



Poster # 16

Title of poster: Location of care impact on frail elderly and caregiver health outcomes: An umbrella review of systematic reviews

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Abstract

Background: Determining location of care is a difficult decision faced by many frail elderly persons. Moreover, it is challenging to establish the impact of location of care on frail elderly and caregivers' health.

Objective: To systematically review and critically appraise the evidence concerning health outcomes of location of care for elderly people and their caregivers.

Methods: We conducted an umbrella review of systematic reviews guided by the Cochrane Handbook. We searched the Cochrane Effective Practice and Organisation of Care Group (EPoC), the Cochrane Rehabilitation and Related Therapies Field Database, EMBASE, CINAHL, PsycINFO and MEDLINE. We determined eligible systematic reviews using the following PICO question: P: elderly people (65 and over) and/or their caregivers; I: location of their care; C; any comparison; and O: any health outcomes in clients and/or caregivers. Reviews in French, English, Spanish or Portuguese were eligible. Independent reviewers used the PICO question to screen citation eligibility in 5 stages: titles, abstracts, full texts, study quality (minimum score 5/11 on the AMSTAR quality measurement tool), and relevance to the review objectives. A third reviewer resolved discrepancies. We used descriptive analysis to synthesize the results.

Results: Of 988 titles screened, 21 full-texts were reviewed and four reviews were included. Systematic reviews were English publications from 2002 to 2010 conducted in Canada (n=1), United Kingdom (n=1), Belgium (n=1) and Sweden (n=1). One review was a Cochrane systematic review which did not comprise a meta-analysis. Two reviews comprised a meta-analysis. Sixty-seven studies were included across the four systematic reviews (range = 1-30). The locations of care included: home, community care program, and nursing home/institutional setting. Three studies examined the frail elderly and found no differences in health outcomes based on the elder's dwelling location. One study showed that caregivers of elderly with dementia were more likely to be depressed compared to caregivers of elderly with other chronic diseases. The risk of depression increased with burden of care. Study quality was moderate, with two studies scoring 5/11 and two scoring 7/11 on the AMSTAR quality measurement tool.

Conclusions: There is insufficient evidence to predict frail elderly health outcomes based on location of care. Therefore, the decision to stay at home or move to another location requires weighing personal importance of reasons for and against each option.

