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Summary of international policy measures to limit impact of COVID19 on people who rely on the Long-Term Care sector

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This summary of measures has been compiled mostly from contributions to the LTCcovid.org website by members of the International Long-Term Care Policy Network (see below for references to each report). This list of measures is not exhaustive, it only contains examples of measures that have been reported or identified by contributors to the website so far.

These tables will be updated regularly as more information is provided. Please email info@LTCcovid.org if you would like to contribute.

Broader long-term care sector measures:

Measure	Country	Short description
Publication of national guidelines for infection prevention and control	Australia Germany Hong Kong Ireland South Korea United States	*Australia*: In practice, many aged care providers do not have the workforce, expertise, PPE or systems to manage an outbreak
Funding packages for LTC sector	Australia Austria Netherlands United States	*Australia*: Equivalent to 2.4% of total annual aged care funding. Items covered are included in this table as "Part of Government funding package announced 11th March". *Austria*: Allocation of an additional 100 million euros to LTC sector *Netherlands*: regional Dutch LTC offices can provide support to LTC providers who face additional costs *US*: *Family's First Coronovirus Response Act* includes $60 million funds for VA patients and healthcare workers.
Regulatory measures	Austria Netherlands Spain	*Austria*: people who did the national service can step in to provide basic care *Netherlands*: Relaxation of inspections regime

		Needs-testing can now be done remotely (used to be only in person)
		Recruitment allowed of non-traditional pool (e.g. medical students)
		Spain: new legislation has been passed that enables regional governments to take over the running of facilities (including private sector) that become overwhelmed
Training staff in infection control	Australia	Part of Government funding package announced 11th March
Funding for web-based and phone services	Australia Austria United Kingdom	*Australia*: Additional funding for the My Age Care information website and phone service. *UK*: Technology funding to help vulnerable people isolated by COVID-19 (NHSX, UK)
Priority for LTC sector to access PPE	Australia	*Australia*: Aged care sector given priority access to national stockpile
Recruitment of additional staff and volunteers	South Korea Spain	*Spain*: newly recruited staff will be offered online training and will become part of rapid response teams
Paid sick leave and support with healthcare costs for LTC staff	United States	*US*: The *Family's First Coronovirus Response Act* extends sick leave to many Americans, but Van Houtven and Boucher note that many LTC workers cannot meet living expenses with a benefit that provides 2/3 of usual income. Some providers are offering additional support. COVID19 Costs of medical care for uninsured people (which includes many LTC staff) will be reimbursed to providers.

Care homes measures (including residential homes, nursing homes, posts-acute care settings, etc.)

Measure	Country	Notes
Prevention of COVID19 infections in care homes		
Notification of suspected cases to Public Health authorities	South Korea Netherlands	*South Korea*: part of guidelines *Netherlands*: voluntary system to collect number of cases from nursing homes via an electronic system, launched by Association of Geriatric Specialists, not at national level)
Rules to restrict visitors	Australia	*Australia*: Visitors with high risk (having travelled overseas, contact with positive case, symptoms) not allowed to visit. Only 2 visitors at a time. Visits in private areas only. No children visits.
Travel restrictions for care staff	Hong Kong	*Hong Kong*: recommendation to avoid all non-essential travel, all who travelled overseas in last 14 days are subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days.
Partial lockdown of care home (no visitors but staff come and go) sometimes with compassionate visits	Australia Germany (Lower Saxony) Hong Kong Netherlands	*Australia*: Adopted by some nursing home providers (over and above current national guidance) *Germany:* Lower-Saxony policy in place until 18th April, allows visits to people receiving palliative care *Hong Kong*: no in person visits from external services. Families only allowed to visit on compassionate grounds

for end-of-life situations		*Netherlands*: national policy, at least until 6th April, includes compassionate visits for end-of-life situations.
Full lockdown of care homes for 2 weeks (staff remain inside, usually 2 weeks)	Gyungsang-do region, South Korea	*South Korea*: measure included provision of financial incentives to staff, as well as PPE, automatic handsanitzers, etc. This was done did this for all 564 care homes in the region, at the time of the report there had only outbreaks in 4.
Care homes not to take in new residents to free-up spaces for people discharged from hospital	Germany (Lower Saxony example)	
Controlling spread once infection has entered the facility		
Testing all care home residents	All care homes (and hospitals) in Dae-gu (South Korea)	This is consistent with evidence from a CDC study in the US that found that half of all nursing home residents who had tested positive were asymptomatic (Kimball et al 2020)
Isolation within facility for all residents	Hong Kong	*Hong Kong:* all residents are advised to eat meals in their rooms and use only a designated toilet, they are also advised to avoid leaving their room and mixing with other residents. They are advised to put on a surgical mask if leaving their room and keep a clear pathway for transfer.
Isolation of residents with *possible, probable and confirmed* COVID19	Spain	*Spain:* new guidance issued on 24th March extends isolation measures for residents and staff who are asymptomatic but may have been in contact with positive cases. Many care homes report that if they adhered to this they would need to send all staff home.
Isolation of residents with symptoms in single room/separate part of the facility	Australia Germany (*Lower Saxony example*) Hong Kong South Korea	*Australia*: Low notes that rooms were not locked and residents sometimes forgot they were not supposed to leave their rooms. *Hong Kong:* Residents with symptoms are isolated within facility *South Korea*: Appears to have been successful at slowing number of care homes with infections in nursing homes.
Removing residents who test positive to quarantine centres	South Korea	
Removing residents without symptoms of COVID19 to other accommodation	Spain	*Spain*: in Guipuzkoa the social services department guarantees that residents who move out of care homes voluntarily will retain the right to return once the COVID19 outbreak has ended. Also, in Catalonia use of hotels to house residents with lower care needs.
Staff who have had contact with residents who test positive self-isolate until they have a negative test	South Korea	

Residents who have had contact with others who test positive self-isolate in separate room until they have a negative test	South Korea	
Specialist onsite pathology services	Australia	*Australia*: Part of Government funding package announced 11th March
Use of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)	Germany Hong Kong Netherlands South Korea	*Germany:* guidelines recommend that all personnel wear PPE while caring for vulnerable people, PPE equipment placed immediately at the entrance to living quarters. Bins for disposal of single use equipment on the inside of all doors. *Hong Kong:* Residents with fever or respiratory symptoms are required to wear surgical masks. PPE to be also used by cleaning staff. *Netherlands*: Use is strictly regulated due to shortage, can only be used under specific circumstances *South Korea*: all staff are provided with PPE
Ensuring access to health care for residents who have COVID 19		
Telehealth visits for healthcare providers	Hong Kong United States	*Hong Kong:* Occupational Therapy for people with dementia delivered via telehealth *US*: Being proposed, extended use of telehealth by Centres for Medicare and Medicaid Services so far except for home health and hospice care delivery. Proposed bill by Sens. Klobuchar and Casey to provide $50 million to Health and Human Services (HHS) to expand telehealth platforms to "senior living centres".
Managing staff availability		
Government (local, national or regional) takes over funding/running of care home	Australia	*Australia*: State government took over a facility that became too short-staffed.
Social workers providing services by phone	South Korea	
Funding to boost staff numbers: retention bonus paid to staff	Australia	*Australia*: Part of Government funding package announced 11th March
Funding to boost staff numbers: funding for additional workforce supply funding and to supplement viability of care homes	Australia	*Australia*: Part of Government funding package announced 11th March

Allowing staff with restricted work visas to work more hours	Australia	
Recruitment of recent graduates and health students	Australia	
Rapid response teams	Australia Spain United States	*Australia*: plans for rapid response teams for homes that become overwhelmed. *Spain*: *and* US: various examples of care homes that have already experienced this, and also in Spain active planning to increase capacity of rapid response teams.

Community-based care measures

Measures	Country	Notes
Measures to prevent spread of COVID10		
Closure of day care and community centres	Hong Kong	*Hong Kong*: day care centres only remain open for those with very high needs, so operating at very reduced capacity. Healthy Living centres for older people are all closed but staff continue to provide urgent support. Staff call centre members regularly by phone to provide social and emotional support. Some non-profit providers have started to provide online day care (including activities and counselling)
Changes in delivery of home-based services	Hong Kong	*Hong Kong*: providers are changing how they deliver services, for example re-usable containers for meal delivery are no longer used, disposable containers are used instead. Other non-essential services are either stopped or reduced.
"Cocooning" of over 70s and medically vulnerable people		*Ireland:* controversial as ageist (assumes all over 70s vulnerable)
Measures to ensure continuity of care		
Recognition of care staff as essential workers	Ireland	*Ireland:* important in terms of permission to travel to work during lockdowns
Opening new facilities for people who can no longer be cared for in their own home	Austria	*Austria*: Currently closed rehabilitation centres are being re-opened to provide additional bed capacity for people with care and support needs who can no longer be cared for at home. Concerns that this may not an option for people living with dementia, and about whether the family carers could move in as well (to continue to provide care)
Rapid response teams	Austria Spain	*Austria*: To support people who can no longer be cared for by family or migrant live-in carers. *Spain*: Rapid response teams prepared to respond to people whose usual carers become unable to support them
Recruitment of volunteers	South Korea	

Recruitment of additional staff, including those without qualifications or experience	Dae-gu (South Korea)	*South Korea*: Recruited to work 24 hours a week for 2 weeks to care for people with disabilities in self-isolation, PPE provided.
Recruitment of family members to act as carers	South Korea	*South Korea*: Registered as temporary care workers and paid same wage as professional equivalent. They are provided a 2 hour virtual training session on safety
Transfers to quarantine centres if carers cannot be provided	South Korea	
Funding to boost staff numbers: retention bonus paid to staff	Australia	*Australia*: Part of Government funding package announced 11th March
Funding for home care and support providers to support people in self-isolation (i.e. shopping and meal deliveries)	Australia	*Australia*: Part of Government funding package announced 11th March
Training in infection prevention and control	Australia	
Community-led responses	Hong Kong	*Hong Kong*: NGOs providing emergency support to older people in the community (assessment by professional team, then provision of medication refills, household cleaning and hygiene supplies delivery).

Measures that are not yet documented on LTCcovid.org but that, based on early evidence, appear critical

1. Clarifying respective roles of care homes and hospitals, establishing clear protocols for both discharges from hospitals to care homes and for admission of care home residents with severe COVID19 infections to hospitals
2. Ensuring that, where care homes are required to provide acute healthcare or palliative care, they have access to the necessary medication, equipment and (telehealth) medical support

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