Reviewer's report

Title: Loneliness and social isolation interventions for older adults: a scoping review of reviews

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Reviewer: Johanna Joyce

Reviewer's report:

This review aims to address the rising concern of loneliness and social isolation in the aging population. As a scoping review, its principle goal was to examine what interventions have been used in the prevention and reduction of loneliness and social isolation, as well as how they did this.

This review is generally well written, clear and easy to read. In certain areas, it would be beneficial to include further elaboration, and not assume such a high standard of knowledge e.g. - Page 34, line 31, the TIDieR checklist is mentioned for its potential use for reporting and describing interventions. However, no explanation of what this is or what the acronym stands for is included, something which would be beneficial.

- Page 33, line 19. The paragraph prior discusses some definitions of social isolation and loneliness, and how they are often used interchangeably. The consensus is drawn that the concepts are distinct but related and that social isolation is a risk factor for loneliness, but the paragraph would perhaps improve with clarification of what the AUTHOR defines both topics as.

- Page 35 line 51 mentions a "method of synthesis" which could be used to understand mechanisms of social interventions, but no definition of this is provided, which should be.

The tables and figures in this review are good.

- Table 1 on page 7 would benefit from explanatory footnotes; the search syntax includes many acronyms, some of which are not explained.

- Figure 1 on page 10 (PRISMA Flowchart) is well set out and easy to read. But in order to have a review that can be replicated and for more detail, the databases and number of articles that came from each could be included, along with some footnotes explaining the diagram.

Because the review covered a lot of different papers, things like the population characteristics were difficult to explain and required long lists of numbers of articles following each facet. Perhaps some of this data would be better presented graphically as well as written, to make it easier to digest. For example, a pie chart representing the specific subgroups in the older
population more prone to loneliness and social isolation (e.g. older people residing in community (6, 22, 35 etc), institutionalised (40 ... etc)).

Limitations discussed on page 36 line 2 could be elaborated upon with suggested improvements should the review be repeated. It is suggested further databases could be used to yield more relevant reviews, perhaps if it were to be repeated, more than one reviewer could screen the titles and abstracts (page 7 line 31) to reduce risk of bias early on.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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