

#DARG2018

Issues with the measurement of informal care in social surveys: Evidence from the ELSA

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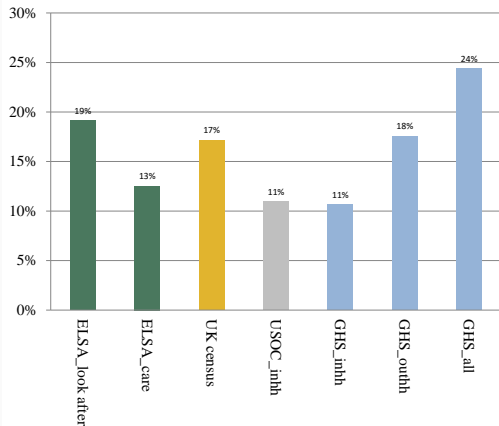
BE THE DIFFERENCE

Introduction

- Informal carers play a significant role in providing care for older people in the UK. And its significance is going to increase in the next two to three decades
- Care in an informal setting can be very ambiguous
- There are various issues with the measurement of informal care, particularly in social surveys

Percentage of 'informal carers' in different surveys

To make it comparable to ELSA, other data have been restricted to people who are aged 50 or over and live in England



Data

Data: ELSA

- English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA): A panel study of people aged 50+ and their partners, living in private households in England
- ELSA was launched in 2002; respondents are interviewed at two-yearly intervals
- Seven waves have been released; the sample was refreshed at wave 3, 4, 6 and 7 to maintain its representativeness
- It includes both care providing (every wave) and receiving questions in some waves (eg wave 6)

Measure: Care Providing (Wave 6)

Did you do any of these activities during the last month, that is since [date one month ago]? If yes, probe: Which ones?

- Paid work
- Self-employed
- Voluntary work
- **Cared for someone**
- Looked after home or family
- ...

Measure: Care Providing (Wave 6)

Did you do any of these activities during the last month, that is since [date one month ago]? If yes, probe: Which ones?

- Paid work
- Self-employed
- Voluntary work
- **Cared for someone**
- Looked after home or family
- ...

Did you **look after** anyone in the past week (including your partner or other people in your household)? *[By 'look after' we mean the active provision of care]*

- Yes
- No

What relation is this person or people to you?

Measure: Care Receiving (Wave 6)

Have you **received help** from anyone with [specific activities], in the last month? *[Including help even if it was for a short time or provided by husband/ wife/ another family member.]*

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

The list of activities:

- Moving
- Dressing/bathing or showering
- Eating
- Shopping for groceries/doing work around the house or garden
- Taking medications
- Managing money

In the last month, Who has helped you with [specific activities]?

Two discrepancies:

- The discrepancy in carers' reports for different questions
- The discrepancy between carers' and carees' reports

First discrepancy

Carer's report

'Give support'

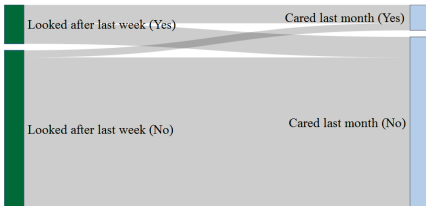
'Provide care'



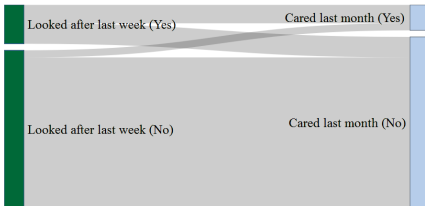
'Look after'

'Give help'

Discrepancies in carers' reports for different questions



Discrepancies in carers' reports for different questions



Under-report

53% of people
'looked after'
did not 'care
for'

		Coef.	S.E.
Female		-0.50***	(0.11)
Age	Under 60 (ref.)	-	-
	60-69	-0.04	(0.14)
	70-79	0.03	(0.17)
	80+	0.35	(0.27)
Memory function score		-0.14	(0.13)
Care hours per week	0-4 hrs (ref.)	-	-
	5-9 hrs	-0.66***	(0.18)
	10-34 hrs	-0.92***	(0.16)
	35+ hrs	-1.07***	(0.17)
Provide care for	Spouse (ref.)	-	-
	Children	0.08	(0.23)
	Grandchildren	0.64***	(0.18)
	Parents/in-laws	-0.50***	(0.17)
	Other relatives	-0.42	(0.26)
	Friends/neighbours	0.23	(0.20)
White		-0.47	(0.32)
Education	Low (ref.)	-	-
	Medium	-0.25	(0.14)
	High	-0.10	(0.16)
Employed		0.40**	(0.14)
Long-standing illness		-0.13	(0.11)
Equivalent household wealth		-0.03	(0.04)

Second discrepancy

Discrepancies between carers' and carees' reports

By carer



By caree



By carer & caree



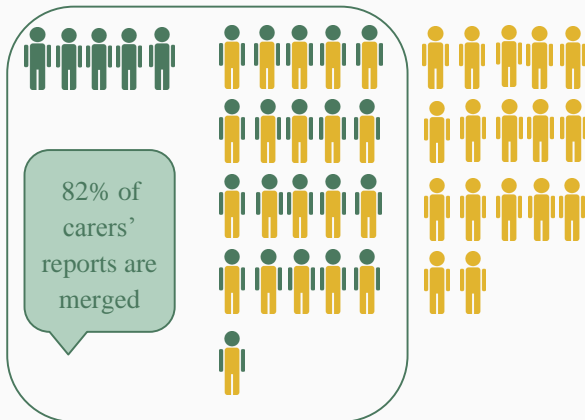
Methodology

- We restricted our data to households where both couples had provided full interviews.
- **Carer dataset:** who 'look after' their spouse & their spouse has ADL, IADL or mobility difficulties
- **Caree dataset:** who receive help from their spouse
- Merge the carer and caree datasets using spouse ids

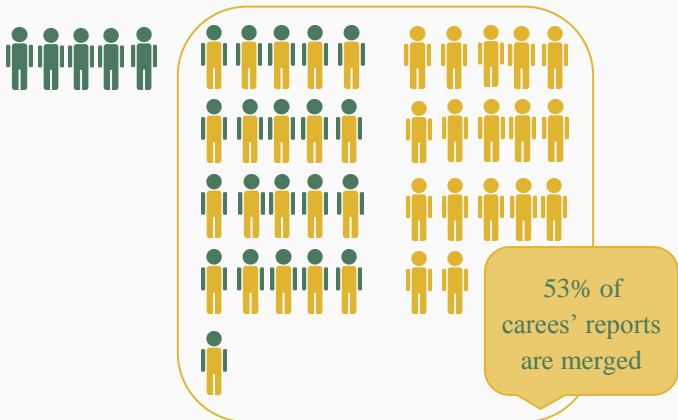
Merging results of the carer and caree datasets



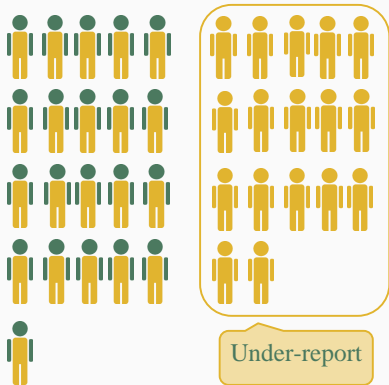
Merging results of the carer and caree datasets



Merging results of the carer and caree datasets



Definition of under-reporting (II)



		Coef.	S.E.
Female		-0.75***	(0.19)
Age	Under 60 (ref.)	-	-
	60-69	0.34	(0.26)
	70-79	0.06	(0.30)
	80+	-0.01	(0.34)
Memory function score		0.17	(0.22)
Care hours per week	0-4 hrs (ref.)	-	-
	5-9 hrs	-1.14***	(0.26)
	10-34 hrs	-1.41***	(0.26)
	35+ hrs	-2.23***	(0.42)
Help with moving		-1.08***	(0.20)
Help with washing/dressing		-0.85***	(0.19)
Help with eating		-1.29**	(0.44)
Help with shopping/doing work around house		-0.54*	(0.22)
Help with taking medication		-0.66	(0.34)
Help with managing money		-0.34	(0.33)
White		1.08*	(0.54)
Education	Low (ref.)	-	-
	Medium	0.13	(0.22)
	High	0.28	(0.27)
Employed		0.34	(0.27)
Long-standing illness		0.05	(0.19)
Equivalised household wealth		0.32	(0.25)

Summary

Summary

- Care providers' reports of their role as a carer is very sensitive to question wording
- There is a striking discrepancy between care providers' and recipients' reports of informal care
- ELSA data shows a clear tendency for care providers to 'under-report' their caring role for their spouse or partner
- Carers with lower care intensity are more likely to 'under-report'
- Some types of activities are more likely to be seen as caring activities than others



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Thank you!