

# The impacts of COVID-19 on unpaid carers of adults with long-term care needs and measures to address these impacts: a rapid review of the available evidence

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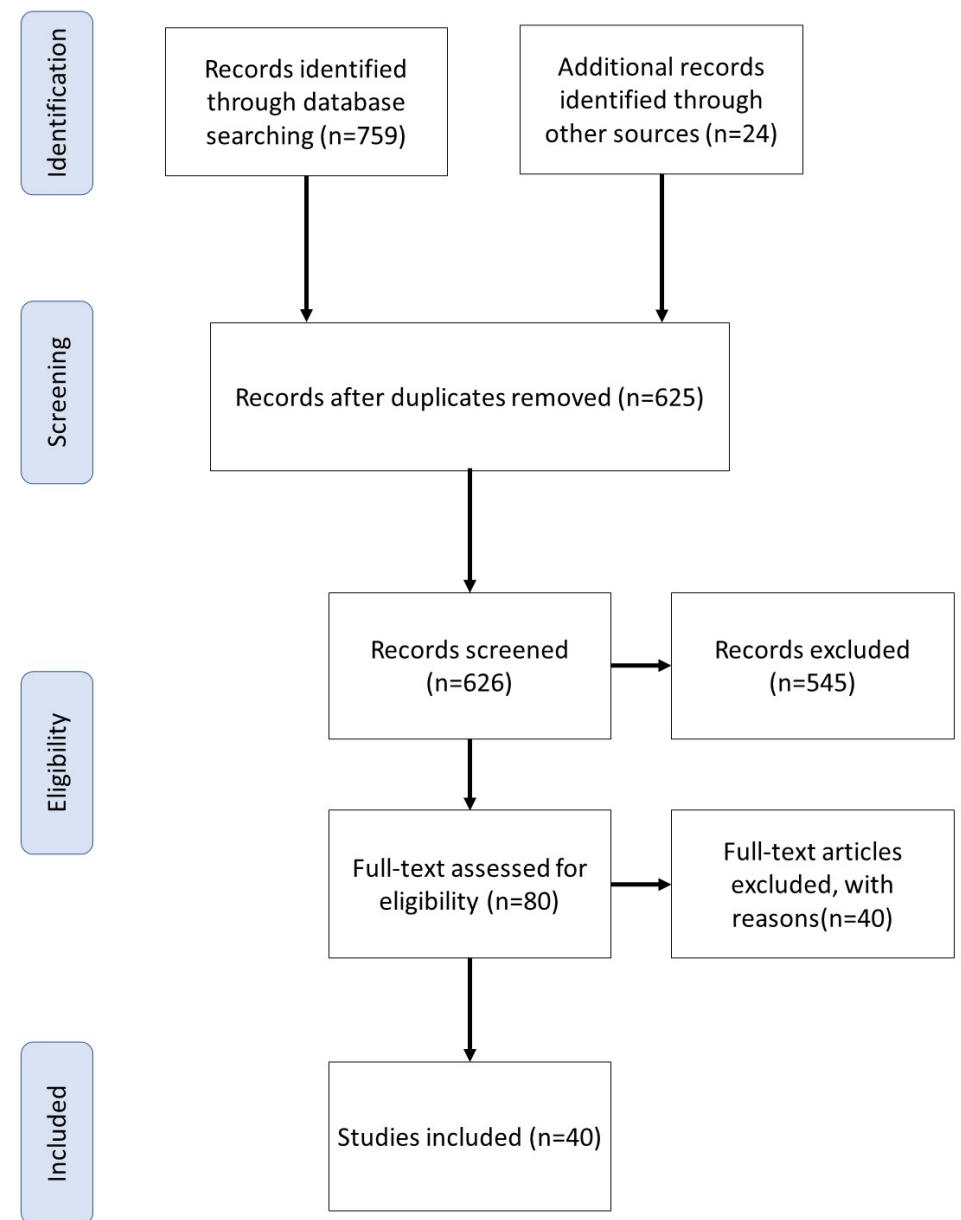


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# Methods

- **Aim:** to map the available evidence on the impact of COVID-19 on unpaid carers (aged 18+) of adults with LTC needs
- **Sources:**
  - Scientific databases (CINAHL, Medline, Socindex and Embase for narrative for selecting these databases)
  - Google search engine for grey literature
  - LTCcovid.org
- **Search terms:** (Family OR Informal OR unpaid) AND (carer OR caregiver) AND (COVID-19 OR coronavirus OR 2019-ncov) for CINAHL, Medline and SocIndex, (Family OR Informal OR unpaid) AND (carer OR caregiver) AND (COVID-19) for Embases and caregiver covid, informal carer covid, carer AND covid, unpaid AND COVID for medRxiv



Adapted from: Moher D, Liberati A, Tetzlaff J, Altman DG, The PRISMA Group (2009). Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses: The PRISMA Statement. PLoS Med 6(7): e1000097. And Peters, M., Godfrey, C., Khalil, H & Mcinerney, P. (2017) 2017 Guidance for the Conduct of JBI Scoping Reviews.

# Results

	Type of study			Sector		
	Quantitative	Qualitative	Mixed Methods	Academic	Voluntary	Other
<b>Argentina</b>	2			2		
<b>Australia</b>		1			1	
<b>Canada</b>		1	1	2		
<b>Germany</b>	2			2		
<b>India</b>		1		1		
<b>Italy</b>	1			1		
<b>Japan</b>			1	1		
<b>Taiwan</b>	1			1		
<b>UK</b>	9	4	2	11	4	
<b>USA</b>	12	1	1	5	8	1
<b>Total</b>	27	8	5	26	13	1



# Themes identified

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## 1. Changes in care responsibilities

- More new carers (mostly women, younger & childcare responsibility)
- Most carers increased care commitment
- Some provide less care (distancing guidelines/ travel restrictions)

## 2. Concern around COVID-19

- Concerns about catching COVID-19
- What happens if carer unable to care
- (early pandemic) difficulty accessing resources
- Government guidelines that can be adhered to
- How to maintain the care situation during winter
- Carers of people with dementia: faster decline of cognitive abilities



# Themes identified

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## **3. Changes in availability of formal and informal support**

- Unavailability of home care
- Concerns what will happen in future
- Many people continue to receive unpaid support, for others practical support stopped (government guidelines, fear of infection)
- Reduced availability and delay in access to medical care

## **4. Financial implications**

- Reduced community service – challenges for working carers
- Financial implications observed in system where there is less social protection



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# Themes identified

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## **5. Impact on carer health and wellbeing**

- Some reported positive experiences
- Increased burden, stress and other stress related symptoms
- Social isolation & loneliness
- Worsened mental health, mental well-being and physical health

## **6. Carers adaptability**

- Drawing strength from informal support network
- Emphasising making time for themselves
- Prioritising self-care



# Themes identified

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## **7. Experience of carers supporting people living in residential care settings**

- Feelings of stress, anger, guilt over inability to visit
- Reliant on staff for updates and to facilitate contact
- Difficulty assessing health and well-being of their relative
- Difficulty assessing quality of care relatives receive
- Concern about treatment if relatives not present to monitor
- Long-term implications of sustained isolations



# Measures to address the impact on carers and evidence on their impact

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## 1. Technology

- To maintain social contacts
- For peer support
- Contact with social services and care providers
- Delivery of medical care
- Ordering supplies

## 2. Financial assistance & support for working carers

- Paid leave/ furlough/ stimulus checks
- flexibility in using funds that are usually allocated for community-care



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# Thank you

Preprint of the paper available at:

[https://ltccovid.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Lorenz\\_Comas\\_COVID\\_impact\\_unpaidcarers\\_preprint.pdf](https://ltccovid.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Lorenz_Comas_COVID_impact_unpaidcarers_preprint.pdf)



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