

Effectiveness of external factors to reduce dehydration risk in older people living in residential care: a systematic review

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Background

- Dehydration is prevalent in elderly care home residents.
- Elderly residents are vulnerable to dehydration due to physiological effects of aging affecting fluid balance regulation and increasing mental and physical frailty.
- Dehydration is associated with poor health outcomes and increased hospital admissions.



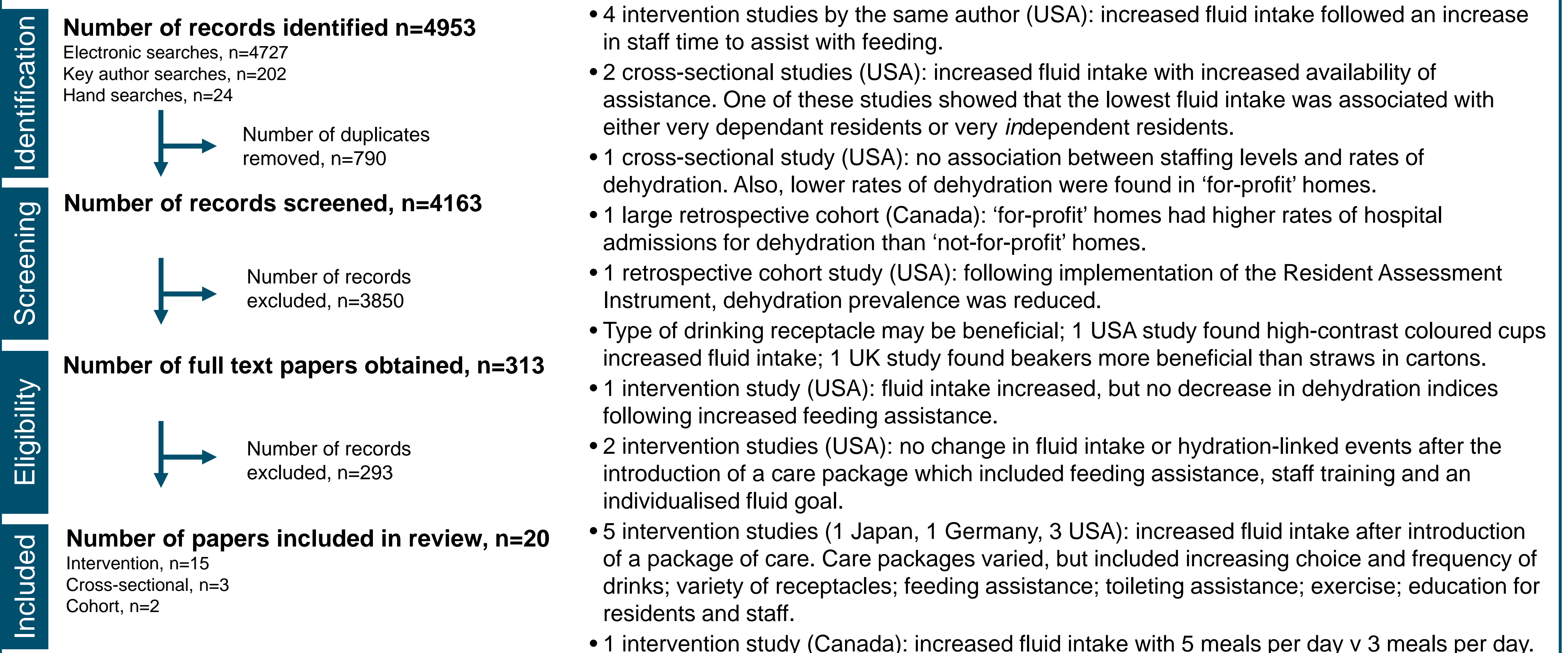
Aim

To identify effective preventative strategies to reduce the risk of dehydration and improve quality of life for this vulnerable group.

Methods

- Protocol registered with PROSPERO, CRD42012003100.
- Inclusion criteria:
 - Participants:** elderly (>65 years) living in residential care.
 - Intervention:** a system of care (administrative, social, educational, behavioural) and/or modification of the environment.
 - Outcomes:** a change in fluid intake and/or dehydration status.
 - Study design:** intervention, case-control, cross-sectional, cohort.
- 13 databases searched August 2012; key author searches; hand searches of reference lists and review papers.
- Screening of abstracts and titles; data extraction, quality and validity of studies assessed by two reviewers.
- Results reported as a narrative summary, but meta-analysis not possible due to differences in trial design and quality and variable methods of defining dehydration and fluid intake.

Results



Conclusions

Preventing dehydration in elderly care home residents is multi-factorial. Increasing assistance as well as increasing the choice and availability of drinks and the type of receptacles in which they are served seem to be key factors. Further research is required.



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