

COVID-19 and older people

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Acknowledgements:

Drawing heavily on this report:

Comas-Herrera A, Zalakaín J, Lemmon E, Henderson D, Litwin C, Hsu AT, Schmidt AE, Arling G and Fernández J-L (2020) *Mortality associated with COVID-19 in care homes: international evidence*. LTCcovid.org, International Long-Term Care Policy Network, CPEC-LSE, 14 October.

<https://ltccovid.org/2020/04/12/mortality-associated-with-covid-19-outbreaks-in-care-homes-early-international-evidence/>

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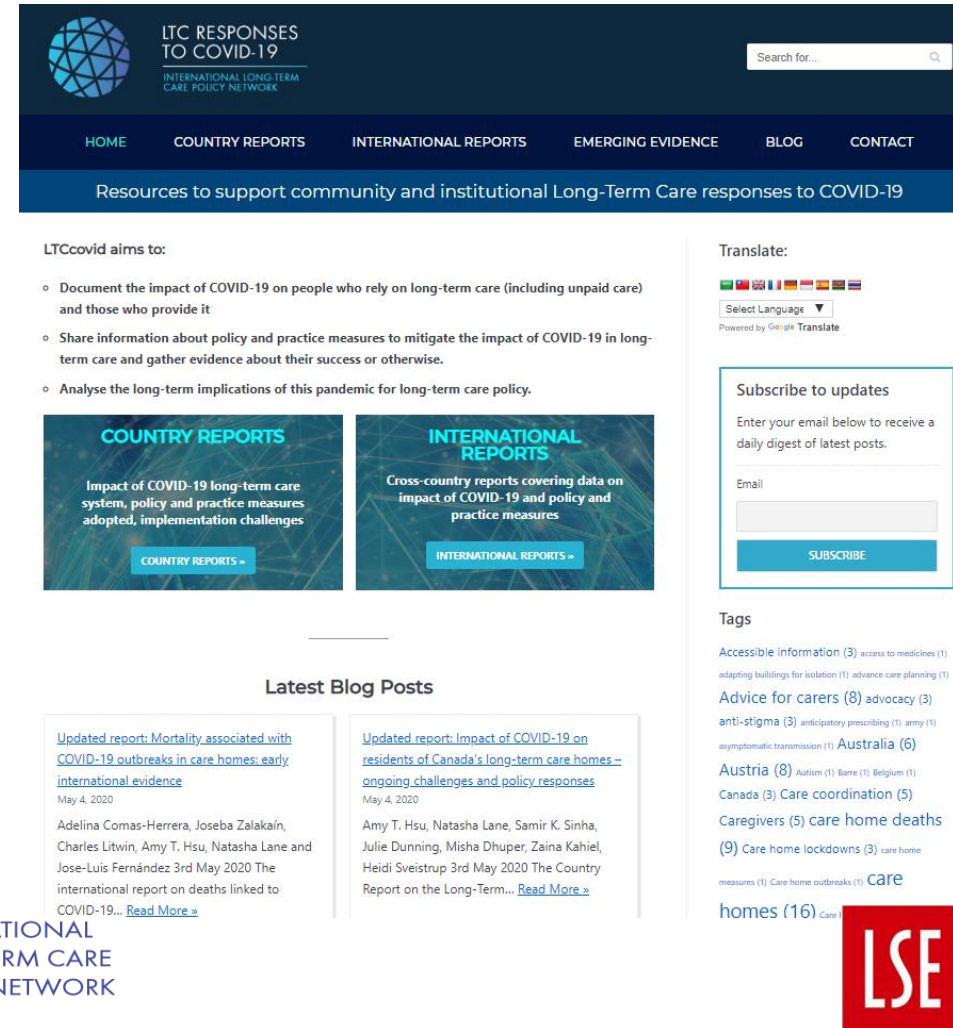
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LTCcovid.org: spontaneous international collaboration to share learning on COVID-19 & LTC

- Country reports
- International comparative reports:
 - Mortality in care homes
 - Visiting policies
 - Influence of sector of ownership
 - Community-based care
 - Unpaid carers
 - Impact on people with dementia
- Summaries of emerging evidence
- Collection of resources
- Directory of research projects (under development)

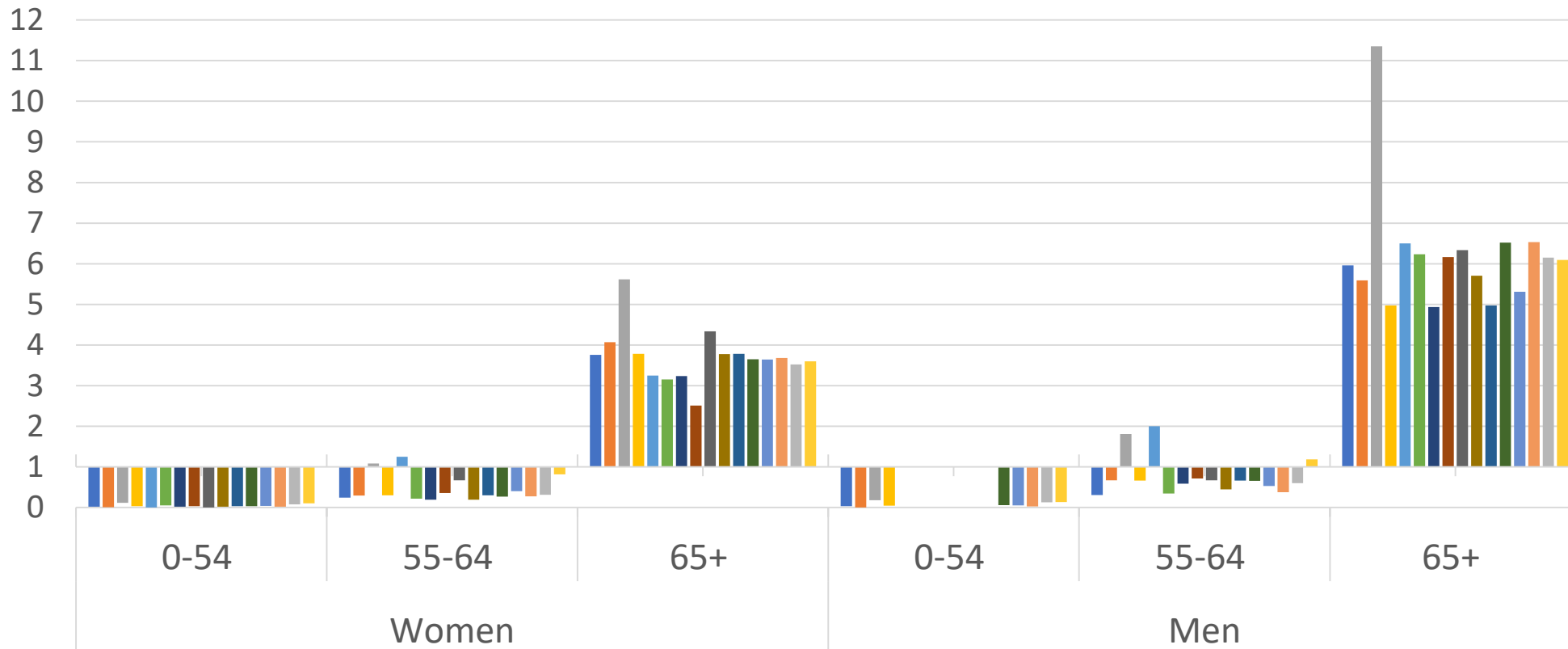
Contributors/volunteers welcome!



The screenshot shows the LTCcovid.org website. The header features the 'LTC RESPONSES TO COVID-19' logo and a search bar. The navigation menu includes 'HOME', 'COUNTRY REPORTS', 'INTERNATIONAL REPORTS', 'EMERGING EVIDENCE', 'BLOG', and 'CONTACT'. Below the menu, a banner states 'Resources to support community and institutional Long-Term Care responses to COVID-19'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column, titled 'LTCcovid aims to:', lists three bullet points: 'Document the impact of COVID-19 on people who rely on long-term care (including unpaid care) and those who provide it', 'Share information about policy and practice measures to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in long-term care and gather evidence about their success or otherwise.', and 'Analyse the long-term implications of this pandemic for long-term care policy.' Below this are two boxes: 'COUNTRY REPORTS' with the subtitle 'Impact of COVID-19 long-term care system, policy and practice measures adopted, implementation challenges' and a 'COUNTRY REPORTS »' button; and 'INTERNATIONAL REPORTS' with the subtitle 'Cross-country reports covering data on impact of COVID-19 and policy and practice measures' and an 'INTERNATIONAL REPORTS »' button. The right column features a 'Translate:' section with a language selector and a 'Subscribe to updates' form with an email input field and a 'SUBSCRIBE' button. Below these are 'Tags' and a 'Latest Blog Posts' section. The 'Latest Blog Posts' section contains two entries: 'Updated report: Mortality associated with COVID-19 outbreaks in care homes: early international evidence' dated May 4, 2020, and 'Updated report: Impact of COVID-19 on residents of Canada's long-term care homes - ongoing challenges and policy responses' dated May 4, 2020. The bottom right corner of the screenshot shows the LSE logo and the text 'THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE'.

COVID-19 & older people: increased probability of dying

Probability of dying with COVID-19 by age and gender, compared to the national death rate. Data from 16 countries, compiled by Yanez et al.

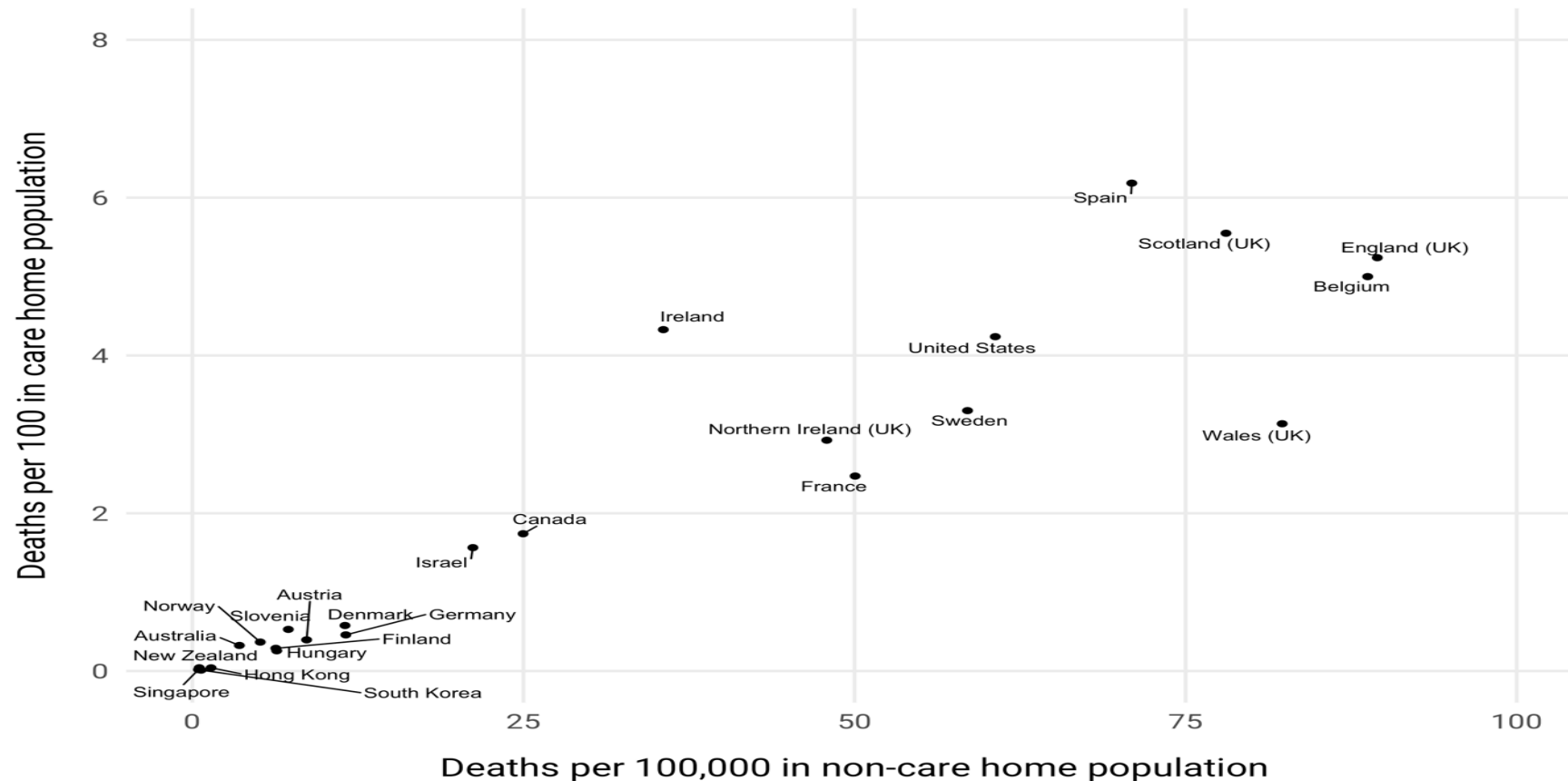


Calculated from: Yanez, N.D., Weiss, N.S., Romand, JA. *et al.* COVID-19 mortality risk for older men and women. *BMC Public Health* **20**, 1742 (2020).
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-09826-8>

COVID-19, older people and care facilities

- Data from 21 countries shows that **46% of COVID-19 deaths** were among care home residents
- Population in care homes represents 0.75% of all population in those countries
- Why has the impact been so large on the care home population? Some potential explanations:
 - High risk: combination of highly susceptible population with crowded living conditions and need for close contact care
 - Exacerbated by problems with policy response, particularly in first waves:
 - Late / insufficient access to testing and PPE
 - Late adaptation of guidance to recognize “geriatric COVID symptoms” and asymptomatic transmission
 - Reduced access to healthcare

High correlation between deaths as % of care home residents, and as share of community-based population



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Impacts on people relying on care living in the community: emerging evidence

- Decrease in use of formal care services (due to closure of services /fear/ need to quarantine)
- Informal and formal carers not recognized as key workers in initial part of the pandemic:
 - Having to break curfews to provide care
 - Lack of access to testing and PPE, lack of guidance
- Increased burden/stress and financial strain for unpaid carers
- Anecdotally: admissions to care homes due to less community-based care
- Large number of deaths in households: lack of access to palliative care?
- Large mortality impact on people living with dementia

What have we learnt?

WHO Policy Brief: Mitigating the impact of COVID-19 across long-term care services (July 2020)

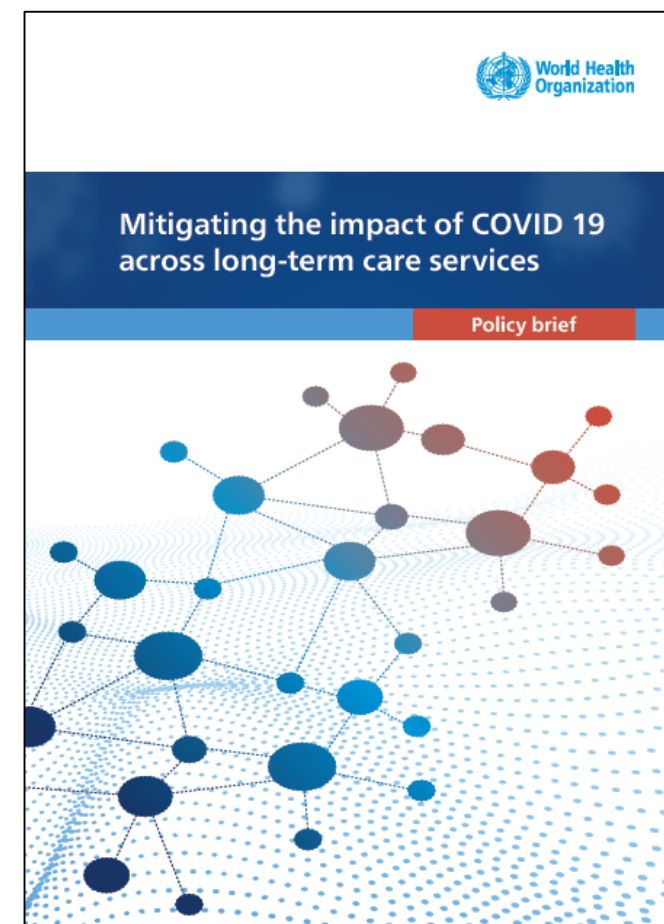
Targets:

- Policy makers and authorities in local, subnational, and national level

Structure:

- Eleven policy objectives
 - Challenges
 - Implications in the context of COVID-19
 - Key actions
 - Whole of sector
 - LTCFs
 - Community
 - Country examples

https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-Policy_Brief-Long-term_Care-2020.1



Some hope!

- Stronger policy awareness of the need to develop emergency responses that take account of older people and people with disabilities
- Some evidence of less mortality in care homes during the 2nd wave in some European countries
- A few countries (UK, US) have already announced that people living in care homes will be prioritized for the vaccines, as well as people aged 80 or more
- Stronger consensus on the need to modernize care systems that strengthen community-based care