

## PO3.82 The effectiveness of web-based interventions on dementia caregivers

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### Background

Due to the increasing number of people with dementia (PwD) and their care costs, research has explored low cost-effective interventions to improve PwD and caregivers lives (Blom et al., 2013), including web-based interventions. Online training programs and social forums have shown positive results on caregivers' experienced burden and depression (Beauchamp et al., 2005). Reviews have explored the effectiveness of web-based interventions for caregivers (McKechnie et al., 2014). This review summarises evidence for the effectiveness of web-based interventions based on caregivers' outcome variables, duration and follow up periods of studies, as well as of caregivers characteristics.

### Method

A systematic literature review was conducted using: Web of Science, PubMed and ScienceDirect databases.

#### *Inclusion & Exclusion criteria*

Studies should have employed web-based interventions and report outcomes for caregivers. Studies where interventions were not developed for caregivers (ie emails and videoconferencing), and studies for caregivers of mixed populations (ie strokes) were excluded.

The search strategy concluded to 11 papers (Figure 1).

### Results

Caregivers' outcomes and outcome measures differed, making difficult to compare the studies. Most common outcome variables were quality of life, depression and stress.

Caregiver characteristic varied significantly across studies, including caregivers' relationship and contact with PwD (from 4 hrs per week to 4 times per week), as well as their age (19.2-86 yrs) and gender.

Study duration and follow up periods varied across the studies, from 30 days to 3 years. In a similar vein, experimental designs varied. Studies analysed their results based on inter-group comparisons (intervention vs control group), based on repeated measures designs (baseline vs follow up), or based on the combination of both.

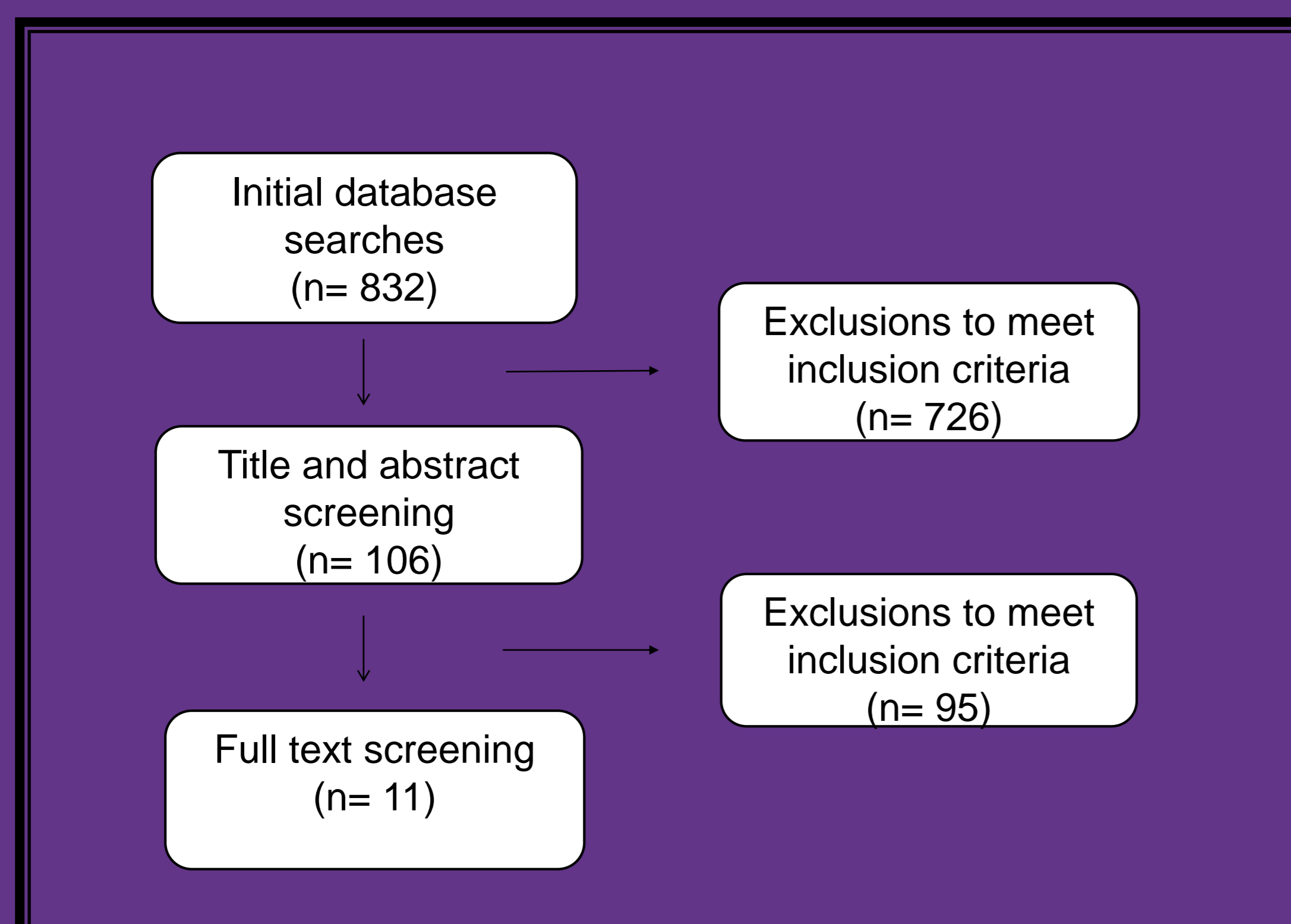


Figure 1. Search strategy



<http://scdigitalhealth.com/about/>

### Conclusions

The results from this review revealed that, due to the progressive nature of dementia, short term interventions are more likely to show benefit. The effectiveness of web-based interventions is not comparable across the different studies due to the variety in caregivers' outcomes, their characteristics, their relationship and contact with PwD, and the duration and follow up periods of the studies. Future research can take into account these factors influencing effectiveness.

### References

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### Acknowledgements



CAREGIVERSPRO-MMD project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 690211. The authors are grateful to CAREGIVERSPRO-MMD consortium for their comments.

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