Mental health impact of the COVID disaster on older people – how does it feel to be a burden?

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The coronavirus disease 19 (COVID-19) pandemic is a disaster that has impacted lives globally. The purpose of this paper is to understand the linkage between the COVID 19 disaster and its impact on mental health of older people 70+. To reach this aim we reviewed the literature on disasters, COVID and mental conditions of older people (70+). The mental responses of the COVID disaster are multidimensional and potentially long-lasting. Rates of mental conditions of older persons vary widely due to exposure to COVID, country, population groups and methods used when conducting the study. We identified a multitude of factors contributing to mental conditions in older people, in general. We identified COVID-19 specific factors which have an impact such as threat to own life and threat to life of loved ones, interruption of behaviors and services, and physical as well as social isolation. Additionally, in older age, life events and feelings of being a burden contribute to mental conditions. To better understand the long impact of the COVID disaster on older people’s mental health we need to understand also the impact of past life events which may exacerbate the impact of the COVID disaster on mental conditions as well the impact of the current exposure to the pandemic.