

Partnership between academia and policymakers

Example of a COVID-19 preparedness study in Portuguese nursing homes during the initial phases of the pandemic and the projects that followed

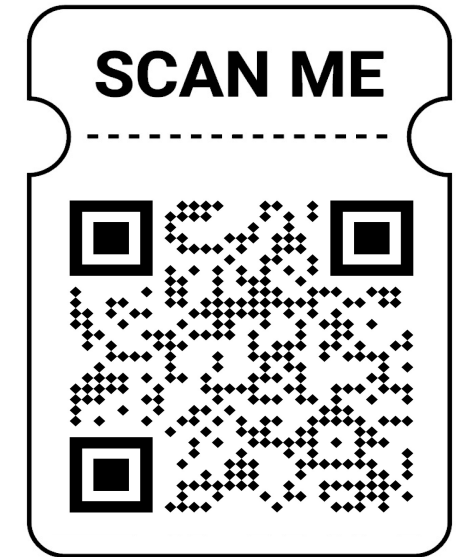
Tuesday 7 December 2021 | International workshop on COVID-19 and long-term care systems

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**COVID-19 preparedness
and safety culture in
nursing homes in
Southern Portugal
(March-July 2020)**



Aim & Objectives



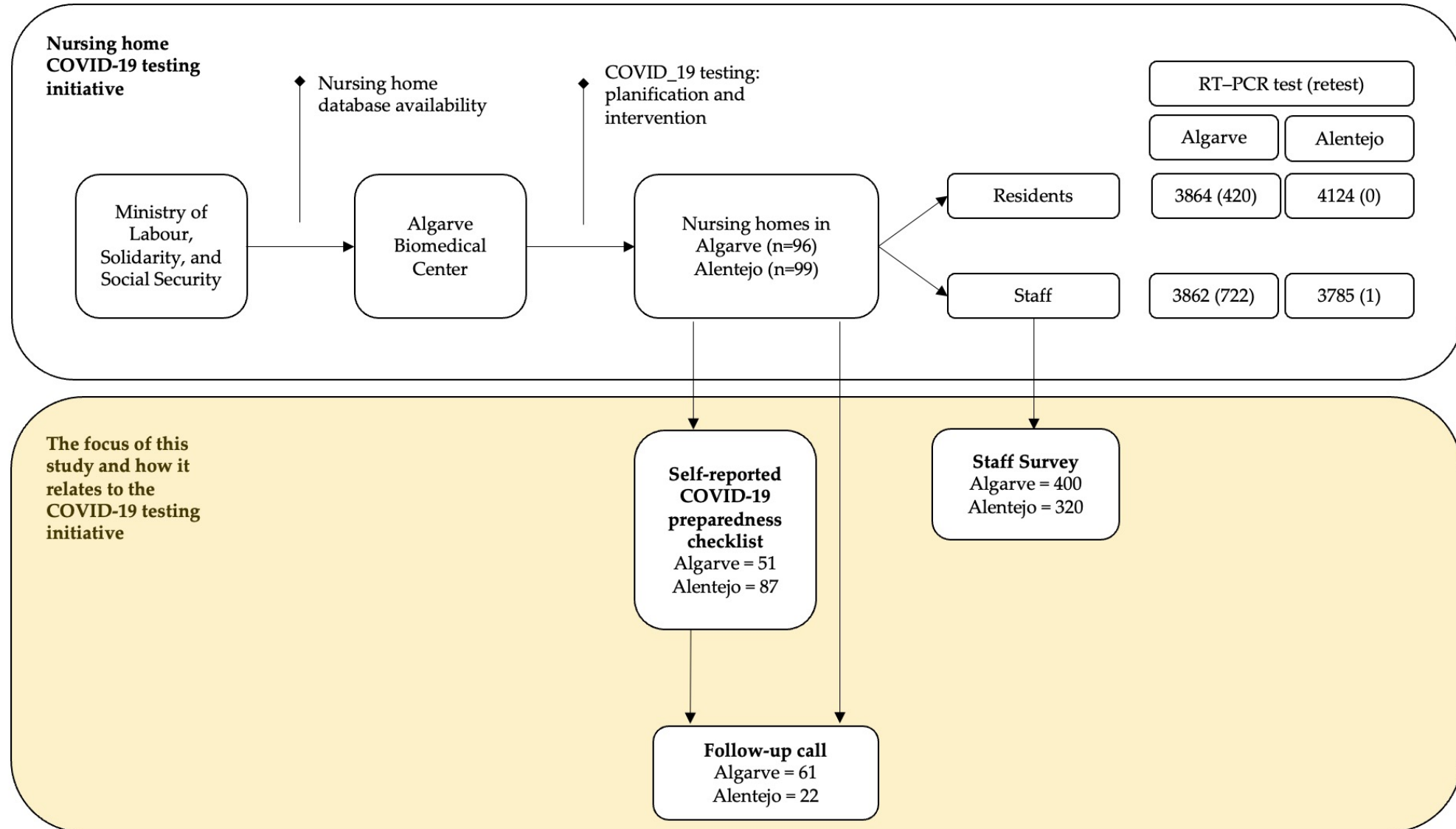
To assess the COVID-19 preparedness of nursing homes in Southern Portugal and explore its effects on nursing home staff safety culture and well-being in the early phases of the pandemic (March to July 2020).

To assess COVID-19 preparedness of nursing homes in 2 regions of Southern Portugal (Algarve and Alentejo) in the early phases of the pandemic.

To better understand safety concerns and well-being of nursing home staff .

To understand nursing home staff's work experiences during the pandemic, including resident safety culture.

Study design



Generalized COVID-19 unpreparedness across nursing homes

Table 1. Nursing home COVID-19 preparedness checklist compliance scores.

Item grouping	COVID-19 preparedness compliance (%) ^a		
	Algarve (n=51)	Alentejo (n=87)	Total (n=138)
Structure for planning and decision-making	65%	79%	74%
COVID-19 contingency plan	75%	87%	83%
Elements of a COVID-19 contingency plan			
General	66%	72%	70%
Outbreak capacity	35%	45%	41%
Communication	79%	76%	77%
Supplies and resources	68%	79%	75%
Education and training	44%	43%	43%
Occupational health	71%	75%	74%
Identification and management of ill residents	87%	81%	83%
Access control	83%	81%	82%

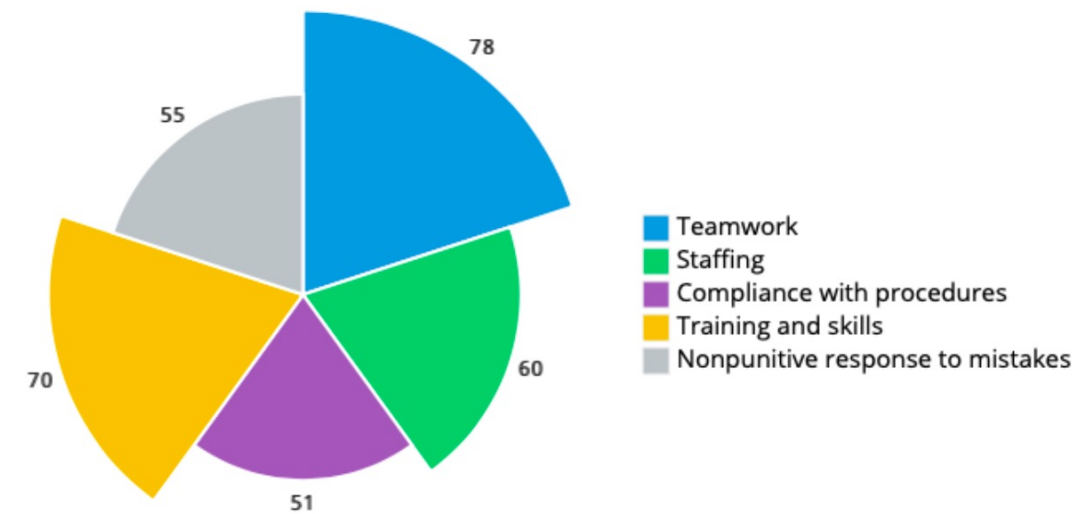
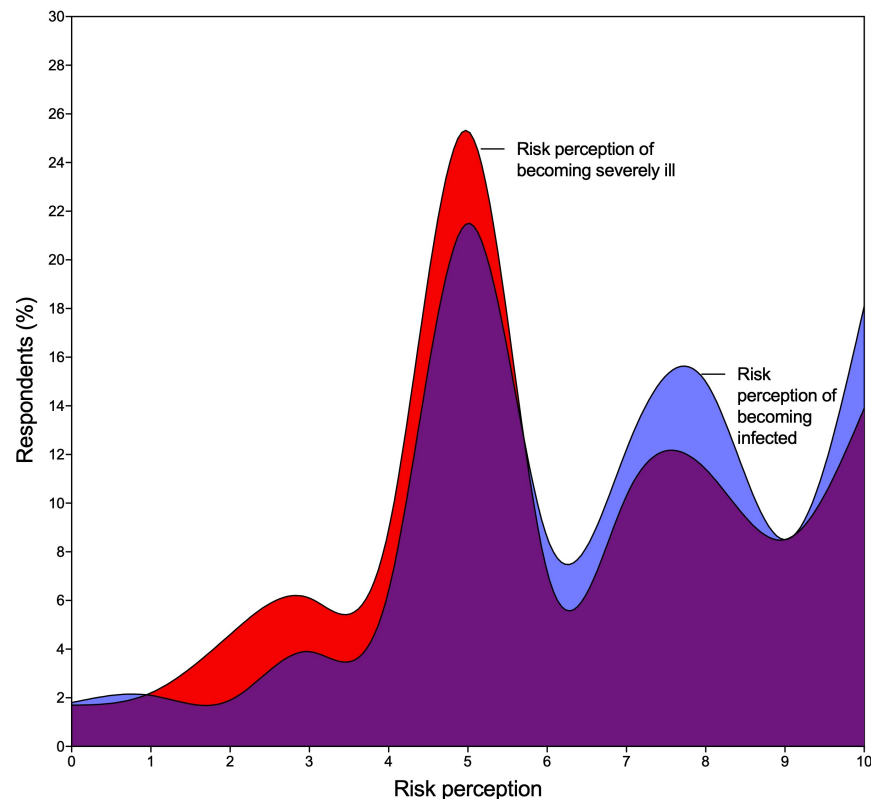
^a Scores were computed as the geometric mean of items fully implemented within each group.

Examples from nursing homes' contingency plans

Most frequently overlooked	Good practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor communication channels, both internal and external• Insufficient planning to overcome hindrances related to staff shortages, absenteeism, and infrastructure constraints• Misuse of personal protective equipment attributed to poor training and a generalized shortage of specific equipment (eg, gowns and FFP2 face masks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continuous revisions to the contingency plan to reflect up-to-date guidelines• Emergency protocol with the nearest primary health care centers for a quick response in case of an outbreak• Using social media to update families and carers on residents' well-being and explain safety measures

Regular testing was important, but **had little effect** on **controlling staff's anxiety** regarding their perception of becoming infected

Resident safety culture from the staff's perspective: **compliance with procedures** and **nonpunitive response to mistakes** were **signalled as needing improvement**





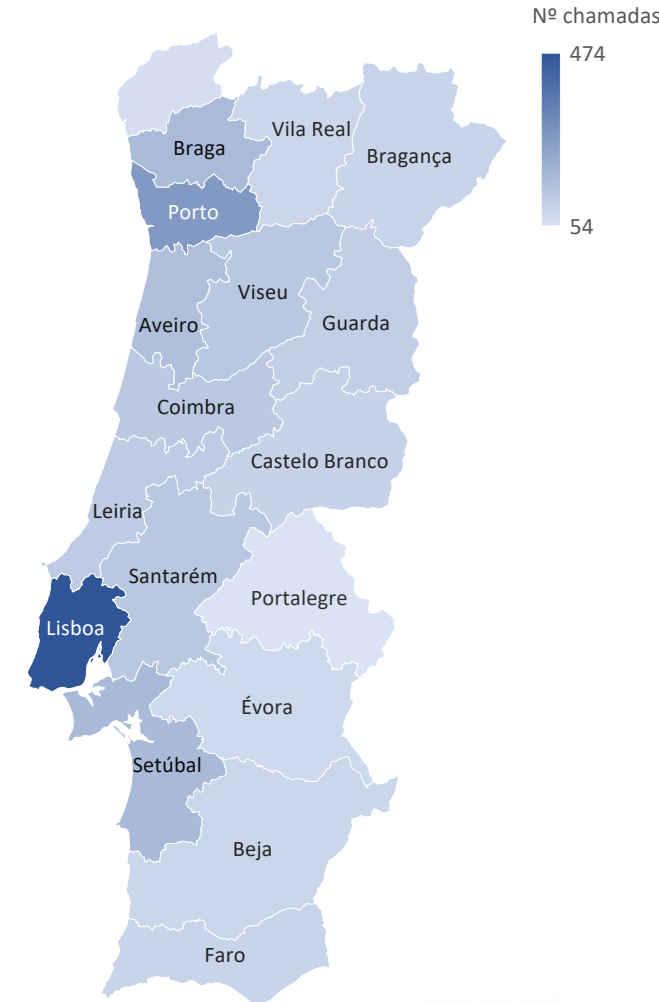
LINHA
COVID LARES

707 207 070

Apoio e Informação aos Lares
no Âmbito da Pandemia

From COVID-19 testing to a matured **evidence-based comprehensive nationwide partnership** with structures of the Ministry of Labour, Solidarity, and Social Security

Volume of incoming calls by regions



- Streamline the communication among competent authorities
- Identify NH needs (eg, PPE, training) and plan how to address these
- Support with understanding and implementing norms and procedures outlines by authorities
- Follow-up calls in case of outbreaks
- Updating NH database
- General check-in calls

≈ **3500** Incoming calls

≈ **17000** Outgoing calls

Since October 2020, a national support line is available 24/7 to nursing homes

Short-term capacity training for working in nursing homes during a pandemic

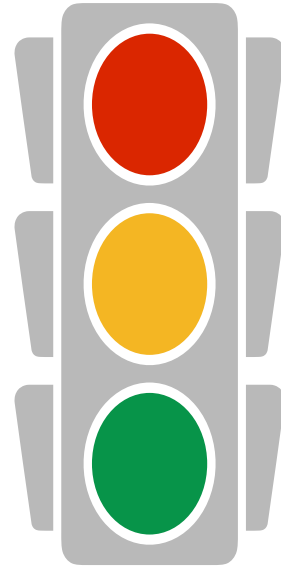
- Since December 2020, a 5-day training is available to foster nursing homes preparedness
- Partnership with the National Institute of Emergency funded by the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training
- Blended-learning, synchronous sessions with a doctor and presential training on PPE
- Topics cover background information on the virus, vaccines, PPE use, and address the questions of staff. Two practical training days focusing on the use of PPE and embed the use of checklist and peer support group in NH
- Maintenance of a YouTube channel available to NH and their staff

Increase outreach and partner up strategically to enhance impact





In July 2021, a free online platform was launched to **support monitoring of symptoms** and **early identification of respiratory infections** among residents in nursing homes



1
Requires urgent intervention

2
Requires active monitoring

3
Normal status

- Oxygen saturation
- Temperature
- Respiratory frequency
- Previous respiratory conditions and other symptoms

≈ **140**

NH using the platform on a daily basis

≈ **3000**

NH residents being monitored

> **2300**

Oximeters distributed among NH of the public social sector

> **65 000**

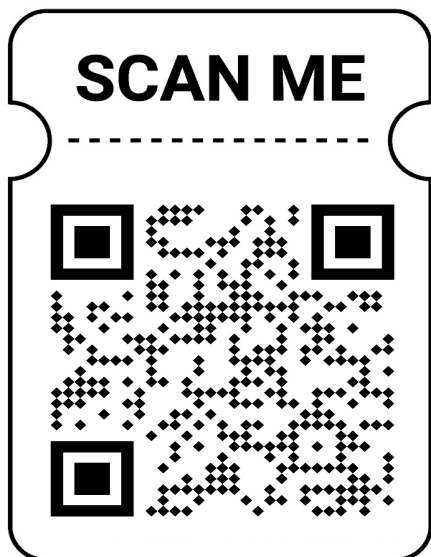
Clinical data from NH residents inserted in the platform



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<https://www.healthpros-h2020.eu/>



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