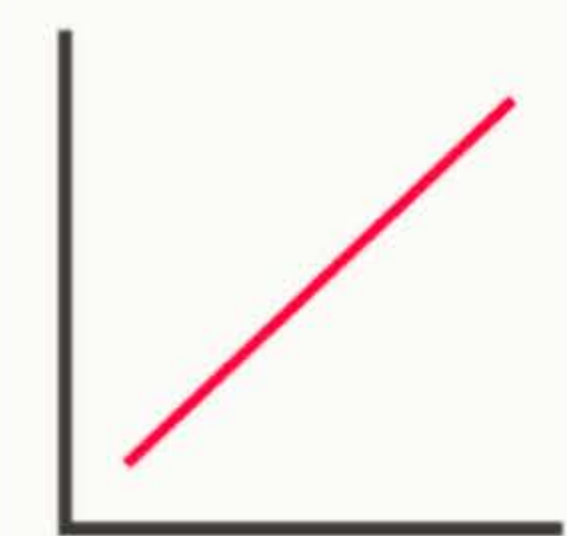


# Self-perceived burdensomeness among the elderly

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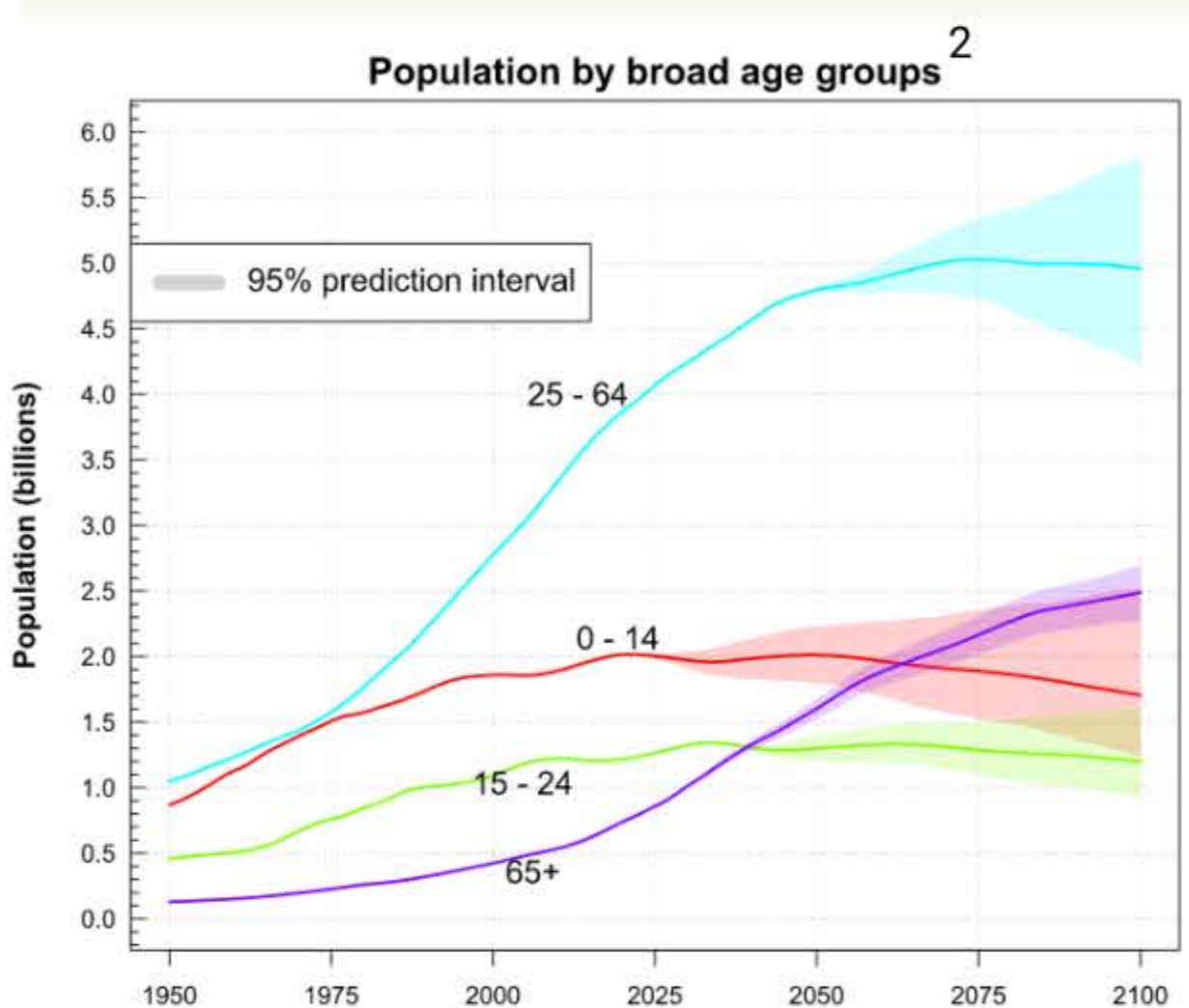


## Introduction



There is a direct correlation between older age and perceived burdensomeness.<sup>1</sup>

Negative impact on the elderly



It can motivate a wish to hasten death<sup>3</sup>  
It is related to "a general sense of suffering, clinical depression".<sup>4</sup>  
There is a great association with suicide ideation.<sup>1</sup>



Nurses should understand the reasons behind perceived burdensomeness to anticipate patients' needs and provide appropriate care that addresses patients' concerns.

## Aim

To explore and identify the reasons behind self-perceived burdensomeness in the elderly

## Methodology

PS: Why might **older patients** feel like a **burden**?

- **population**: older patients
- **situation**: reasons why they feel like a burden

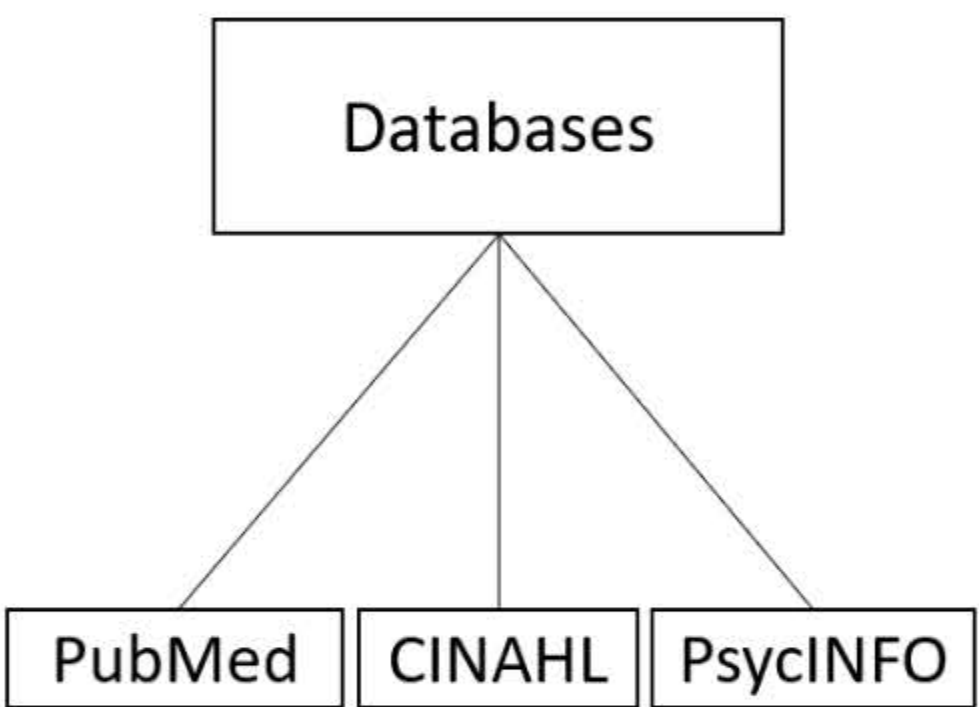


Table 1. Search terms:

<b>Main term</b>	older patient	AND	self perceived burden
<b>Main heading</b>	older adulthood (PsycINFO)		burden dependency (Pubmed)

## LIMITS

English and Spanish

11 articles selected



## Results



### ★ Dependence: a reason for feeling like a burden

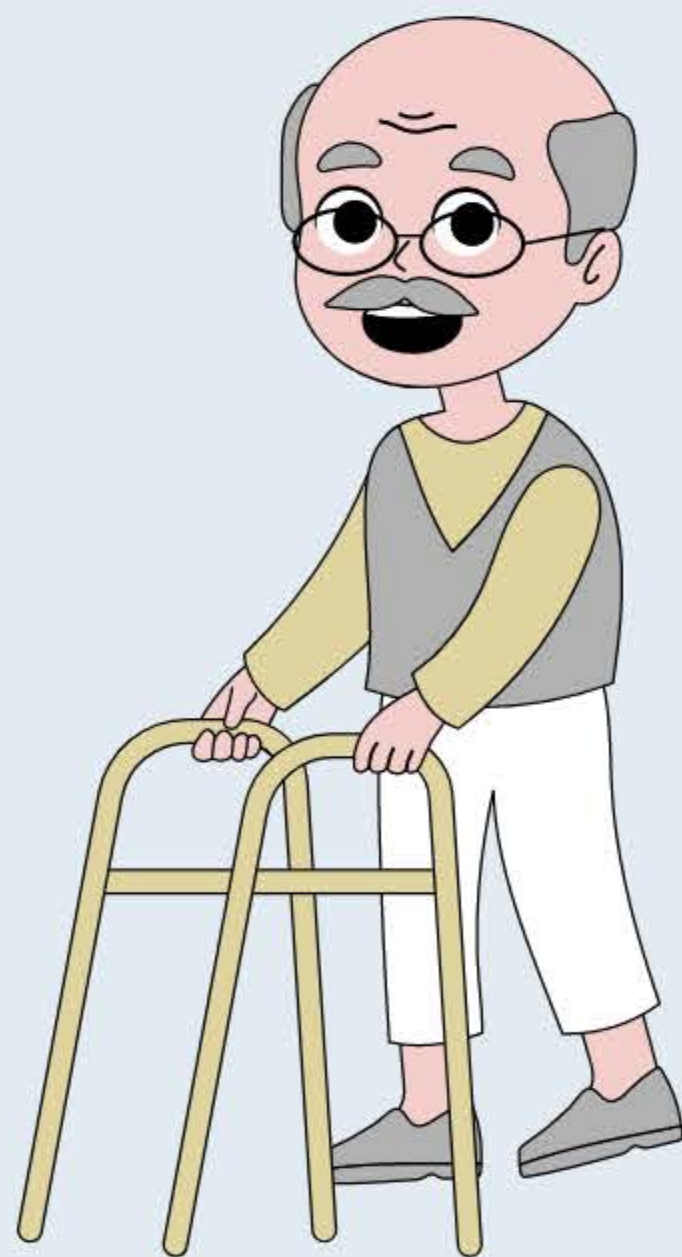
Elders' functional decline leads to a loss of independence which exacerbates the perception of being a burden. The loss of personal autonomy contributes to the feeling of burdensomeness.  
There is a greater degree of perceived burdensomeness when older adults require help for activities of daily life.<sup>5</sup>  
Dependence requires someone to care for them which results in the elderly worrying for their caregiver's wellness. They worry about the negative consequences their dependence has on their family physically, emotionally and financially.  
When elders have to rely on younger generations to provide care for them, their feeling of burdensomeness accentuates.

### ★ Mental state and perceived burdensomeness

Depression and anxiety are linked to greater self perceived burdensomeness.  
Some personality disorders are more likely to accentuate the thought of being a burden than others. Extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experience and conscientiousness are protecting factors against perceived burdensomeness while neuroticism, avoidant, borderline, dependent, obsessive-compulsive, paranoid, schizoid and schizotypal personality traits accentuate the perception of being a burden.<sup>6</sup>

### ★ Society as an enhancer of perceived burdensomeness

The loss of status in society leads to feelings of useless and burdensomeness.<sup>7</sup>  
Lack of social support as well as a negative view on of the elderly contributes to the perception of being a burden to others.



## Conclusion

The identification of the reasons elders may have for feeling like a burden can be categorized into dependence, mental health and society. These help us understand and address elders' needs in order to provide better care for them.

This narrative review implies that:

1. The concept of dependence should be re-examined.
2. We should reverse society's negative view of aging to decrease the incidence of burdensomeness.
3. Support older adults' sense of autonomy and independence.

## Bibliography

