



## BRIEFING PAPER

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# Loneliness: a reading list

By Philip Loft

### Contents:

1. Definitions, summaries and strategies
2. The impact of Coronavirus
3. The incidence of loneliness amongst different groups
4. Infrastructure and loneliness
5. Health and Loneliness
6. Interventions to tackle loneliness



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## Summary

Around 47% of adults in England experience loneliness occasionally or more often, according to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's (DCMS) [Community life survey 2019/20](#) (2020).

Office for National Statistics (ONS) [analysis](#) in 2016/17 suggests that people with a long-term disability, widowed homeowners, unmarried middle-agers and young renters, experience the greatest likelihood of feeling some degree of loneliness.

Some academic research has suggested that loneliness or social isolation is linked to poorer health outcomes, including early death, higher rates of depression and cognitive decline. Loneliness may lead to higher costs in the public and private sector due to greater service usage, absences and productivity losses. One 2017 report, by the [New Economics Foundation](#), estimated that loneliness costs UK employers £2.2-£3.7 billion per year.

This reading list is a companion to the Library's [Tackling loneliness](#) (CBP 8514) briefing, which sets out in greater detail the incidence and impact of loneliness and strategies adopted to tackle it across the UK.

Please note that the Library is not responsible for either the views or accuracy of external content.

Other loneliness resources include:

- Housing LIN, [Combating loneliness and reducing social isolation](#) (updated 2021)
- What Works Wellbeing, [Loneliness: resources](#) (updated 2020)
- Campaign to End Loneliness, [Loneliness: resources](#) (updated 2020)
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation, [Loneliness resource pack](#) (updated 2013)

# 1. Definitions, summaries and strategies

## 1.1 What is loneliness?

Age UK, [Loneliness and social isolation—understanding the difference and why it matters](#)

Age UK, [Loneliness among the UK population. How is loneliness measured across the countries of the UK?](#) (2020)

Cacioppo, Stephanie, et al., [Loneliness: clinical import and interventions](#), Perspectives on Psychological Science: A Journal of the Association for Psychological Science, 10 (2015), pp238-49

de Jong Gierveld, J. and van Tilburg, T., [6-item scale for overall, emotional, and social loneliness: Confirmatory tests on survey data research on ageing](#), Research on Aging, 28 (2006), pp582-98

de Jong Gierveld, Jenny, [A review of loneliness: Concept and definitions, determinants and consequences](#), Reviews in Clinical Gerontology (1998), pp73-80

Peplau, Letitia Anne and Perlman, Daniel, eds, Loneliness: A sourcebook of current theory, research and therapy (1982)

Peplau, Letitia Anne and Perlman, Daniel, [Toward a social psychology of loneliness](#), in Gilmour, R and Duck, S, eds, Personal relationships 3 (1981), pp32-56

Tzouvara, Vasiliki et al., [A narrative review of the theoretical foundations of loneliness](#), British Journal of Community Nursing, 20 (2015), pp329-33

## 1.2 Research summaries

### General: definitions, causes and impacts

Liverpool Public Health Observatory, [Rapid evidence review series: loneliness](#) (2014)

University of Reading, [Tackling loneliness and social isolation in Reading, England](#) (2019)

Kearns, A et. al., [Loneliness, social relations and health and wellbeing in deprived communities](#), Psychological Health Medicine, 20 (2015), pp332-44

Peplau, Letitia Anne & Perlman, Daniel, [Loneliness research: A survey of empirical findings](#) in National Institute of Mental Health, Preventing the harmful consequences of severe and persistent loneliness (1984), pp13-46

Prohaska, T. et al, [Consensus statement: Loneliness in older adults, the 21<sup>st</sup> century social determinant of health?](#), British Medical Journal, 10 (2020)

Yanguas et al., [The complexity of loneliness](#), Acta Biomed, 89 (2018), pp302-14

## What causes loneliness?

British Red Cross and Co-op Foundation, [Trapped in a bubble: An investigation into triggers for loneliness in the UK](#) (December 2016)

British Red Cross, [Isolation and Loneliness: An overview of the literature](#) (January 2016)

Solmi, M. et al, [Factors associated with loneliness: An umbrella review of observational studies](#), Journal of Affective Disorders, 271 (2020), pp131-8

## Who is lonely?

Campaign to End Loneliness, [Alone in the crowd: Loneliness and diversity](#) (2014)

Future Foundation/Friends of the Elderly, [The future of loneliness: Facing the challenge of loneliness for older people in the UK, 2014 to 2030](#) (2014)

Go Well, [Loneliness in Glasgow's deprived communities](#) (2015)

Mental Health Foundation, [The lonely society](#) (2010)

Lasgaard, M, Friis, K and Shevlin, Mark, ["Where are all the lonely people?" A population-based study of high-risk groups across the life span](#), Social Psychiatry, 51 (2016), pp1373-84

Macdonald, S, Nixon, J and Deacon, L, ["Loneliness in the city": Examining socio-economics, loneliness and poor health in the North East of England](#), Public Health, 165 (2018), pp88-94

Rokach, Ami, [Loneliness of the marginalized](#), Open Journal of Depression, 3 (2014), pp147-53

## Approaches to tackle loneliness

Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness, [Combatting loneliness one conversation at a time: A call to action](#) (December 2017)

## 1.3 Official strategies, reports and guidance

### England

Public Health England & UCL Institute of Health Equity, [Local action on health inequalities: Reducing social isolation across the life course](#) (2015)

Public Health England, [Recognising the impact of loneliness: A public health issue](#) (2017)

UK Government, [A connected society: A strategy for tackling loneliness](#) (October 2018)

### Wales

National Assembly for Wales, Health, Social Care and Sport Committee, [Inquiry into loneliness and isolation](#) (2017)

Welsh Government, [Loneliness and social isolation \(Connected communities\)](#) (February 2020)

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Welsh Government & Government Social Research, [Review of the impact of loneliness and social isolation on health and well-being and whether people who experience loneliness have higher use of public services](#) (October 2019)

### Scotland

NHS Scotland, [Social isolation and loneliness in Scotland: A review of prevalence and trends](#) (2018)

Scottish Government, [A connected society](#) (December 2018)

Scottish Parliament Equal Opportunities Committee, [Age and social isolation](#) (2015)

### Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Assembly Research and Information Service, [Loneliness: What is it and what can be done about it?](#) (April 2020)

### Local Government Association

Local Government Association, [Combating loneliness: A guide for local authorities](#) (2016)

Local Government Association, [Loneliness: How do you know your council is actively tackling loneliness?](#) (2018)

Local Government Association and National Association of Local Councils, [Reaching out: Guide to helping principal and local councils tackle loneliness](#) (2019)

## 1.4 How does the worldwide incidence of loneliness compare?

EU Commission, [Loneliness- An unequally shared burden in Europe](#) (December 2018)

Barreto et al, [Loneliness around the world: Age, gender, and cultural differences in loneliness](#), Personality and Individual Differences, 169 (2021)

Hansen, T. and Slagvold, B., [Late-life loneliness in 11 European countries: Results from the generations and gender survey](#), Social Indicators Research, 129 (2016), pp445-64

Ortiz-Ospina, E., [Is there a loneliness epidemic?](#), Our World in Data (December 2019)

Ortiz-Ospina, E and Roser, M, [Loneliness and social connections](#), Our world in Data (February 2020)

Vozikaki, M. et al., [Loneliness among older European adults: Results from the survey of health, aging and retirement in Europe](#), Journal of Public Health, 26 (2018), pp613-24

## 1.5 What might be the financial costs of loneliness?

Simetrica, [Loneliness monetisation report](#), August 2020

Mihalopoulos, Cathrine et al., [The economic costs of loneliness: A review of cost-of-illness and economic evaluation studies](#), Social Psychiatry Psychiatric Epidemiology (2019), pp1-14.

Homes for Later Living/WPI Strategy, [Healthier and happier: An analysis of the fiscal and wellbeing costs of building more homes for later living](#) (2019)

New Economics Foundation and the Co-operative Foundation, [Cost of loneliness to UK employers](#) (2017)

Social Finance, [Investing to tackle loneliness](#) (2015)

## 2. The impact of Coronavirus

### Academic Research

Economic and Social Research Council, Centre for Society and Mental Health and King's College London, [Impacts of social isolation among disadvantaged and vulnerable groups during public health crises](#) (2020)

UCL and What Works Well, [How has Covid-19 and associated lockdown measures affected loneliness in the UK?](#) (2020)

University of Stirling, [Covid-19 social distancing effects on social engagement, loneliness, wellbeing and physical activity in Scottish older adults](#), Written Evidence LOL0029 (December 2020)

Welcome Trust/University of Edinburgh, [Rural Covid Life Survey](#) (January 2021)

Welcome Trust/University of Edinburgh, [TeenCovidLife](#) (2020)

Welcome Trust/University of Edinburgh, [Covidlife](#) (2020)

Brooks, S. et al, [The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it: rapid review of the evidence](#), 395 (2020), pp912-20

Bu, F, Steptoe, A and Fancourt, D, [Who is lonely in lockdown? Cross-cohort analyses of predictors of loneliness before and during the COVID-19 pandemic](#), Public Health, 186 (2020), pp31-4

Bu, F. Steptoe, A and Fancourt, D, [Loneliness during strict lockdown: Trajectories and predictors during the COVID-19 pandemic in 38.217 UK adults](#), *Social Science and Medicine*, 265 (2020)

Chandola, T. et al, [The mental health impact of COVID-19 and lockdown related stressors among adults in the UK](#), *Psychological Medicine* (2020)

Groarke, J., [Loneliness in the UK during the COVID-19 pandemic: Cross-sectional results from the COVID-19 psychological wellbeing study](#), PLOS ONE (2020)

Holmes, E. et al, [Multidisciplinary research priorities for the COVID-19 pandemic: A call for action for mental health science](#), *Lancet Psychiatry*, 7 (2020), pp547-60

Loades, M.E., [Rapid systematic review: The impact of social isolation and loneliness on the mental health of children and adolescents in the context of COVID-19](#), *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 59 (2020), pp1218-39

Shah, S. et al, [The Covid-19 pandemic: A pandemic of lockdown loneliness and the role of digital technology](#), *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 22 (2020)

### Third-sector and official publications

Age UK, [Tackling Loneliness among older people this COVID winter](#) (November 2020)

All Party-Parliamentary Group on Social Integration, [Social connection in the COVID-19 crisis](#) (May 2020)

Alzheimer's Society, [Worst hit: Dementia during coronavirus](#) (September 2020)

British Red Cross, [Life after lockdown: Tackling loneliness](#) (June 2020)

British Red Cross, [Lonely and Left behind: Tackling loneliness in a time of crisis](#) (October 2020)

Central & Cecil Housing Trust, [Isolation and loneliness among over 55s during Covid-19](#) (February 2021)

Local Government Association, [Loneliness, social isolation and COVID-19](#) (December 2020)

Nuffield Trust, [Lockdown loneliness and anxiety across the generations](#) (October 2020)

Office for National Statistics, [Coronavirus and loneliness, Great Britain, 3 April to 3 May 2020](#), 8 June 2020

Public Health England, [Pre-existing mental health conditions spotlight](#) (December 2020)

Welsh Centre for Public Policy, [Loneliness in the lockdown](#) (April 2020)

Wonkhe, [Don't drop out: Averting a Covid-retention crisis](#) [in Higher Education] (November 2020)

## 3. The incidence of loneliness amongst different groups

### 3.1 Age

#### Charity & Think-tank publications

Action for Children, [It starts with hello](#) (2017)

Age Cymru, [A spotlight on tackling loneliness and social isolation among older people](#) (2017/18)

Age UK, [All the lonely people: Loneliness in later life](#) (2018)

Age UK, [Evidence review: Loneliness in later life](#) (2015)

Campaign to End Loneliness, [Hidden citizens: How can we identify the most lonely older adults?](#) (2015)

Centre Forum, [Ageing alone: Loneliness and the “oldest old”](#) (2014)

Co-op Foundation, [All our emotions are important: Breaking the silence about youth loneliness](#) (2018)

Co-op Foundation with 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and Manchester Metropolitan University, [Loneliness connects us all: Young people exploring and experiencing loneliness and friendship](#) (2018)

Co-op Foundation, [We are lonely, but not alone. How young people are beating loneliness, and what we can all do to help](#) (2019)

The Samaritans, [Loneliness, suicide and young people](#) (2019)

What Works Wellbeing, [A conceptual review of loneliness across the adult life course \(16+ years\)](#) (2019)

#### Academic publications

Bristol University, [Addressing older men’s experiences of loneliness and social isolation in later life](#) (2019)

Manchester University, [Social isolation among older people in urban areas](#) (2015)

Devine, Paula and Johnston, Frank for the Northern Ireland Assembly, [Social isolation and older men- meeting the need?](#) (April 2015)

Diehl, [Loneliness at universities: Determinants on emotional and social loneliness among students](#), 15 (2018), pp1-14

Evans, Isobel et al., [Living alone and cognitive function in later life](#), Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics, 81 (2019), pp222-33

Fakoya, O., McCorry, N and Donnelly, M., [Loneliness and social isolation interventions for older adults: a scoping review of reviews](#), BMC Public Health, 20 (2020)

Gale, Catharine R. et al., [Social isolation and loneliness as risk factors for the progression of frailty: The English longitudinal study of ageing](#), Age and Ageing, 47 (May 2018), pp392–97

Hadley, R, [“It’s most of my life- going to the public or the group”: The social networks of involuntarily childless older men](#), Ageing and Society (2019), pp1-26

Kobayashi, Lindsay C. et al., [Social isolation, loneliness, and health behaviours at older ages: longitudinal cohort study](#), Annals of Behavioural Medicine, 52 (2018), pp582–93

Luhmann, Maike and Hawkey, Louise C., [Age differences in loneliness from late adolescence to oldest old age](#), Developmental Psychology (2016), pp943-59

Martin, Karen Emma et al., [‘I don’t have the best life’: A qualitative exploration of adolescent loneliness](#), Journal of Child and Adolescent Behaviour, 2 (2014), pp1-7

Matthews, Timothy, et al., [Lonely young adults in modern Britain: Findings from an epidemiological cohort study](#), Psychological Medicine, 49 (2019), pp268-77

Shovestul, B. et al, [Risk factors for loneliness: The high relative importance of age versus other factors](#), PLOS ONE (2020)

Siva, N., [Loneliness in children and young people in the UK](#), Lancet Child Adolescent Health, 4 (2020)

## 3.2 Carers and parents

Carers UK, [Alone and caring](#) (January 2015)

Carers UK, [The world shrinks: Carer loneliness](#) (2017)

Carers Week, [Getting carers connected](#) (2019)

Greenwood, Nan, Pound, Carole, Brearley, Sally and Smith, Raymond, [A qualitative study of older informal carers’ experiences and perceptions of their caring role](#), Maturitas, 124 (2019), pp1-7

Lee, Katherine et al., [Lonely within the mother: An exploratory study of first-time mothers’ experiences of loneliness](#), Journal of Health Psychology, 8 (2019), pp1334-44

Vasileiou, Konstantina al., [Experiences of loneliness associated with being an informal caregiver: A qualitative investigation](#), Frontiers in Psychology, 8 (2017), pp1-11

Victor, C. et al, [The prevalence and predictors of loneliness in caregivers of people with dementia: Findings from the IDEAL programme](#), Aging and Mental Health (2020)

## 3.3 Armed services

Royal British Legion, [Loneliness and social isolation in the armed forces community](#) (July 2018)

Gribble, Rachael, [Social connections among UK military spouses: The influence on well-being](#) (2017)

Leslie, C, Wilson, G., McGhill and G, Kiernan, [Social isolation and loneliness of UK veterans: A Delphi study](#), Occupational Medicine, 70 (2020), pp407-14

Wilson, G., Hill, M. and Kiernan, M. D., [Loneliness and social isolation of military veterans: Systematic narrative review](#), Occupational Medicine, 68 (2018), pp600-9

### 3.4 Housing and homelessness

Future Spaces Foundation, [Kinship in the city: Urban loneliness and the built environment](#) (2019)

Shelter, [‘I was all on my own’: Experiences of loneliness and isolation amongst homeless people](#) (2015)

Kearns, Ade et al., [‘Lonesome town’? Is loneliness associated with the residential environment, including housing and neighbourhood factors?](#) Journal of Community Psychology, 43 (2015), pp849–67

Matthews, Timothy et al., [Loneliness and neighbourhood characteristics: A multi-informant, nationally representative study of young adults](#), Psychological Science, 30 (2019), pp1-11

### 3.5 Disability

Office for National Statistics, [Disability, well-being and loneliness](#) (2019)

Sight Scotland, [Social Connection and Sight Loss](#) (2020)

Sense, [“Someone cares if I’m not there”](#) (2017)

Burholt, Vanessa et al., [A social model of loneliness: The roles of disability, social resources, and cognitive impairment](#), The Gerontologist, 57 (2017), pp1020-30

Emerson, Eric et al., [Loneliness, social support, social isolation and wellbeing among work age adults with and without disability: Cross-sectional study](#), Disability and Health Journal, 14 (2021)

Long, Emily and McGlone, Megan, [Are young adults with long-standing illness or disability at increased risk of loneliness? Evidence from the UK Longitudinal household study](#), Journal of Public Health Research, 9 (2020), pp544-9

Gilmore, Linda and Cuskelly, Monica, [Vulnerability to loneliness in people with intellectual disability: An explanatory model](#), Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities, 11 (2014), pp192–9

Warner, David F. and Adams, Scott A., [Physical disability and increased loneliness among married older adults: The role of changing social relations](#), Soc Ment Health, 6 (2016), pp106–28.

### 3.6 Black and Minority Ethnic Groups

Red Cross and Co-op Foundation, [Barriers to belonging: An exploration of loneliness among people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds](#) (2019)

University of Manchester, [Social isolation and older Black, Asian and Minority ethnic people in Greater Manchester](#) (2018)

University of Sheffield, [How can loneliness and social isolation be reduced amongst migrant and ethnic minority groups?](#) (2017-2020)

Victor, C. et al, [Loneliness in mid-life and older adults from ethnic minority communities in England and Wales: Measure validation and prevalence estimates](#), *European Journal of Ageing* (2020)

### 3.7 Refugees & Migrants

The Forum, [This is how it feels to be lonely: A report on migrants and refugees' experiences with loneliness in London](#) (2014)

Refugee Action, [Safe but alone: The role of English language in allowing refugees to overcome loneliness](#) (2017)

University of Sheffield, [How can loneliness and social isolation be reduced amongst migrant and ethnic minority groups?](#) (2017-2020)

Júnior, J. et al, [A crisis within the crisis: The mental health situation of refugees in the world during the 2019 coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\) outbreak](#), *Psychiatry Research*, 288 (2020)

### 3.8 LGBT persons

University of Sheffield, [Reducing social isolation amongst older LGBT people: A case study of the Sage Project](#) (2018)

Kim, Hyun-Jun and Fredriksen-Goldsen, Karen I., [Living arrangement and loneliness among lesbian, gay, and bisexual older adults](#), *The Gerontologist*, 56 (2016), pp548-58

Mereish, Ethan H. and Poteat, V. Paul, [A relational model of sexual minority mental and physical health: The negative effects of shame on relationships, loneliness, and health](#), *Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 62 (2015), pp425-37

Jacobs, Robin J. and Kane, Michael N., [Correlates of loneliness in midlife and older gay and bisexual men](#), *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services*, 24 (2012), pp40–61

### 3.9 Place and rural loneliness

Age UK, [Rural ageing \(England\)](#) (2018)

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, [Rural ageing research summary report of findings](#) (2013)

Local Government Association/Public Health England, [Health and wellbeing in rural areas](#) (2017)

Northern Ireland Assembly, [Rural isolation, poverty and rural community/farmer wellbeing- Scoping paper](#) (2014)

University of Exeter, [Loneliness, social isolation and mental health in farming communities](#) (ongoing to September 2021)

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Buecker, S. et al, [In a lonely place: Investigating regional differences in loneliness](#), *Social Psychological and Personality Science* (2020)

Hennessy, C. and Innes, A., Social relations, connectivity and loneliness of older rural people, in Skinner, M., Winterton, R. and Walsh, K., *Rural gerontology: Towards critical perspectives on rural ageing* (2021)

McDonald, K. et al, [Predicting loneliness from where and what people do](#), *Social Sciences*, 9 (2020)

Thurnell-Read, T. for the Campaign to End Loneliness, [Open arms: the role of pubs in tackling loneliness](#) (2021)

Victor, C. and Pikhartova, [Lonely places or lonely people? Investigating the relationship between loneliness and place of residence](#), *BMC Public Health*, 20 (2020)

Yarker, S., [Social infrastructure: How shared spaces make communities work](#) (2019)

## 4. Infrastructure and loneliness

### 4.1 Social media & digital technology

Age UK, [Digital inclusion evidence review](#) (2018)

Welsh Government NHS Wales and Welsh Co-operative Centre, [Digital inclusion guide for Health and Care in Wales](#), July 2019

Barry, C.T. et al., [Adolescent social media use and mental health from adolescent and parent perspectives](#), Journal of Adolescence, 61 (2017), pp1-11

Clark, Jenna L. et al., [Social network sites and well-being: The role of social connection](#), Current Directions in Psychological Science, 27 (2018), pp32–7

Hutto, C.J. et al., [Social media gerontology: Understanding social media usage among older adults](#), Web Intelligence, 13 (2015), pp69–87

Nowland, Rebecca et al., [Loneliness and social internet use: Pathways to reconnection in a digital world?](#) Perspectives in Psychological Science, 13 (2018), pp70-87

Pittman, Matthew and Reich, Brandon, [Social media and loneliness: Why an Instagram picture may be worth more than a thousand Twitter words](#), Computers in Human Behaviour, 62 (2016), pp155-67

Primack, Brian A. et al., [Social media use and perceived social isolation among young adults in the US](#), Am J Prev Med, 53 (2017), pp1-8

Shensa, Ariel et al., [Social media use and perceived emotional support among us young adults](#), Journal of Community Health, 41 (2016), pp541–9

Stockwell, S. et al, [Internet use, social isolation and loneliness in older adults](#), Ageing and Society (2020)

Thomas, Lisa, Orme, Elizabeth and Kerrigan, Finola, [Student loneliness: The role of social media through life transitions](#), 146 (2020), n.p

van Schalkwyk, Gerrit I. et al., [Social media use, friendship quality, and the moderating role of anxiety in adolescents with autism spectrum disorder](#), Journal of Autism and Development Disorders, 47 (2017), pp2805-13

### 4.2 Transport and loneliness

Age UK, [The future of transport in an ageing society](#) (2015)

ECT Charity and Deloitte, [Why community transport matters](#) (2018)

House of Commons Transport Committee, [Pavement parking](#), HC 1982 (2019)

National Centre for Mobility Management, [The role of transportation in addressing social isolation in older adults](#) (July 2020)

Matsuda, N et al., [Association between public transportation use and loneliness amongst urban elderly people who stop driving](#), Gerontology and Geriatric Medicine, 5 (2019), pp1-5

Rambaldini-Gooding, D. et al, [Exploring the impact of public transport including free subsidised on the physical, mental and social well-being of older adults: A literature review](#), Transport Reviews (2020)

### 4.3 Housing and mixed-communities

Aspire, [The health and wellbeing of spinal cord injured adults and the family: Examining lives in adapted and unadapted homes](#) (2015)

Cambridge Centre for Housing & Planning Research, [Is co-living a housing solution for vulnerable older people?: Literature review](#) (2019)

GM Journal, [A novel cohousing project for older women and implications for loneliness](#) (May 2018)

GM Journal, [A novel cohousing project for older women and implications for loneliness](#) (part 2) (June 2018)

Innovation@Home, [Approaches to successful aging in community from 25 countries](#) (July 2019)

National Housing Federation, [Breaking the mould](#) (2018)

Royal Society for the Arts, [Co-Living and the common good](#) (2018)

Social Market Foundation, [Co-living: A solution to the housing crisis?](#) (2019)

## 5. Health and Loneliness

### 5.1 General

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, Medicine, Social isolation and loneliness in older adults: Opportunities for the health care system (2020)

Cacioppo, John T. and Hawkley, Louise C. [Loneliness matters: A theoretical and empirical review of consequences and mechanisms](#), *Ann Behav Med.*, 40 (2010), pp1-14

Häming, Oliver, [Health risks associated with social isolation in general and in young, middle and old age](#), *PLUS One*, 14 (2019), pp1-18

Leigh-Hunt, N. et al., [An overview of systematic reviews on the public health consequences of social isolation and loneliness](#), *Public Health*, 152 (2017), pp157-171

Ong, Anthony D. et al., [Loneliness and health in older adults: A mini-review and synthesis](#), *Gerontology*, 62 (2016), pp443–9

White, A., Taylor, T. and Cooper, R., [Social isolation and loneliness: A hidden killer](#), *TRENDS in Urology & Men's health*, 11 (2020), pp31-5

### 5.2 Mortality

Beller, Johannes and Wagner, Adina, [Loneliness, social isolation, their synergistic interaction, and mortality](#), *American Psychological Association*, 37 (2018), pp808-13

Elovainio, Marko et al., [Contribution of risk factors to excess mortality in isolated and lonely individuals: An analysis of data from the UK Biobank cohort study](#), *The Lancet*, 2 (2017), pp260-6

Hakulinen, Christian et al., [Social isolation and loneliness as risk factors for myocardial infarction, stroke, and mortality: UK Biobank cohort study of 479,054 men and women](#), *Heart*, 18 (2018), pp1536-42

Holwerda, Tjalling et al., [Impact of loneliness and depression on mortality: Results from the longitudinal ageing study Amsterdam](#), *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 209 (2016), pp127-34

Holt-Lunstad, J. et al., [Loneliness and social isolation as risk factors for mortality: A meta-analytic review](#), *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 10 (2015), pp227-37

Rico-Urbe, Laura Alejandra et al., [Association of loneliness with all-cause mortality: A meta-analysis](#), *PLOS ONE*, 13 (2018), pp1-21

### 5.3 Other physical health impacts

Burholt, Vanessa and Scharf, Thomas, [Poor health and loneliness in later life: The role of depressive symptoms, social resources, and rural environments](#), *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, 69 (2014), pp311–24

Jaremka, Lisa M et al. [Marital distress prospectively predicts poorer cellular immune function](#), *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 38 (2013), pp2713-19

Schrepft, Stephanie et al., [Associations between social isolation, loneliness, and objective physical activity in older men and women](#), *BMC Public Health*, 19 (2019), pp1-10

Shankar, Aparna et al., [Loneliness, social isolation, and behavioural and biological health indicators in older adults](#), *Health Psychology*, 30 (2011), pp377-85

Valtorta, Nicole K. et al., [Loneliness and social isolation as risk factors for coronary heart disease and stroke: systematic review and meta-analysis of longitudinal observational studies](#), *Heart*, 102 (2016), pp1009-16

## 5.4 Mental health

Campaign to End Loneliness, [The psychology of loneliness: Why it matters and what we can do](#) (2020)

Cacioppo, John and Hawkley, Louise, [Perceived social isolation and cognition](#), *Trends in Cognitive Science*, 13 (2009), pp447-54.

Hyland, Philip et al., [Can the REBT theory explain loneliness? Theoretical and clinical applications](#), *Cognitive Behaviour Therapy*, 48 (2018), pp39-51

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## 5.5 Use of health and care services

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## 6. Interventions to tackle loneliness

The What Works Centre for Wellbeing in its [Tackling loneliness](#) (2018) review set out potential issues in research on the effectiveness of interventions:

- Social isolation and loneliness were often treated interchangeably in the literature. Loneliness was often not the only outcome measured: related concepts such as social isolation and social support were also assessed.
- Differing measures and types of loneliness were used, and results are often reported inconsistently, making it difficult to compare.
- There is less data regarding interventions aimed at earlier life stages: most studies have looked at the over 55s.
- Studies have tended not to explore their impact amongst different population groups (e.g. age, sexuality, vulnerability).
- More “large-scale, controlled study designs are required to draw any solid conclusions.”<sup>1</sup>

The Centre’s briefing on Tackling Loneliness outlines in greater detail the sorts of interventions that have been tried for individuals, groups and wider communities. More information can be found on its [webpage on Loneliness](#).

Below is a selection of intervention-based research, literature reviews and case studies:

Age UK, [Promising approaches to reducing loneliness and isolation in later life](#) (2015)

Age UK, [Testing promising approaches to reducing loneliness: Results and learnings of Age UK’s loneliness pilot](#) (2018)

Campaign to End Loneliness, [Promising approaches revisited: Effective action on loneliness in later life](#) (2020)

Public Health England and UCL Institute of Health Equity, [Local action on health inequalities: Reducing social isolation across the life course](#) (2015)

Social Care Institute for Excellence, [Preventing loneliness and social isolation: Interventions and outcomes](#) (2011)

Chen, Y. R. R. and Schulz P. J., [The effect of information communication technology interventions on reducing social isolation in the elderly: A systematic review](#), J Med Internet Res, 18 (2016), pp1-6

Forsman, Anna K. et al., [Promoting mental wellbeing among older people: Technology-based interventions](#), Health Promotion International, 33 (2018), pp1042-54

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<sup>1</sup> What Works Centre for Wellbeing, [Tackling Loneliness](#), (2018)

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Khosravi, Pouria et al., [The impact of technology on older adults' social isolation](#), *Computers in Human Behaviour*, 63 (2016), pp594-603

Mann, Farhana et al., [A life less lonely: The state of the art in interventions to reduce loneliness in people with mental health problems](#), *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 52 (2017), pp 627-38

Masi, Christopher M. et al., [A meta-analysis of interventions to reduce loneliness](#), *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 15 (2011), pp1-66

Sharma, Dhruv et al., [Developing radical-digital interventions to tackle loneliness amongst the elderly](#), in *International Conference on Human Aspects of IT for the Aged Population 2015, Human aspects of IT for the aged population, design for everyday life* (2015), pp170-80

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