

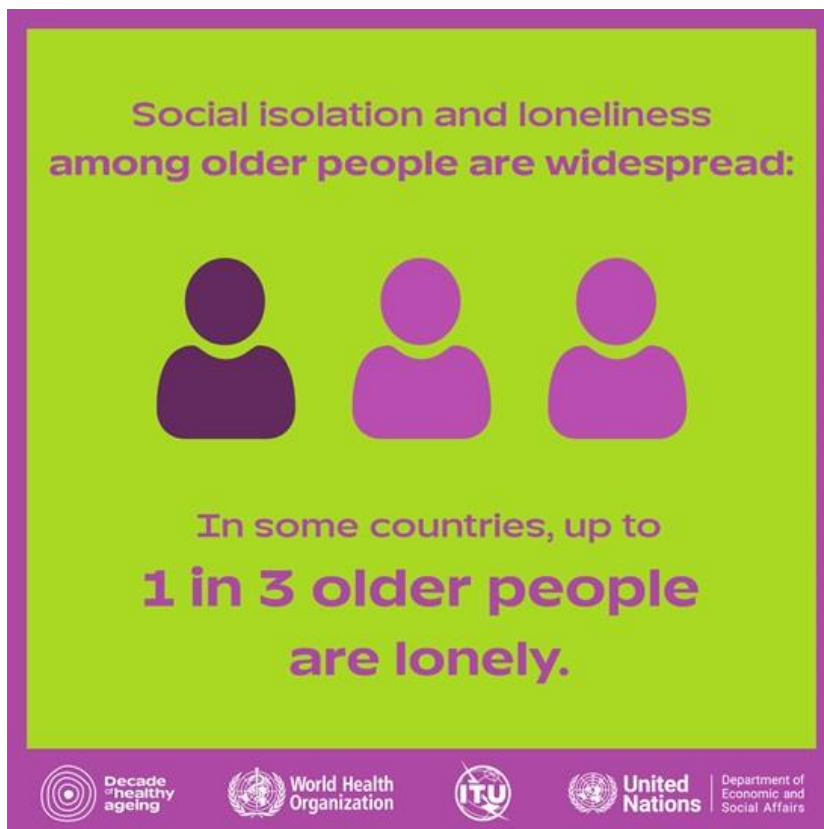
Living with Care: The Older Person

Impact of Loneliness and social isolation on the elderly population

Module code: BMHP6009

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Introduction:

In this written academic report I am going to discuss critically the impact of loneliness and social isolation on the elderly population. To give more understanding I am going also to define the concept of an elderly person in the UK compared to Portugal, concerning the policies I will be implementing actual policy in the UK and the delivery of care for older people compared with Portugal.

In the Development of the report I am going to define changes that could be made to the programmes based on the problem of loneliness including the elderly in Portugal and UK, I am going to use technology for the provision of care and lonely older persons.

In summary recommendations is going to be applied for enhancement

According to (AgeUk,2023) evidence of research demonstrates that people in the UK are often solitary around 1.4 million older people in the UK, they work to fight loneliness through campaigns, influence, and service requirement.

There is a difference between loneliness and social isolation, the word isolated means people who are alone however they do not feel lonely. On the opposite loneliness means that people can still feel alone even with people around them, it is important to understand both concepts for the help of older people and the design of services.

1) What is it considered to be an elderly person in the UK and Portugal?

Elderly person in the UK

It is considered an Old person when someone is above the age of 65. Nevertheless, it is not simple to define a rigorous definition for the reason that people can biologically age at different levels, for example, a person that is 75 years old may be in good health than another 60 years old. (NHS.uk,n.d).

According to (MHA,2023) it is nicely understood that UK residents is ageing, extra people are living extended lives than before. There are currently more than 15.5 million people aged 60 or above, with 23% of the UK residents. The number of old people is also increasing. The largest rise in population is probable in the elder age groups, 2041 it is probable that there will be more than 3 million people with the age of 85 or more, which is more than twice the quantity that are currently.

Elderly persons in Portugal are defined as people of third age or pessoas idosas or exactly idosos. World Health Organization defines old people as over the age of 65 in countries that are developed. Portugal is one of the oldest countries in the U.E (Observador, 2023). Older people in Portugal, 40 % of them waste eight hour or more alone with the age over 65. The National Institute of Statistics explains that there are a higher percentage of women who spend a lot of hours alone, they are included on 321,000 senior people.

The main problems affecting Portugal are economic issues and loneliness. A variety of people do not have money to buy food which impact negatively on the absence of a healthy diet the reason is that not every person achieves retirement age with enough wages to guarantee all their essential needs. Older people have social state support from three principal types such as care at home, residential home and foster home

(Verba,2023)

2) Provide statistics on the ageing population and how these have changed in recent years.

Statistics in England

In 2021, people aged 65 were about 3.3 million people and more, were living lonely in England and Wales, the Older population was 30.1%. The ratio of older women living

alone decreased in 2021 with a percentage of (36.3%) compared to 2011 (39.2%). About men, the ratio improved slightly in 2021 (22.7%) the opposite in 2011 (21.8%).

Age group	Male	Female
65-69	19,8	24,3
70-74	20,1	29,5
75-79	21,5	37,2
80-84	25,4	47,8
85-89	32,3	56,5
90+	42,5	56,3

Figure 1: England and Wales Population aged 65 and over living alone, with the age groups and sex of five years in 2011

Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

The probability of older people groups living alone increased, with the number of older women living alone higher compared to older men.

Statistic in Portugal

Figure 2: Portugal's aging indicators from 1961 to 2017



(Reddit,2021)

The number of senior people 65 and above will rise since **2.2 to 3.0 million**. The ageing percentage in Portugal will practically dual, from 159 to 300 ageing people for all 100 early people, in 2080, as a conclusion of the reduction in the early residents and the growth in the older population. (Statistic Portugal,2020)

3) Discuss relevant theories of loneliness and isolation and explore the concepts associated with loneliness, alluded to in literature.

According to NHS, there are three types of Loneliness such as emotional loneliness, social loneliness, and existential loneliness.

Emotional loneliness is the absence of an emotional friendship with an important person, for example a close friend or partner.

Social loneliness is the absence of friends to go out with, or a person that divides the same interests or hobbies

Existential loneliness is the understanding that you are surrounded by different people in the same area but still feel lonely.

Isolation is the restriction of being alone even though don't make you feel happy (Cambridge University Press,2023)

Theories of loneliness and isolation

1 Psychodynamic Models

The author Zildberg (1938) published what is probably the first psychological analysis of loneliness. He differentiates being lonely from being lonesome, the word lonesome is considered as "normal" and transient state of mind because of losing someone in particular. Loneliness is an irresistible persistent experience, it is not significant what one does, loneliness is defined as "inner warm" that bites at the heart.

Zilborg explained that loneliness is based on basic traits of selfishness, megalomania, and aggression. The alone person keeps feelings of childhood and personal authority is self-centred and wants to hide before an audience to "show others up".

The author traced the basis of loneliness to the crib. The children learn the happiness of being loved and prized, and the disturbance of being small turns them into vulnerable creatures having to wait for others to satisfy their needs.

2. Roger's Phenomenological Perspective

Carl Rogers, who created client-centred therapy is the most noted proponent of a phenomenological perspective.

He demonstrates twice the problem of loneliness, and his analysis reflects his "self-theory" of personality. Rogers declares that people force an individual to act in confidential ways that are accepted socially.

This results in a diversity between one person's true inner self and the manifestation of the other self. It is related to people's roles, being insignificant to how right is made, results to blank existence. Loneliness according to Rogers happens when people have left their protection to connect with their inner selves, nevertheless await refusal from others.

The author explains that faith in their real selves is without love “Keep people locked in their loneliness”. Fear of refusal results in people continuing in their social appearance, maintaining a feeling blank. (Perlman and Anne Peplau, 1982)

3. Existential Approach

Existentialists obtain as their beginning view the “fact” that people are eventually lonely. There is no other person who can experience our feelings and thoughts, distinction is an important disorder of our presence. The people who agree with this point regularly concentrate on the question of how society can survive with their loneliness.

Moustakas was the chief speaker for this viewpoint. (1961,1972), he was the author of different books. Moustakas highlights the value of differentiating between anxiety, loneliness and true loneliness. Loneliness anxiety is considered a technique of protection machine that diverts populations from facing important life questions and that enhances them frequently to follow activities with others. True loneliness is the realism of being lonely and accepting life’s fundamental experiences.

4) Discuss the impact of loneliness and isolation on an older person living within a care setting.

In the UK Loneliness and isolation are severe and negatively impact, the physical and mental health of any person. A person who is alone can develop or become worse and socially isolated with depression, schizophrenia, and alternative mental health disorders. Old people who are fragile and living with long-term health problems are at specific damage of experiencing social isolation and loneliness if removed from community activities and social networks. However, the importance of significant social connection, a sense of intention and belonging for mental health is huge. (NIHR,2022)

Continuing social isolation and loneliness are dangerous to people’s health and a factor in early death. An Ireland academic study shows evidence that higher stages of social isolation and loneliness involving people aged 50 and above during the COVID-19 social limits result in a higher hazard of dying from any illness.

In Portugal, Generally, as people get old, they become powerless against loneliness, typically because chances to socially communicate and create relationships tend to reduce. Some factors help to that reduction: the withdrawal process, which declines the regular connection with employees; physical weakness, which reduces the number of social communications; and the sadness of the loss of family.

5) Critically identify recent legislation and policies that deal with or aim to raise awareness or reduce loneliness and isolation in the elderly population.

GOV.UK, (2023) The government in the UK is working on tackling loneliness they support older people to have an important social connection because it affects not only

job communication and larger community organizations but also individuals' physical and mental health.

There are principal aspects of the government's actual work on loneliness including,

The "Every Mind Matters Loneliness Campaign", seeks to lift awareness of loneliness so people know the problem and stigma is diminished, motivating people to communicate and perform on loneliness.

Tackling Loneliness Network is a society of high-profile charities, companies, and community figures, created by the government to support and link groups at risk of being alone. The members of this network have been confronted to progress advanced ideas and perform to attack loneliness; the Tackling Loneliness Action Plan was distributed for the obligations.

Care Act 2014 is a new law related to care and support for adults in England, the care act states rules and information about the law such as, what people must be capable of to get, what are the roles of councils, Guidance is information to say the Councils how to use the Care Act exactly. The council support the community in meeting several people's needs. (Department of Health,2014)

- Local authorities obtain services that prevent their care needs from turning more severe or pause the effect of their desires.
- To receive a good result of care and support people can obtain information and guidance from local authorities.
- They have a variety of great quality, suitable services to decide from and are organized in terms of receiving more control in the care and support. (Care Quality Commission,2023)

Portugal

In Portugal, the area of social unity, the area of collaboration between the National and the Private Social Solidarity Institutions (IPSS) is of central value in the execution of social defence procedures and facilities, in specific what worries the elderly and dependant people.

The National Strategy for Active and Healthy Ageing (ENEAS) was made in 2017. The ENEAS unites the situation in a usual of Action Rules and Procedures organised from four planned axes, based on the application of interventions in health, community, and other organisations, based on the inter-field and multitasking method, always considering the standards and principles that must leader the act.

law of September 6th number 100/2019, that accepts the Stage of Informal Caretaker that manages the rights and obligations of the caretaker, determining the relevant care procedures.

5) Critically analyse and differentiate local, national, and global delivery of services for the older person relating to recent initiatives and policy

UK

The National Service Framework for Older People is the principal vehicle for confirming that the desires of older people are at the centre of the reform programme for health and social services. This service is a 10-year plan of action connecting services to support independence and provide good health for older people, there are specific services for the main situation, and ensuring that all older people and their caretakers are always treated with respect, pride, and equality. (Department of Health,2001)

This reform plan will be conducted onward by:

- declaring values of care
- spreading access to services
- confirming honest money
- rising services which encourage independence.
- helping older people to stay healthy,
- Increasing more effective connections between health and social services and other services including housing, and colleagues in the voluntary and particular sectors.

In the UK the local and national governments help senior people to prepare for a healthier life, they provide advice and services such as healthy living guidance, various kinds of physical exercise, regular vaccinations that need to be made on time, screen testing, follow various kinds of activities to stop them from feeling lonely and isolated. (GOV.UK,2020)

Portugal

The Intergenerational Programme, created in 2012 by the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa (SCML), purpose to take precautionary action in contradiction of isolation situations and loneliness between elderly residents in Lisbon, in addition to help meet their desires and solve their difficulties. The “Live better” Project, which requests to design new social habits, increase skills and reform social and emotional networks by the involvement in sporting and cultural activities.

Since 2013 to 2015, consistent and free physical activity classes were made in the city’s gardens, motivating the elderly to leave their houses and take part in activities with extra people, resultant in a total of 23 219 memberships in physical exercise classes in the parks of Lisbon.

The “Calm days” Programme, an idea of the INATEL Foundation, which intends to provide the senior population with flexibility restrictions and the option of learning to experience new places and new people, by remaining in hotels for duration of 15 days or extra. From 2012, 1 561 people have taken a trip this route. (UNECE,2008)

6) Identify the prospective future of the care of the older person; Identify what changes could be made to the programmes aimed at tackling the problem of loneliness among the elderly and how technology could be applied in the provision of care facilities to lonely older persons



(WHO,2023)

A large variety of face-to-face or digital interventions have been improved to lower social isolation and loneliness for older people. These involve social skills teaching, community, and support groups, making friends with others, and cognitive behavioural therapy. The implementation of more age-friendly communities is helpful for a better future for older people, for example, developing access to transportation, information and communication technologies can also help minimize social isolation and loneliness. (Who,2023)

There are 8 areas of age-friendly communities to help older people age healthily at home and be involved completely in the community through local services including:

Outside spaces and Constructions, transportation, Accommodations, Social Involvement, Respect and Community Inclusion Work and Civic Commitment, interaction and Information, Communal and Health Services

Artificial intelligence (AI) technologies remain transforming several grounds including community health and medication for older people anywhere they can help anticipate, health hazards and actions, allow drug growth, provision the actualization of care control, and much more. (WHO,2022). The function of artificial intelligence is to send automatic alerts or social recommendations to the elderly person and/or their recognised caretakers, AI-founded controlling mechanisms can ease appropriate care and possibly anticipate more declines. Studies show that senior adults and their familiar caretakers experience an elevated perception of security and declined

individual stress when using programmed management techniques at home(Lukkien, Herman Nap, P Buimer, et al, 2021)

Technology can help older people remain connected to their loved ones and the real world while they are not allowed to have a visit from care home. This correlation and online communication with family make an important change and vastly affect a resident's mental health, decreasing social isolation and loneliness. (Care England, 2022).

7) Give recommendations

It is recommended by NICE (2025) the use of a variety of group-based activities including vocal music programmes, exercise strategy and multigenerational jobs such as helping older people with reading in schools for the improvement of loneliness and isolation.

Donations and face-to-face activities including home visiting or making friends with programmes are also recommended in the principle, termed "Older people: independence and mental wellbeing".

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS) work to address loneliness as an ending of council strategies.

- Work at the locality level, to know and form on existing community capability and resources.
- Acknowledge and answer to individual desires and conditions by equally making sure overall services are educated to meet the requests of those who are alone, also providing interferences as demanded.
- Combining reserves, and information over groups and improving new associations may improve the advantages for individuals who are difficult to pass or confined.

This evidence was shown by the Local Government Association,2016

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