

- There are discrepancies between the support children would like from professionals and
- The support they typically receive.

Recommendations highlighted by the review:

- Regular training for all hospice staff in relation to working with children – including recognition of how parental illness may affect children, the importance of communication, and children's understanding of death at different ages.
- Consideration of how children can be more routinely involved, for example inclusion in family meetings.
- Encouraging staff to explore patients' wishes and feelings in relation to their children.
- Consideration of whether the hospice environment is 'child-friendly'.
- Flexibility around working hours – children are often 'invisible' and visit parents in the evening and at weekends.
- Consideration of creative methods of including children, perhaps by using technology.

Hospices are encouraged to consider these recommendations and promote a model of family-centred care which includes children under 18.

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#### THE UNMET HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE NEEDS OF OLDER CAREGIVERS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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**Background** There has been rapid growth in older caregivers (OCs) age 65+ in the UK.<sup>1 2 3</sup> Playing a fundamental role in the life of their care-recipient,<sup>4 5</sup> helping to sustain preferred place of care, with many delivering over 50 hours of weekly care.<sup>6</sup> OCs may themselves have age and caring role associated health issues.<sup>7 8</sup> Spending cuts mean fewer now qualify for support.<sup>9</sup> Understanding the breadth and extent of OCs unmet needs can inform support to help OCs maintain their wellbeing and caring role.

**Aim** To identify and describe the unmet health and social care needs of caregivers aged 65+ in the UK.

**Methods** A systematic search was undertaken across a wide range of databases and grey literature from inception to February 2018. Two reviewers undertook study selection, data extraction and quality assessment. Qualitative Metasummary was used to synthesise findings.

**Results** In total 10 of 4407 identified records satisfied the inclusion criteria. Eight unmet need domains were identified, many were interrelated and displayed interplay: psychosocial, service, informational, constancy of care, future care planning, physical health issues, reluctance to utilise services, and financial needs.

**Conclusions** The review has identified eight domains of unmet need that may impact on OCs wellbeing and ability to care. OCs are a heterogeneous group with wide-ranging support needs, hence personalised carer's needs assessments are vital. Services need to be accessible, flexible and sufficiently available. Service information should be actively promoted. An extensive research gap on the unmet needs of OCs has been exposed.

Systematic Review Registration: CRD42018086759.

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#### EXPERIENCES OF SUPPORTING NUTRITION AND HYDRATION FOR SOMEONE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA AT THE END-OF-LIFE: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE

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**Background** People living with dementia often face eating and drinking difficulties as life is ending. Family and friends find this emotionally challenging and professionals also struggle to provide information and support. The aim of this systematic review was to 1) explore the views of people with dementia and those involved in supporting eating and drinking for someone with dementia (paid and unpaid carers) at the end of life; and 2) explore views and experiences of artificial nutrition and hydration (ANH) for people with dementia.

**Methods** A systematic search was conducted in Medline, CINAHL, Embase and PsycINFO, for English-language qualitative studies published between 2000 and 2019, and forward and backward citation tracking. Studies were synthesised using narrative synthesis and thematic analysis methods.

**Results** 18 papers were included with six focussing on carers' and 13 on professionals' views. Professionals and carers reported on challenges associated with supporting nutrition and hydration and several strategies used to facilitate oral intake (i.e., modifying the environment and food provision). When ANH was considered, six main factors were identified as influencing decisions: 1) personal perceptions; 2) national context; 3) understanding of the natural dying process; 4) involvement of different parties (i.e., professionals in multidisciplinary teams, carers and the person living with dementia); 5) lack of information; and 6) prognosis.

**Discussion** Decisions around eating and drinking and the introduction of ANH require clear and respectful communication among all involved (including those living with dementia), as their personal/professional experiences, perceptions and knowledge impact on their behaviours and emotions.