

Barriers and Facilitators to Physical Activity Among Older Adults Living in Long-Term Care Facilities: A Systematic Review with Qualitative Evidence Synthesis

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Abstract : Background: Low levels of physical activity are associated with poorer health outcomes, and this situation is more critical in older adults living in long-term care facilities. Objectives: To systematically identify, appraise, and synthesize current qualitative research evidence regarding the barriers and facilitators to physical activity as reported by older adults and care staff in long-term care facilities. Design: This is a systematic review with qualitative evidence synthesis adhering to PRISMA guidelines. Methods: We conducted a systematic search on PubMed, Science Citation Index Expanded, Social Sciences Citation Index, EMBASE, CINAHL, and PsychInfo databases from inception until 30 June 2023. Thematic synthesis was undertaken to identify the barriers and facilitators relating to physical activity. Then, we mapped them onto the Capability, Opportunity, Motivation, and Behavior model and Theoretical Domains Framework. Methodological quality was assessed using the CASP Qualitative Studies Checklist, and confidence in review findings was assessed using the GRADE-CERQual approach. Results: We included 32 studies after screening 10496 citations and 177 full texts. Seven themes and 17 subthemes were identified relating to barriers and facilitators influencing physical activity in elderly residents. The main themes were mapped onto COM-B model-Capability (physical activity knowledge gaps and individual health issues), Opportunity (social support and macro-level resources) and Motivation (health beliefs, fear of falling or injury, and personal and social incentives to physical activity). Most subthemes were graded as high (n = 9) or moderate (n = 3) confidence. Conclusions and Implications: Our comprehensive synthesis of 32 studies provides a wealth of knowledge of barriers and facilitators to physical activity from both residents and care staff's perspectives. Intervention components were also suggested within the context of long-term care facilities. End users such as older residents, care staff, and researchers can have confidence in our findings when formulating policies and guidance on promoting physical activity among elderly residents in long-term care facilities.

Keywords : long-term care, older adults, physical activity, qualitative, systematic review

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