
POSTER ABSTRACT

Senior Cohousing: A Model of Social Support and Mutual Aid for Aging in Community - A Scoping Review

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Background: Population aging poses new challenges to traditional models of housing and care. One alternative that has gained worldwide attention is senior cohousing, a collaborative housing model for older adults that promotes the creation of self-sustaining communities where residents share responsibilities and provide mutual support. This housing arrangement aims not only to offer an adapted physical environment but also to strengthen social bonds and foster cooperation among residents, reducing social isolation and encouraging mutual aid.

Approach: To map and synthesize the available evidence on the senior cohousing model for older adults, focusing on its contribution to strengthening mutual support networks and social support among residents as they age. A scoping review was conducted, with sources drawn from scientific articles available in the following databases: PubMed, PubMed PMC, Scopus, MedLine, Ageline, Embase, Proquest Central, Web of Science, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, and Scielo. The search was conducted on December 4, 2023, and updated on December 6, 2024, with no time restrictions. The search terms used were "older adults" and "cohousing."

Results: A total of 2,241 studies were retrieved. Using the Rayyan software, 888 duplicates were identified and removed. Based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria, 156 studies were eligible for full-text review, of which 72 were included. The evidence presented was extracted through a detailed analysis of the selected studies.

Implications: Senior cohousing stands out as an innovative and promising alternative for aging in community, offering a balanced combination of housing and social interaction that fosters mutual support among residents. The data reveal that this housing model provides a strong sense of belonging and security, strengthens social bonds, and supports the creation of an integrated community with high levels of social support. Community engagement and positive impacts on residents' mental health are evident, reinforcing the importance of support networks fostered by community life, contributing to healthy aging and prolonged community residence. Thus, senior cohousing promotes inclusive and resilient cities that incorporate well-being and environmental preservation practices into their care approaches, aligning with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3, 11, 13, and 17. Communities adopting this model benefit from urban planning that includes public health solutions focused on cooperation, collective well-being, and efficient resource use, supported by practices that strengthen support networks. During climate crises or emergencies, cohousing enables a collaborative and adaptive response, integrating social and health care systems sustainably. For this model to be effective, adaptations and support must be carefully planned to meet the specific needs of older adults. Additionally, it is essential for public

policies to encourage the expansion of this type of housing, given its contribution to strengthening social support networks amid population aging.