

The impact of social care on quality of life of older carers and the people they care for: a scoping review

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Background

- **Increasing number of carers aged over 65 years**
 - At least 20% of carers in the UK
- **Separate approaches to assess and address carers' and care-recipients' needs**
 - Not fully consider the complexity of caregiving relationships
 - Overlook interdependencies between carers and care-recipients
- **Specific needs of older carers**
 - More likely to be caring for someone co-resident with them (e.g. spouse/partner)
 - Less likely to recognize themselves as carers or seek support
 - Own health problems and/or social care needs
- **The impact of community-based social care services**
 - Aim to improve quality of life (QoL) and wellbeing
 - But *how* do services affect carers' QoL, individually or applying a 'dyadic' lens (i.e. carer and the person they support together)
- **The DYADic impact of Social care (DYADS) project**

Review questions

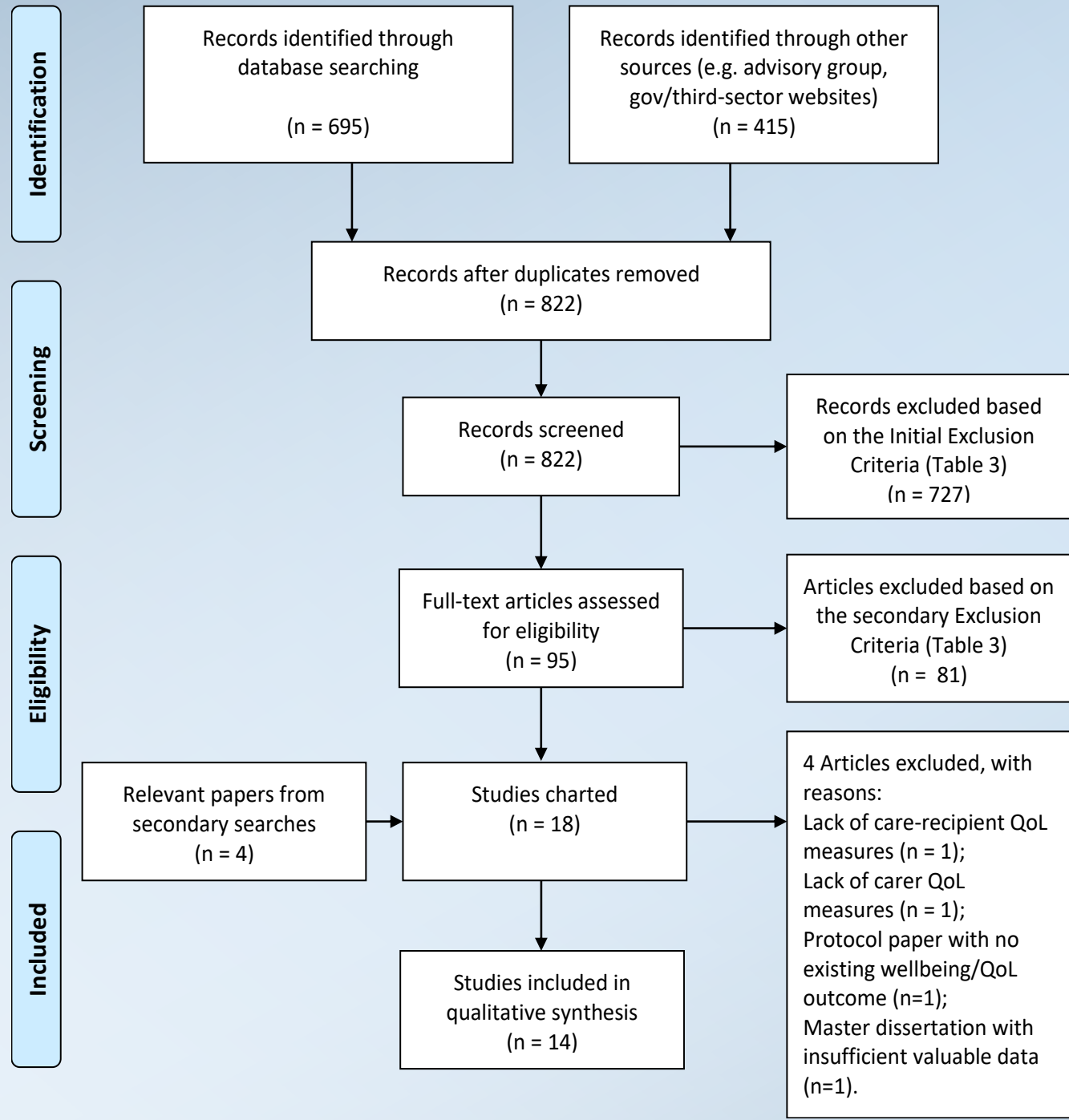
What is known about the quality of life (QoL) of older carers & people they support?

- How do older carers and care-recipients experience QoL from a dyadic perspective?
- How do community-based social care services affect QoL of older carers and care recipients?

Research process

Timeline: September 2020 to end of April 2021

- Stage 1: Identify and refine the research question
 - Refine and finalize - Advisory Group 1
- Stage 2: Search relevant articles
- Stage 3: Study selection
- Stage 4: Extract/chart the evidence
- Stage 5: Collate, summarize and report the results
 - Interpret and refine – Advisory Group 2



Basic study characteristics	Numbers of studies
Study context - country	
UK	6
US	3
China	1
International	4
Reference type	
Journal article	11
PhD thesis	1
Report	2
Study design	
Quantitative	5
Cross-sectional study	3
Secondary analysis of longitudinal study	1
Secondary analysis of combined samples from two studies in one region	1
Literature review	5
Qualitative	3
Mixed methods	1

Key findings

1. Dyadic analytical approach and relevant theories
2. Relational aspects of dyadic QoL
3. Informal and formal support that influence QoL

Theme 1. Dyadic analytical approach - 1

- **Consensus:** importance of applying a dyadic analytical approach in understanding QoL of carers and people they support.
- **Interdependence Models**
 - One person's characteristics influence on their own QoL (Actor effect)
 - Characteristics of someone close to the person impact on the other's QoL (Partner effect)
 - Mutual influence between QoL outcomes of the dyad
 - Contextual factors beyond the dyad

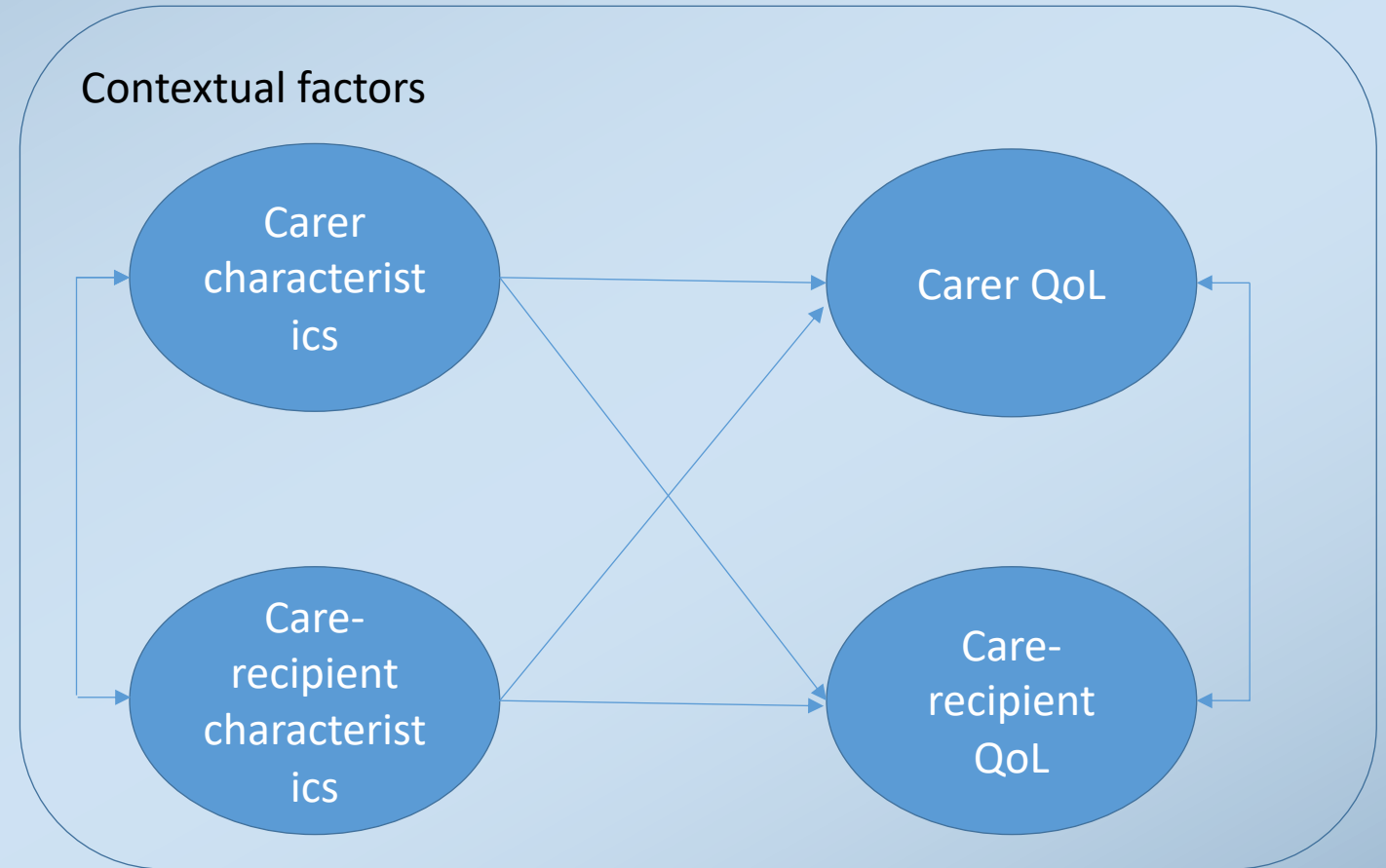


Figure 2. Actor-Partner Interdependence Model, adapted based on Rand et al., 2017

Theme 1. Dyadic analytical approach – 2

- **Relationship dynamics that influence dyadic QoL**
 - **Social Exchange Theory and Equity Theory** (Lyons et al., 2002; Hill, 2007; Braun et al., 2009; Henwood et al., 2018)
 - The moral norm of obligation and reciprocity explains the exchanges within caregiving relationships
 - equality in the relationship in the long run
 - **Power in Relationship and Dyadic Conflict/Incongruence** (Lyons et al., 2002; Hill, 2007; McIntyre and Reynolds, 2012; Moon et al., 2017)
 - **Stress, Coping and Adaptability** (Braun et al., 2009)
 - dynamic coping process around dyadic stress, coping and adaptability to changing circumstances
- **Ageing process** (Hill, 2007; Henwood, et al., 2018; Forrester-Jones, 2019)
 - Struggles for older caring dyads (Henwood, et al., 2018; Forrester-Jones, 2019)
 - Continuity Theory, Disengagement Theory and Activity Theory (Hill, 2007)

Theme 2. Relational aspects of dyadic QoL

- **Relational nature of caring & effect on dyadic outcomes**
 - Caregiving impacts on care-recipients' QoL and how they perceive self & identity, but also influences carers' health, wellbeing & personhood
 - Caring relationship vs. previous relationship
 - Changing family dynamics & re-orientation of relationships
- **Mutual interdependence of QoL within the caregiving dyad**
 - Influences on QoL at individual level, as **actor effects** (effect on own QoL) or **partner effects** (effect on dyad partner's QoL)
 - Influences on QoL at the dyadic level (**'mutual interdependence'**) - influenced through the caregiving relationship

Theme 3. Informal and formal support that influence QoL of the dyad – 1

- **Support from formal services**

- Various types of services impact at both dyadic and individual levels (Lyon, et al., 2002; Hill, 2007; Larkin, et al., 2017; Henwood et al., 2018; Bielsten and Hellstron 2019a; Bielsten and Hellstron, 2019b; Forrester-Jones, 2019)
 - e.g. services with positive impacts on dyadic QoL: carer support groups, telephone counselling, educational programmes, art therapy, meditation-based interventions, computer-mediated interventions, cognitive reframing, couple-based interventions and psychosocial interventions (Larkin et al., 2019)
- Impacts of formal services at both dyadic and individual levels
 - Joint dyadic interventions (e.g. couple counselling, music therapy) & individual services (e.g. respite care)
- Dyadic approach being recognised by care providers and practitioners (Hill, 2007; Larkin, et al., 2019)

Theme 3. Informal and formal support that influence QoL of the dyad - 2

- **Informal support from family and friends** (Hill, 2007; Forrester-Jones, 2019; Larkin, et al., 2019)
 - Within families - a key source of informal care
 - From friends and neighbours – supplementary source of practical assistance
- **Networks of wider community or informal support**
 - Diverse sources of support complement and supplement between each other, instead of serving as a substitute for one another
 - The style of the service and a combination of elements of services that provide valued support for the caring dyad (Henwood et al., 2018)
 - Irrespective of informal or formal support, older couples constructed support as helping them, as individuals and as a dyad, to manage care demands, fulfil caring responsibilities, keep social activities and boost their self-esteem (Hill, 2007)

Key messages

- A deficit in the evidence base on dyadic QoL of older carers and the people they care for.
- The vital contribution of community-based social care services to older carers and people they care for, as well as how formal and informal support complement each other and how these could influence both individual and dyadic QoL of caregiving dyads.
- The needs of a dyadic approach in social care practice, policy and research.

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Thank you!

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