Since January 2020 Elsevier has created a COVID-19 resource centre with free information in English and Mandarin on the novel coronavirus COVID-19. The COVID-19 resource centre is hosted on Elsevier Connect, the company's public news and information website.

Elsevier hereby grants permission to make all its COVID-19-related research that is available on the COVID-19 resource centre - including this research content - immediately available in PubMed Central and other publicly funded repositories, such as the WHO COVID database with rights for unrestricted research re-use and analyses in any form or by any means with acknowledgement of the original source. These permissions are granted for free by Elsevier for as long as the COVID-19 resource centre remains active.
Amphetamine dependence in Australia

Chris McCall painted a bleak picture of amphetamine-type stimulant abuse in Australia. Amphetamine has little appeal in Australia, although methamphetamine is certainly its most problematic stimulant, despite both drugs having similar therapeutic effects. The World Report briefly mentioned the decade-long monitoring of drugs with abuse potential in South Australia. In 2016, this surveillance expanded to the National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program, in partnership with the University of Queensland. Results on the Sewage Core Group Europe website, which provides waste water data to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, show that amphetamine use is high in parts of the Netherlands, although methamphetamine use has been consistently higher in parts of North America over previous years than in Australia.

This is not to say that Australia does not have a problem. Waste water analysis allows for the direct quantification of the amounts of methamphetamine, which in South Australia showed a 3-times increase in use from 2011 to 2018. A 50% drop in early 2018 has largely been maintained to the present. The National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program reports show that methamphetamine is the most prevalent stimulant everywhere in Australia.

We agree with McCall’s comment about the methamphetamine problem in Australia being complex with no easy solutions. However, the reference to festival pill testing is perhaps misleading. Methamphetamine has never been associated with festivals in terms of drugs seized or detected. 3,4-Methylenedioxy methamphetamine and alcohol are the drugs of choice at these events. Therefore, any interventions aimed at introducing drug checking at festivals are unlikely to address the actual methamphetamine problem.

We declare no competing interests.

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Minimising long-term effect of COVID-19 in dementia care

We thank Huali Wang and colleagues for highlighting that dementia is also a pandemic in an ageing society, albeit the word pandemic generates a negative perspective of dementia.

The UK is now dealing with the issues that China has already dealt with. People with dementia in the UK, both those living with families and alone, have lost the invaluable support offered by art, music, and exercise groups. Family carers have lost precious respite.

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opportunities, such as those offered by day centres, because of COVID-19, causing them to feel they are alone and abandoned. The burden of care was increased by the lockdown enforced in March, 2020, with government advice being that all people older than 70 years should self-isolate, denying them the informal support of family and friends. We, along with other professionals, are deeply concerned regarding the effect of COVID-19 on the wellbeing and on the physical and cognitive function of those with dementia. We are also concerned that increased family carer burden and stress will diminish family carers’ ability to cope long term, meaning that more people with dementia will enter full-time care prematurely. COVID-19 has brought death and dying to the forefront, yet dementia is the most common cause of death in men and women older than 80 years. Etkind and colleagues predict that deaths from dementia will increase from around 59 000 per year in 2014 to around 220 000 per year by 2040. We declare no competing interests.

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Essential medical equipment for Gaza

In June, 2018, The Lancet published our Correspondence about a cross-border collaboration that led to the acquisition of an advanced gastrointestinal endoscopic unit for the European Gaza Hospital. Despite the publicity for this important project, several issues continue to make essential medical equipment acquisitions for the gastroenterology service of the European Gaza Hospital difficult, to say the least. In the past year, numerous efforts have been made to purchase a costly, but much needed, endoscopic ultrasound system—an important complementary service for an advanced endoscopy unit. We had exhausted all possible avenues when a colleague told me about a Christian organisation in Germany called Bread for the World. Since their focus was hunger, I was not optimistic about their willingness to help. However, we wrote and explained to them the crucial need for an endoscopic ultrasound system in Gaza. A representative contacted us requesting information to substantiate our request. We gave them a link to our Correspondence. The decision makers were deeply moved by that letter and, to our amazement, responded. Physicians for Human Rights Israel received a donation from Bread for the World to cover the full cost of a new endoscopic ultrasound system (about US$200 000). The endoscopic ultrasound system has been ordered and will soon be delivered and installed at the European Gaza Hospital. This event could not have happened without the publication of our Correspondence in The Lancet. On behalf of all our collaborators, we are writing to express our deepest gratitude and thanks to the Editor-in-Chief and the Editors for publishing our Correspondence.

We declare no competing interests.

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