**Clinical Librarian Service Search Results**

**Request:** What literature is available on COVID-19 and palliative care?

Is there anything published in relation to lay carers managing frail older people dying at home, (e.g. non-pharmaceutical symptom management)?

**Summary**

A search of good quality resources has retrieved a very small body of literature addressing COVID-19 and palliative care.1-11 However, almost nothing specific has been retrieved on symptoms and management of patients who are dying at home with COVID-19. At present, it appears that clinical features and patient experiences literature has focused primarily on patients treated in hospitals or on the epidemiology and transmission of the virus, rather than on patients dying in their own home.

Perhaps the resources retrieved which are closest to the search question are:

* Guidance from the Northern Care Alliance / Association for Palliative Medicine of Great Britain and Ireland, (2020)1, which includes advice on non-drug measures for symptom management, such as for breathlessness, cough and fever.
* The resource collection made available on the website of the European Association for Palliative Care, (2020)2, which includes links to potentially useful documents.
* The brief article By Kunz and Minder, (2020)11, which comments on palliative care for elderly and frail patients at home and in nursing homes in Switzerland.

It may be that over the coming months more information will become available concerning the COVID-19 management of elderly, frail and palliative and supportive care patients within their own homes.

I hope that I have interpreted your request correctly. Please let me know if you would like me to search further.

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**Accessing Articles**

Links are provided where online access to the full-text is available. An OpenAthens username and password may be required for online access to articles. You can register for one here: <https://openathens.nice.org.uk/>

Unfortunately there may occasionally be some problems accessing the links provided. In this case the items can be accessed via the Library Journals link: <http://journals.nice.org.uk/>. [Log in to OpenAthens via the link in the top tight-hand corner].

If the full-text is not available, you can request an Inter-Library Loan freely and directly via our Inter-Library Loans system: CLIO. Register for CLIO (using your library membership number) at: [https://derbyill.cliohosting.co.uk](https://derbyill.cliohosting.co.uk/). Further information can be found at: <http://www.uhdblibrary.co.uk/ills>.

**Feedback**

Once you have read this report, I would appreciate it if you would complete our online literature search feedback form at:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/LiteratureSearchFeedback20192020/>

This relates to this specific search and will help us to monitor and improve our service.

Many Thanks.

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*With acknowledgement and thanks to N. Kenssous, (Clinical Outreach Librarian, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust), and Y. Hon, (Knowledge Resources Manager, The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust), for kind permission to adapt and re-use their search results on this topic made available via the Clinical Librarians’ mailing list.*

**Current at:** 25th March 2020.

**Time taken for search:** 4 hours.

**Please acknowledge this work in any resulting paper or presentation as:**

Evidence Search: LS399 COVID-19 and palliative care. Lisa Lawrence. (25/03/2020). Derby, UK: University Hospitals of Derby & Burton NHS Foundation Trust Library and Knowledge Service.

**Disclaimer:** Please note that the information supplied by the Library and Knowledge Service in response to a literature search is for information purposes only. Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that this information is accurate, up-to-date and complete. However, it is possible that it may not be representative of the whole body of evidence. No responsibility can be accepted by the Library for any action taken on the basis of this information.

Guidance or information relating to specific drug queries or procedures should be referred to Medicines Information on RDH ext. 85379 or Burton ext. 5168 or 5101.

Email: [UHDB.MedicinesInformation@nhs.net](mailto:UHDB.MedicinesInformation@nhs.net)

For local UHDB guidelines and policies please refer to the red button on the Trust intranet, or [**https://derby.koha-ptfs.co.uk/cgi-bin/koha/opac-main.pl**](https://derby.koha-ptfs.co.uk/cgi-bin/koha/opac-main.pl)

**Results**

1. **COVID-19 and Palliative, End of Life and Bereavement Care in Secondary Care. Role of the specialty and guidance to aid care.**

**Date:** 22 March 2020.

**NB:** Includes non-drug measures/advice for symptom management, such as for breathlessness, fever, cough.

**Extracts:** *“The sectors of the population most at risk at this time are those who are elderly, frail, have serious illness or co-morbidities and this is the population supported and managed by PEoLB [Palliative, end of life and bereavement care] professionals every day. In the context of COVID-19, its presence may exacerbate co-existing illness or lack of reserve and create a situation where the patient becomes sick enough that they might die and PEoLB skills of discussing and reviewing advance care plans, ensuring a comfortable and dignified death and supporting families and colleagues will be imperative. Where healthcare resources and facilities some under so much pressure that difficult decision-making is required, the management of those patients not expected to survive then such decision-making can be complex both to undertake, but also to communicate to patients and those close to them. Again, this is where PEoLB professionals can help support their colleagues in the processes of triage and planning, difficult conversations and coordinating care. Should travel or hospital visiting restrictions be put in place, conversations regarding decision-making, sharing clinical and prognostic information and supporting families may have to be carried out remotely. Again, this is an area where PEoLB professionals are already highly skilled and can be utilised effectively during the COVID-19 outbreak.*

*…*

*Timely honest conversations about the person’s preferences and priorities, including advance decisions to refuse treatment, is part of advance care planning for anybody who has a progressive life-limiting illness. In the context of people who have severe COVID-19 disease, honest conversations about goals of care and treatment escalation planning should be initiated as early as is practicable so that a personalised care and support plan can be developed and documented. This will need to be revisited and revised as the situation changes. Families and those close to the person should be involved in these discussions as far as possible and in line with the person’s wishes. This is standard good practice in palliative and end of life care. However, in the context of COVID-19, the person is likely to have become ill and deteriorated quite quickly so the opportunity for discussion and involving them in decision making may be limited or lost. Families and those close to them may be shocked by the suddenness of these developments and may themselves be ill and / or required to self-isolate. There may be multiple members of the family ill at the same time. But as far as possible it remains important to offer these conversations. Being kept honestly informed helps to reduce anxiety, even if the health care professionals do not have all the answers and even if the conversations need to be conducted behind PPE or, in the case of families who are self-isolating, by telephone or by using other technology solutions”.*

***S*ource:** Northern Care Alliance / Association for Palliative Medicine of Great Britain and Ireland.

**Full Text/URL:**

<https://apmonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID-19-and-Palliative-End-of-Life-and-Bereavement-Care-22-March-2020.pdf>

1. **Coronavirus and the palliative care response.**

**Date:** Undated, but on current website.

**Extract:** *“In unprecedented times, the EAPC knows that many of our members, supporters and colleagues are providing care in challenging circumstances. We would like to help in any way we can and have set up a web page for our members to source ad share important information and updates on caring for people with COVID-19. Please let us know if new or updated resources become available. Latest news and first hand information will continue to be shared on our EAPC Twitter, Facebook and the EAPC blog”.*

Includes links to:

* <https://eapcnet.wordpress.com/2020/03/22/from-the-front-line-palliative-care-in-bologna-during-the-covid-19-crisis/>
* Example documents and protocols:

 

**Source:** European Association for Palliative Care.

**Full Text/URL:** <https://www.eapcnet.eu/publications/coronavirus-and-the-palliative-care-response>

1. **Statement on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).**

**Date:** March 2020.

**Source:** Palliative Care Australia.

**Full Text/URL:**

<https://palliativecare.org.au/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2020/03/Palliative-Care-Australia-statement-FINAL.pdf>

1. **Palliative care and COVID-19.**

**Date:** 19 March 2020.

**Source:** Blog - University of Glasgow End of Life Studies Group.

**Full Text/URL:** <http://endoflifestudies.academicblogs.co.uk/palliative-care-and-covid-19/>

1. **The Role of Palliative Care in a COVID-19 Pandemic.**

**Date:** Undated, but on current site.

**Source:** Blog – Jennifer Moore Ballentine, Executive Director, California State University Shiley Institute for Palliative Care.

**Full Text/URL:** <https://csupalliativecare.org/palliative-care-and-covid-19/>

1. **Integrating palliative care and symptom relief into the response to humanitarian emergencies and crises.**

**Date:** 2018.

**Source:** World Health Organization.

**Full Text/URL:**

<https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/274565/9789241514460-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

1. **Coronavirus Guidance (COVID-19).**

**Date:** Undated, but on current website.

**Extract:** *“Hospice UK has brought together links to official guidance and resources to provide information for people about the current outbreak of Coronavirus in the UK. We also have links to statements given by hospices in response. This page will be updated regularly over the next few weeks”.*

**Source:** Hospice UK.

**Full Text/URL:**

<https://www.hospiceuk.org/what-we-offer/clinical-and-care-support/coronavirus-guidance>

1. **Specialty guides for patient management during the coronavirus pandemic: Clinical guide for the management of cancer patients during the coronavirus pandemic.**

**Date:** 17th March 2020, Version 1.

**Source:** NHS England.

**Full Text/URL:**

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/Specialty-guide_Cancer-and-coronavirus_17-March.pdf>

1. **COVID-19: decision making and palliative care.**

**Author(s):** Borasio GD, Gamondi C, Obrist M, Jox R, For The Covid Task Force of Palliative Ch.

**Citation:** Swiss Med Wkly. 2020;150:w20233. Published 2020 Mar 24.

**Source:** Google.

**Full Text/URL:** <https://doi.org/10.4414/smw.2020.20233>

1. **Response and role of palliative care during the COVID-19 pandemic: a national telephone survey of hospices in Italy.**

**Author(s):** Costantini, M., Sleeman, K. E., Peruselli, C., & Higginson, I. J.

**Citation:** medRxiv PREPRINT. 2020.

**Source:** medRxiv – Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory / BMJ / Yale University.

**Full Text/URL:**

<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/medrxiv/early/2020/03/20/2020.03.18.20038448.full.pdf>

1. **COVID-19 pandemic: palliative care for elderly and frail patients at home and in residential and nursing homes.**

**Author(s):** Kunz R, Minder M.

**Citation:** Swiss Med Wkly. 2020;150:w20235. Published 2020 Mar 24.

**Source:** Google.

**Full Text/URL:** <https://doi.org/10.4414/smw.2020.20235>

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**Databases searched:**

* + **Guidance:** NICE Guidance, selected International Guidelines.
  + **Healthcare Databases:** MEDLINE, EMBASE, PubMed.
  + **Other:** Google, Google Scholar, medRxiv, CLIN-LIB – Clinical Librarians mailing list.

**Local Guidance:** Local guidance has not been searched as part of this literature search. However, local guidelines, policies and procedures are available via the red button on the intranet.

**Search Terms:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Subject Headings*** | ***Free Text Words*** |
| Coronavirus Infections | 2019nCoV |
| Hospice and Palliative Care Nursing | Carer\* |
| Palliative Care | “corona virus” |
| Palliative Medicine | CoV2 |
|  | “CoV 2” |
|  | COVID-19 |
|  | “covid 19” |
|  | Family |
|  | nCoV |
|  | “Lay carers” |
|  | “novel CoV” |
|  | “novel coronavirus” |
|  | Palliative |
|  | SARS-CoV-2 |
|  | sarscov2 |
|  | Supportive |

**Search Limits:** English language, 2020.

**Search Date: 25/03/2020**

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