

## World Summit on OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY

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**The professionalization of domiciliary care workers in England following COVID-19****Imose Itua***Arden University, United Kingdom*

Domiciliary care typically refers to arrangements by which care is provided in the patient or client's own home, requiring home visits from care staff. The growing pressure of an ageing population has resulted in an increased focus and interest in domiciliary care. For example, between April 2014 and October 2019, the number of domiciliary care services in England increased by 23%. The current pandemic has further given increased focus to domiciliary care. Between 10 April 2020 and 19 June 2020, 6523 people died in domiciliary care, well over double the 3-year average of 2895. Although the pandemic was a major contributor to this dramatic rise in deaths, there were likely a number of factors involved for example demographic trends, changes in the epidemiological landscape of disease, the increased focus on user-centred services, the availability of new supportive technologies, and the pressing need to reconfigure health systems to improve responsiveness, continuity, efficiency and equity. The increasing focus and trend in domiciliary care necessitates a review of care in the UK. Importantly, there is no formal recognition or definition of the role of the carer in the UK, and there seems to be an overlap between support workers and carers, without adequate explanation of what either of these roles means in practice. This article highlights the need to pay particular attention to this care sector, a sector which is complex due to the heterogeneous circumstances of its clients and currently unregulated, but which could provide a reliable employment sector if properly invested in, particularly in light of both the COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit which may necessitate increasing use of its services.

**Biography**

Imose Itua is an experienced programme lead, currently leading two Masters Programmes in public health and healthcare management, a lecturer, active researcher and an author. Her specialty is in epidemiology, family planning and cardiovascular science. Her research interest led her to set up a research team at the school of healthcare management to encourage evidence informed practice. For nine years, she was the dissertation advisor and instructor for the Master's in Public Health programme at Laureate Online Education/The University of Liverpool. Here, she won two awards for outstanding contribution in 2013, and for best instructor in 2012. She has also taught at other institutions for example at Edge Hill University and at the University of Salford. She is a senior fellow of the Higher Education Academy, a Fellow of the Royal Society for Public Health and a member of the Chartered Management Institute.

iitua@arden.ac.uk