

# Highlighting health and social inequalities in older people: has it gone viral?

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## Different steps, different perspectives

- 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019 first recorded case in China, a market trader, probably infected in November 2019
- 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 Taiwan raise concerns with WHO
- 11<sup>th</sup> January 2020, first recorded death in Wuhan
- 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2020 SAGE met for the first time with senior members of COBRA
- 25<sup>th</sup> January ICL models suggest 'clear and ongoing threat'

- 11<sup>th</sup> February, WHO name virus SARS-CoV-2 and the disease COVID-19'
- 21<sup>st</sup> February WHO warn opportunities to prevent spread diminishing
- 25<sup>th</sup> February Marmot Review 10 years on
- 2<sup>nd</sup> March COBRA meeting (39 cases, 0 deaths)
- 12<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> March
  - SAGE (modelling from Imperial)
  - figures shared with the public
  - 20,000 deaths declared a 'good result'

- 18<sup>th</sup> March use of public transport, use of leisure venues dropping
- 20<sup>th</sup> March pubs, clubs and restaurants closed
  - Package of emergency measures for employers and employees
- 23<sup>rd</sup> March lockdown announced
- 26<sup>th</sup> March Health Select Committee
  - PPE insufficient in the care sector
  - 122,000 care sector vacancies
  - Problems identifying people safe for discharge

- 27<sup>th</sup> April 18,749 hospital deaths
- 29<sup>th</sup> April government figures for confirmed deaths included those from care homes
- Figures of registered COVID-19 deaths are likely to be a serious underestimate
- 1<sup>st</sup> May ONS figures excess of 22,000 deaths of care home residents (previous 4 months)
- 54% of all excess mortality (England and Wales)

# COVID-19 is not the great leveller.

- Inequalities are intertwined with the effects of the virus with level of deprivation a key predictor
- Those most likely to experience poor outcomes from COVID also likely to be the most effected economic and social measures in lockdown
- Self isolation may disproportionately affect older people, increasing risks
- End of life care and the manner of death

- The Coronavirus Act 2020 provided for easement of local authority duties in England and Wales.
- Removal of the obligation to conduct needs assessments and provide support unless breaching a person's human rights.
- Resources to expediting discharge to care homes ill equipped, inadequately trained for end of life care and without adequate access to testing for residents or staff.

- Social care workforce
  - Training
  - Precarity of employment
  - Sick pay
  - Difficult to raise concerns
- PPE has not been universally available and testing has been patchy
- Financial instability in the sector
  - Care Provider Alliance
  - UK Home Care Association
  - Voluntary Sector



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