



Objectives

- 1) To determine the **characteristics of interventions** to support people with dementia and their family carers
- 2) To review **intervention effects**
- 3) To determine whether studies follow a **systematic approach for development, evaluation and implementation of interventions**

Results

Objective 2: Evaluation of effects of interventions

Table 2: Description of intervention effects

Mittelman et al., 2004	Statistically significant improvement in outcomes for the intervention for depressive symptoms of carers ($p < 0.05$) compared to the control group that continued up to the 3-year follow-up.
Gaugler et al., 2008, 2011	Intervention significantly decreased burden of carers ($p < .03$) when compared with control group, significant intervention effects were found for depressive symptom reduction after nursing home admission ($p < .001$).
Gaugler et al., 2016	Significant decrease in overall negative reactions to behavior problems over a 12-months period ($p < .01$) compared with control group. No effect on frequency of behavior problems, role overload or role captivity.
Gaugler et al., 2015	Reduction of emotional distress and role overload ($p < .05$) at 8-months follow-up compared with control group. No significant differences were found for stress, depressive symptoms and carers adaptation to placement ($p \leq .10$) (due to the small sample size).
Davis et al., 2011*	Significant reduction in carers' feelings of guilt and positive interactions with staff ($p < .05$) compared to the control group after post-intervention measurement. No effect regarding depression, burden, facility satisfaction, resource use.
Paun et al., 2015*	Significant improvement in carers' heartfelt sadness and longing at three months ($p = .027$), a significant drop in their guilt at the six-month ($p = .029$) follow-up. No significant effects on burden, heartfelt sadness and longing, worry and isolation at the six-month.

* No intervention effects were found for secondary outcomes.

Objective 3: Appraisal of studies according to the MRC framework

- All studies referred to theoretical frameworks
- None was registered, and no study protocol published
- Only two studies tested the feasibility before full scale evaluation, none evaluated the implementation process (Gaugler et al., 2015 and Paun et al., 2015)
- Description of intervention and materials (such as manuals) are lacking

Conclusion

Evidence regarding **effectiveness of interventions supporting family carers** during the transition of a relative with dementia to a nursing home **is insufficient**; studies are prone to **overestimation of intervention effects due to risk of bias**.

No intervention supporting people with dementia was identified.

Careful development and evaluation of complex psychosocial interventions and well-designed RCTs with larger samples and rigorous methodology are warranted.

Reporting on feasibility and implementation process is lacking but is crucial for evaluating transferability across settings and should be part of upcoming studies.

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Supporting People with Dementia and Family Carers in Transition to Nursing Home: A Systematic Review

Background

During the transition of people with dementia from home to nursing home, family carers are at increased risk of becoming burdened, stressed, having sleep disturbances, depression and other health complications [1]. From the carers' point of view, problems become apparent due to being unprepared for the transition period, having limited support, being uninformed about care alternatives or financial options, and due to a lack of knowledge about dementia [2]. The transition from their home into a nursing home is an experience for people with dementia as well, representing loss of their home, neighborhood and time with family and friends; behavioral and neuropsychiatric symptoms often increase [3].

Methods

A **systematic review was carried out** [4] according to the Cochrane Handbook for Intervention Reviews V.5.1.0 [5].

Search strategy

- MEDLINE (via PubMed), CENTRAL, PsycINFO, CINAHL, OTseeker, and PEDro (Inception – July 2015), the Specialised Register of the Cochrane Dementia and Cognitive Improvement Group (ALOIS) and Google Scholar.
- Backward citation tracking.

Inclusion criteria

- **Study types:** Randomized controlled trials (RCTs), cluster-randomized controlled trials (cRCTs) and clinical controlled trials (CCTs).
- **Types of participants:** People with mild to severe dementia and family carers of people with dementia (any type of relationship).
- **Types of interventions:** Targeting people with dementia or their family carers with the objective of offering support during the transition
- **Types of comparator(s) and outcome measures:** Usual care and all types of outcomes
- **Language:** German or English.

Study selection and data extraction

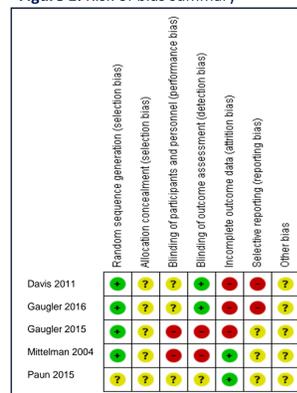
Screening, selection and data extraction were performed independently by two researchers

Quality appraisal

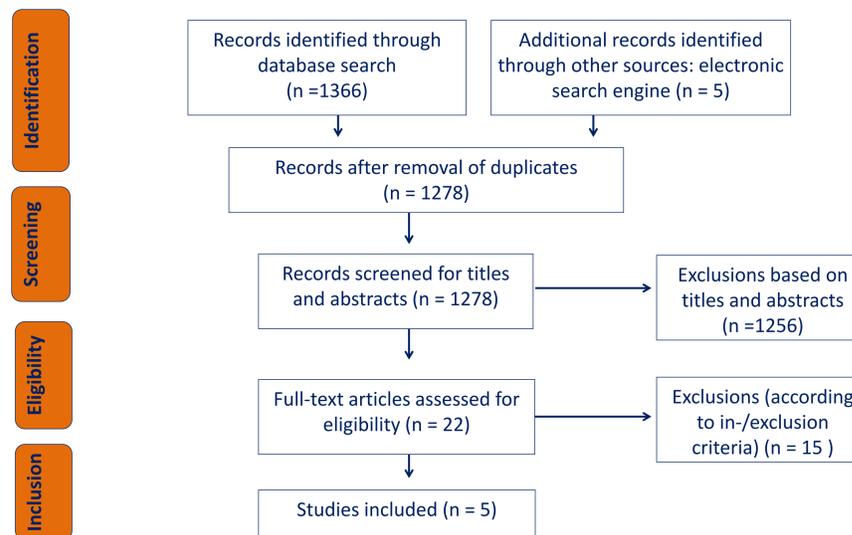
The Cochrane Risk of Bias tool [5] was used. The UK MRC framework [6] guided the assessment of the development, feasibility testing, evaluation and implementation of interventions.

Data synthesis

A narrative synthesis was performed because the studies were too heterogeneous in terms of design, methods, interventions and outcome measures.

Figure 1: Risk of bias summary

Results

**Figure 2:** PRISMA flow diagram of the study selection process.

Objective 1: Description of interventions

- 5 studies (all from USA) described interventions supporting **family carers**
- **None of the studies targeted people with dementia**
- Characteristics of studies and interventions are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1 Characteristics of included studies (n = 5)

Authors, year	Sample	Study design	Intervention	Comparison	Outcomes	Follow-up
Mittelman et al., 2004*	n=406	RCT	Individual and family counseling, support intervention program	Usual care	Depression, depressive symptoms	7 years
Gaugler et al., 2016	n=107	RCT	Individual and family psychosocial counseling, support intervention	Usual care	Support resources, stress	18 months
Gaugler et al., 2015	n=36	RCT	Psychosocial intervention program for family carer and other family members	Usual care	Stress, depressive symptoms, adaptation to placement	8 months
Davis et al., 2011	n=35	RCT	Telephone-delivered psychosocial support program	Usual care	Feelings of guilt, depression, burden, hassles with staff, facility satisfaction, resource use (secondary outcomes: visiting frequency, quality of life, social support, negative reactions to care)	Post-intervention measurement
Paun et al., 2015	n=93	cRCT	Group-based psychosocial intervention program	Usual care	Chronic grief (secondary outcomes: depression, knowledge, skills)	6 months

*The three publications by Mittelman et al., 2004; Gaugler et al., 2008 and 2011 were handled as one source for reporting study findings.

References

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Included Studies

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