 might only be appropriate if supportive or palliative care is insufficient in the (nursing) home or if requested by the individual. •

Guidance

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
14.01.2021	Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) standard operating procedure: COVID-19 vaccine deployment programme: Frontline social care workers (JCVI Priority Cohort 2)	NHS England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This standard operating procedure (SOP) supports deployment of vaccinations to frontline health and social care workers in priority cohort 2, as identified by the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). Operational guidance to commence immediate vaccination of this cohort, ensuring maximum uptake of vaccination and timely, equitable access across staff groups, was issued on 7 December 2020. This SOP does not apply to frontline social care workers within the JCVI priority cohort 1 (that is those who work within CQC registered residential settings for older adults) for which a separate SOP exists This standard operating procedure (SOP) provides additional guidance on the how this will be achieved for the frontline social care workforce. It describes the process to support the identification and vaccination of frontline social care workers as part of the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme.
Updated 18.01.2021	Pulse oximetry to detect early deterioration of patients with COVID-19 in primary and community care settings	NHS England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance sets out principles to support the remote monitoring, using pulse oximetry, of patients with confirmed or possible COVID-19.
Updated 19.01.2021	Infection prevention and control in care homes	CQC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated guidance on the key questions used by CQC inspections to look at how well staff and people living in care homes are protected by infection prevention and control (IPC)

Evidence Summaries

Publication Date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
14.01.2021	What is the relationship between validated frailty scores and	Cosco, Theodore D.; et al	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aims to quantify association between frailty and COVID-19 in relation to mortality in hospitalised patients

	mortality for adults with COVID-19 in acute hospital care? A systematic review		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review concludes the majority of studies have shown a positive association between COVID-19 related death and increasing frailty, but some studies suggested a more nuanced understanding of frailty and outcomes in COVID-19 is needed Therefore, clinicians should be cautious not to put too much emphasis on influence of frailty alone when discussing likely prognosis for older COVID-19 patients
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Statistics

Publication date	Title / URL	Author(s)	Digest
19.01.2021	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.
20.01.2021	Notifications to Care Inspectorate Wales related to COVID-19 in adult care homes: 1 March 2020 to 15 January 2021	Welsh Government Care Home statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notifications related to COVID-19 in adult care homes during the coronavirus pandemic for 1 March 2020 to 15 January 2021.
20.01.2021	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
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13.01.2021	COVID-19 vaccination in older adult care homes – the next stage	NHS England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter from Dr Nikita Kanani and Ed Waller informs local vaccination teams in England that care homes should receive at least an initial COVID-19 vaccination by Sunday 24 January • Care homes should work with the local vaccination team to perform a risk assessment to enable safe vaccination to go ahead, and this letter sets out the schedule by which vaccination teams will be paid
15.01.2021	Covid-19: Norway investigates 23 deaths in frail elderly patients after vaccination	Torjesen, Ingrid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports doctors in Norway have been told to conduct more thorough evaluations of very frail elderly patients in line to receive the Pfizer BioNTec vaccine against covid-19, following the deaths of 23 patients shortly after receiving the vaccine • There is no current proven link between the vaccination and deaths. Report notes that over 20,000 doses of the vaccine have been administered over the past few weeks in Norway and around 400 deaths normally occur among care home residents every week. The Paul Ehrlich Institute in Germany is also investigating 10 deaths shortly after covid-19 vaccination. • Based on the available published reports from the clinical trials, the MHRA said it did not currently anticipate any specific safety concerns.
15.01.2021	Emerging SARS-CoV-2 Variants	Centers for Disease Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports on variants of COVID-19 (i.e., SARS-CoV-2) which emerged in autumn/winter 2020, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The UK Variant (20I/501Y.V1, VOC 202012/01, or B.1.1.7). This variant has since been detected in numerous countries around the world, including the United States (US) and Canada 2. A South African variant (20H/501Y.V2 or B.1.351). This variant shares some mutations with B.1.1.7. Cases attributed to this variant have been detected outside of South Africa 3. A Brazilian variant (P.1). This variant has 17 unique mutations, including three in the receptor binding domain of the spike protein • At this time, there is no evidence that these variants cause more severe illness or increased risk of death. New information about the virologic, epidemiologic, and clinical characteristics of these variants is rapidly emerging.

18.01.2021	Covid-19: What new variants are emerging and how are they being investigated?	Mahase, Elizabeth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The new, more transmissible variant of SARS-CoV-2 found in England is just one of many variations of the virus being detected around the world. This BMJ report examines what is known so far• The three main vaccines—Pfizer BioNTech, Moderna, and Oxford AstraZeneca—all target the spike protein of the virus, where these variants have mutations. Researchers are still fairly confident, however, that the vaccines will work against the Brazilian, English, and South African variants of COVID-19
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