

Effectiveness of digital technology interventions to reduce loneliness in adults: a systematic review

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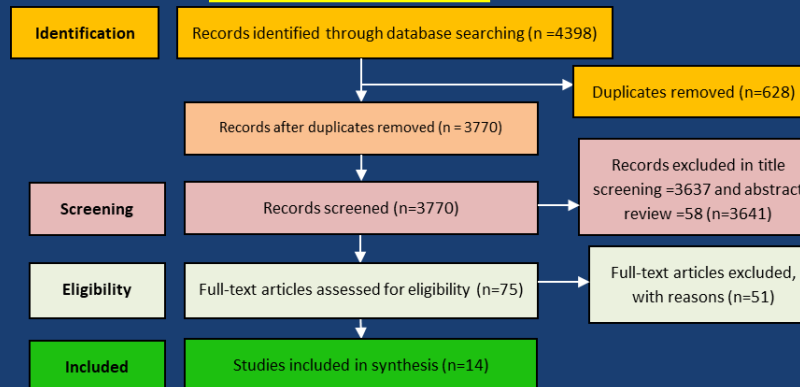


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BACKGROUND:

AIM: To undertake a systematic review of published primary research on digital technology interventions to reduce loneliness in adults.

Figure 1 PRISMA Flow Diagram



KEY MESSAGE 1: Loneliness is associated with social, emotional, physical and mental health problems and the burden of loneliness is increasing, especially in developed countries.

KEY MESSAGE 2: Digital technology interventions help in reducing loneliness in adults but further research preferably clinical trials involving large sample sizes and longer follow-up durations are required.

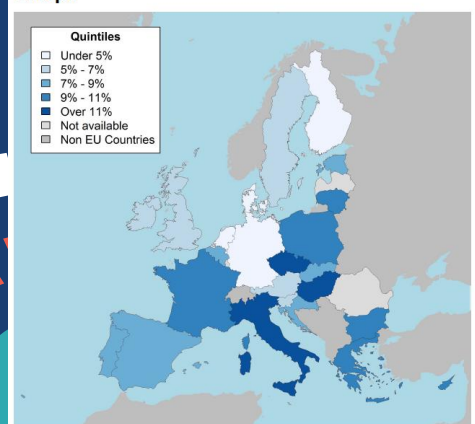
Loneliness is an emerging public health issue^[1] and its burden is increasing in developed countries^[2] e.g. EU countries (Fig.1)

Loneliness is associated with social, emotional, physical and mental health issues.^[3]

Various digital technology (DT) interventions are used to tackle loneliness.^[4]

Assessing the effectiveness of DT interventions is important from the health, social care and public health perspectives.^[5]

Figure 1: Prevalence of frequent loneliness across Europe



Note 1: European Social Survey (2010, 2012 and 2014).

Source: https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/jrcsh/files/barness_pb2018_loneliness_jrc_i1.pdf

METHODS

Data Sources	5 Online databases: PubMed, Medline, CINAHL, EMBASE and Web of Science
Inclusion criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary studies Application of digital technology to reduce loneliness Participants: Adults (aged ≥18 years) Language: English Publication period: From 1 January 2010 to 14 January 2019
Article screening and data extraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertaken by two independent researchers Use of the population, intervention, comparator(s) and outcome(s) framework

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