

The impact of COVID-19 lockdown on Chinese care homes in New Zealand

Doris Zhang, BMedSc(Hons)

Supervisor: Dr Gary Cheung

Co-Supervisors: Dr Lillian Ng, Dr Sarah Cullum

Department of Psychological Medicine

Background and rationale

- Care home residents = vulnerable group
 - Comorbidities, cognitive impairment, physical impairment, loneliness etc. (1,2)
 - Higher risk of death, loneliness and cognitive decline due to COVID-19 (2,3)

(1) Broad JB, Wu Z, Bloomfield K, Hikaka J, Bramley D, Boyd M, et al. Health profile of residents of retirement villages in Auckland, New Zealand: findings from a cross-sectional survey with health assessment. BMJ open 2020 Sep 18,;10(9):e035876.

(2) Gordon AL, Goodman C, Achterberg W, Barker RO, Burns E, Hanratty B, et al. Commentary: COVID in care homes—challenges and dilemmas in healthcare delivery. Age and ageing 2020 Aug 24,;49(5):701-705.

(3) Thompson D, Barbu M, Beiu C, Popa LG, Mihai MM, Berteanu M, et al. The Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Long-Term Care Facilities Worldwide: An Overview on International Issues. BioMed research international 2020 Nov 11,;2020:8870249.

Background and rationale (cont.)

- Chinese residents face additional barriers
 - Language and culture differences (4)
 - An increase in COVID-related Asian hate crime (5)
- Lack of Chinese voices in NZ qualitative literature despite a growing population (4)

(4) Statistics New Zealand. 2018 Census ethnic group summaries | Stats NZ. 2018; . Accessed March 15, 2021.

(5) Nielsen. *Te Kaikiri me te Whakatoihara i Aotearoa i te Urutā COVID-19: He Aro Ki Ngā Hapori Haina, Āhia Hoki. Racism and Xenophobia Experiences in Aotearoa New Zealand during COVID-19: A Focus on Chinese and Asian Communities*. New Zealand Human Rights Commission (HRC) 2021.

Aim: To explore the experiences of Chinese care home residents in New Zealand during the COVID-19 lockdowns.

Study setting: Auckland, New Zealand



Methods

Care Home A: 29 bed dementia care unit, majority non-Chinese residents

Care Home B: 18 bed rest home + 40 bed hospital level care home, majority Chinese residents

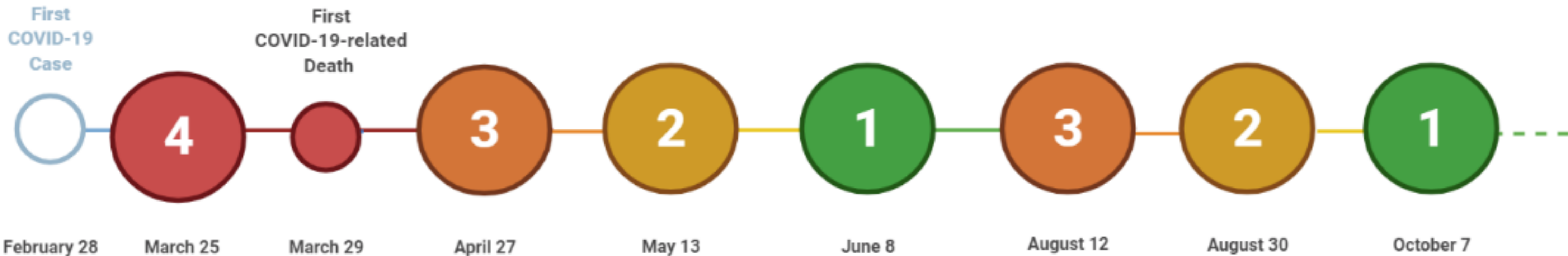
- Face-to-face, semi structured in-depth interviews with Chinese residents (n=6), family members (n=6) and staff (n=6)
- Either English or Mandarin Chinese
- Interviews recorded, transcribed and coded
- Thematic analysis was performed



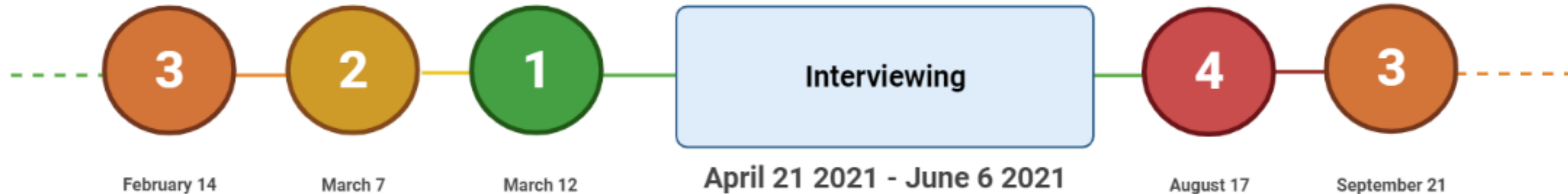
A Brief Timeline of COVID-19 Alert Levels in Auckland, New Zealand

February 2020 to November 2021

2020



2021



Participant demographics

- Diverse group of participants
 - Resident ages ranged from 66 years to 91 years old
 - Length of time spent in the care home ranged from 1 to 6 years
 - Time in NZ ranged from 1 to 26 years
- Most interviews were conducted in Mandarin Chinese
- Most participants were from Mainland China
- Most participants were from **Care Home B**

Themes

1. Lockdowns as seen through a Chinese lens
2. Specific needs and considerations for Chinese care home residents during lockdown
3. Navigating technology during COVID-19 as a Chinese care home resident



Theme one: Lockdowns as seen through a Chinese lens



→ A) Sub-theme one: Challenges to the fulfilment of filial duties



→ B) Sub-theme two: Acceptance of the inevitable

→ C) Sub-theme three: Not wishing to be a burden

Theme two: Specific needs and considerations for Chinese care home residents during lockdowns

→ A) Sub-theme one: The complex needs of Chinese care home residents

→ B) Sub-theme two: Lockdown as a significant life event

→ C) Sub-theme three: The Chinese care home community as a safe haven or prison

→ D) Sub-theme four: Emergence from the bubble



Theme three: Navigating technology during COVID-19 as a Chinese care home resident



→ A) Sub-theme one: WeChat and the fostering of an online care home community

→ B) Sub-theme two: Benefits and barriers to technology use

A brief overview of Confucian philosophy

Social harmony is key to achieving
peace in society
Hierarchy and duty



(6) Ng RM. The influence of Confucianism on Chinese conceptions of power, authority, and the rule of law. Chinese perspectives in rhetoric and communication. 2000;1:45.

Confucian philosophy: Filial piety (孝; xiào)

- . Expectation for child to pay respects to parents once they are older (7,8)
- . Agrarian roots of Chinese society
- . Reciprocation for sacrifices made by parents

(7) Smith CS, Hung LC. The influence of eastern philosophy on elder care by Chinese Americans: attitudes toward long-term care. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*. 2012 Jan;23(1):100-5.

(8) Yang Q. The aging of China's population: perspectives and implications. *Asia-pacific population journal*. 1988 Sep 13;3(1):55-74.

1. Lockdowns as seen through a Chinese lens

Subtheme one: Challenges to the fulfilment of filial duties

“I understand, I really do. I can’t blame my children, can’t blame them for not fulfilling their filial obligations. Though it’s true that in Chinese culture, it’s an expectation.” – R3

“In the latter half of lockdown, some family members would leave food at the entrance every day. Staff would go pick it up, and when the residents ate those homemade meals, their appetite improved – S6

Discussion: Challenges to the fulfilment of filial piety

- . Influence of culture on the lockdown experience
 - . Lower receipt of filial piety associated with suicidal ideation in elderly (9)
- . Filial piety is evolving
 - . Different socio-political contexts (10,11)
 - . More towards acts of affection than e.g. financial support (10)

(9) Simon MA, Chen R, Chang ES, Dong X. The association between filial piety and suicidal ideation: findings from a community-dwelling Chinese aging population. *Journals of Gerontology Series A: Biomedical Sciences and Medical Sciences*. 2014 Nov 1;69(Suppl_2):S90-7.

(10) Li WW. Filial piety, parental piety and community piety: changing cultural practices of elder support among Chinese migrant families in New Zealand. *OMNES: The Journal of Multicultural Society*. 2011 Jun;2(1):1-30.

(11) Yeung P, Allen J. Health, quality of life and service needs among older Chinese immigrants in New Zealand.

1. Lockdowns as seen through a Chinese lens

Subtheme two: Acceptance of the inevitable

“The emotional impact of things? What impact, just “任天由命” (rèn tiān yóu mìng), if you get infected then it can’t be helped, but if you don’t go out then you won’t get infected. So, I just don’t go anywhere.” – R3

“How should I say this, us Chinese usually “未雨绸缪” (wèi yǔ chóu móu). If we know there will be some challenge in the near future, then we’ll prepare and buy whatever we need beforehand.” – F6

Discussion: Acceptance of the inevitable

- Confucian values and resilience
 - “生死有命， 富贵由天” (*shēngsǐyǒumìng, fùguìyóutiān*) :
life and death are determined by fate, wealth and prosperity are determined by the heavens
- Distinctly Chinese attitude (12)

(12) Dong, X., Chang, E. S., Wong, E., Wong, B., Skarupski, K. A., & Simon, M. A. (2011). Assessing the Health Needs of Chinese Older Adults: Findings from a Community-Based Participatory Research Study in Chicago's Chinatown. *Journal of aging research*, 2010, 124246.
<https://doi.org/10.4061/2010/124246>

WeChat



3. Navigating technology during COVID-19 as a Chinese care home resident

Subtheme one: WeChat and the fostering of an online care home community

“They’re all in one group. WeChat is very good to connect all of them. And they are very free to ask questions there. If they have any concerns, they just put it there. It’s very open- it’s transparent.” – S2

“They updated the chat every time the situation changed, so everyone with a mobile phone can see what we should do.” – R2



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3. Navigating technology during COVID-19 as a Chinese care home resident

Subtheme one: WeChat and the fostering of an online care home community

“The care home is very good. They took photos of residents every day, them eating, doing activities, and posted it into the group chat so all the family can see. So, we were put at ease. We’ve been here for more than 2 years, so I understand them, we’re basically a big family.”

– F6

Discussion: WeChat and the fostering of an online care home community

- Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)
 - Enhances communication
 - Digital literacy may be protective against cognitive decline (13, 14)
- Need for extra support
 - E.g. cognitive impairment, physical impairment
 - Increased workload for staff → staff also need support (15)

(13) Jin Y, Jing M, Ma X. Effects of Digital Device Ownership on Cognitive Decline in a Middle-Aged and Elderly Population: Longitudinal Observational Study. *Journal of medical Internet research* 2019 Jul 29;;21(7):e14210.

(14) Xavier AJ, d'Orsi E, de Oliveira CM, Orrell M, Demakakos P, Biddulph JP, et al. English Longitudinal Study of Aging: Can Internet/E-mail Use Reduce Cognitive Decline? *The journals of gerontology. Series A, Biological sciences and medical sciences* 2014 Sep;69(9):1117-1121.

(15) Chu CH, Ronquillo C, Khan S, Hung L, Boscart V. Technology Recommendations to Support Person-Centered Care in Long-Term Care Homes during the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond. *Journal of Aging & Social Policy* 2021 -07-18:1.

Strengths

- Interviews were conducted in person and in the participant's preferred language
- Interviewer also transcribed, coded and analysed the data
- Triangulation of themes

Further studies

- Include more diverse demographic of Chinese New Zealanders
- Differentiate between pre-lockdown and post-lockdown experiences

? Second study after this Level 4 Lockdown...

Conclusion

- . Lockdown has presented many challenges
- . Also provides an opportunity to reflect and explore improvements that can be made
- . Stories as a symbol of hope and strength through adversity

“During lockdown [...] suddenly I felt much closer to the relatives of residents. I felt like we were a sort of family.” – S3

Acknowledgements

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- Dr Jacqueline Anne Robinson
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References

- (1) Broad JB, Wu Z, Bloomfield K, Hikaka J, Bramley D, Boyd M, et al. Health profile of residents of retirement villages in Auckland, New Zealand: findings from a cross-sectional survey with health assessment. *BMJ open* 2020 Sep 18;;10(9):e035876.
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- (7) Smith CS, Hung LC. The influence of eastern philosophy on elder care by Chinese Americans: attitudes toward long-term care. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing.* 2012 Jan;23(1):100-5.
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- (13) Jin Y, Jing M, Ma X. Effects of Digital Device Ownership on Cognitive Decline in a Middle-Aged and Elderly Population: Longitudinal Observational Study. *Journal of medical Internet research* 2019 Jul 29;;21(7):e14210.
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Graphic on 'Methods' slide: 'house with a tree' by Gan Khoon Lay from the Noun Project