



UNIVERSITY of  
**STIRLING**



#DARG2018

# Carers and Choice Modelling

Nadine Thomas

Dementia and Ageing Research Group,  
University of Stirling

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018

**BE THE DIFFERENCE**

# Background

**Unpaid carers:** those who look after, give help or support to family members, friends, neighbours because of long-term physical or mental ill health or disability, or problems related to old age.



- 759,000 adult carers in Scotland
- Trend towards caring more hours per week
- Caring 35 or more hours per week is associated with detrimental health and wellbeing outcomes
- Carers have their own support needs

# Changes to UK health and social care policy



*"From being a recipient of services, citizens can become actively involved in selecting and shaping the services they receive."* Changing Lives, Scottish Government, 2009

# Research questions

#DARG2018

1. What are the support needs of carers of older people (defined as those over the age of 55) in Scotland?
2. What types of support do carers of older people perceive as useful, accounting for diversity?
3. What are the implications for Self-Directed Support in meeting the needs and preferences of carers of older adults?

# Question 1: Which service would you prefer?

| Service A  | Service B  |
|--|--|
|     |     |
| <p><u>Group support</u></p>  | <p><u>One to one support</u></p>   |
|     |     |
| <p>Provided by<br/><u>hospital stroke service</u></p>                                | <p>Provided by<br/><u>community health service</u></p>                               |
|  1h |  2h |
| <p>Takes <u>1 hour</u> to arrange transport and make the journey</p>                 | <p>Takes <u>2 hours</u> to arrange transport and make the journey</p>                |
|    |    |
| <p>Social and leisure activities are <u>not provided</u></p>                         | <p>Social and leisure activities are <u>provided</u></p>                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>   |

OR

Please tick (✓) ONE box

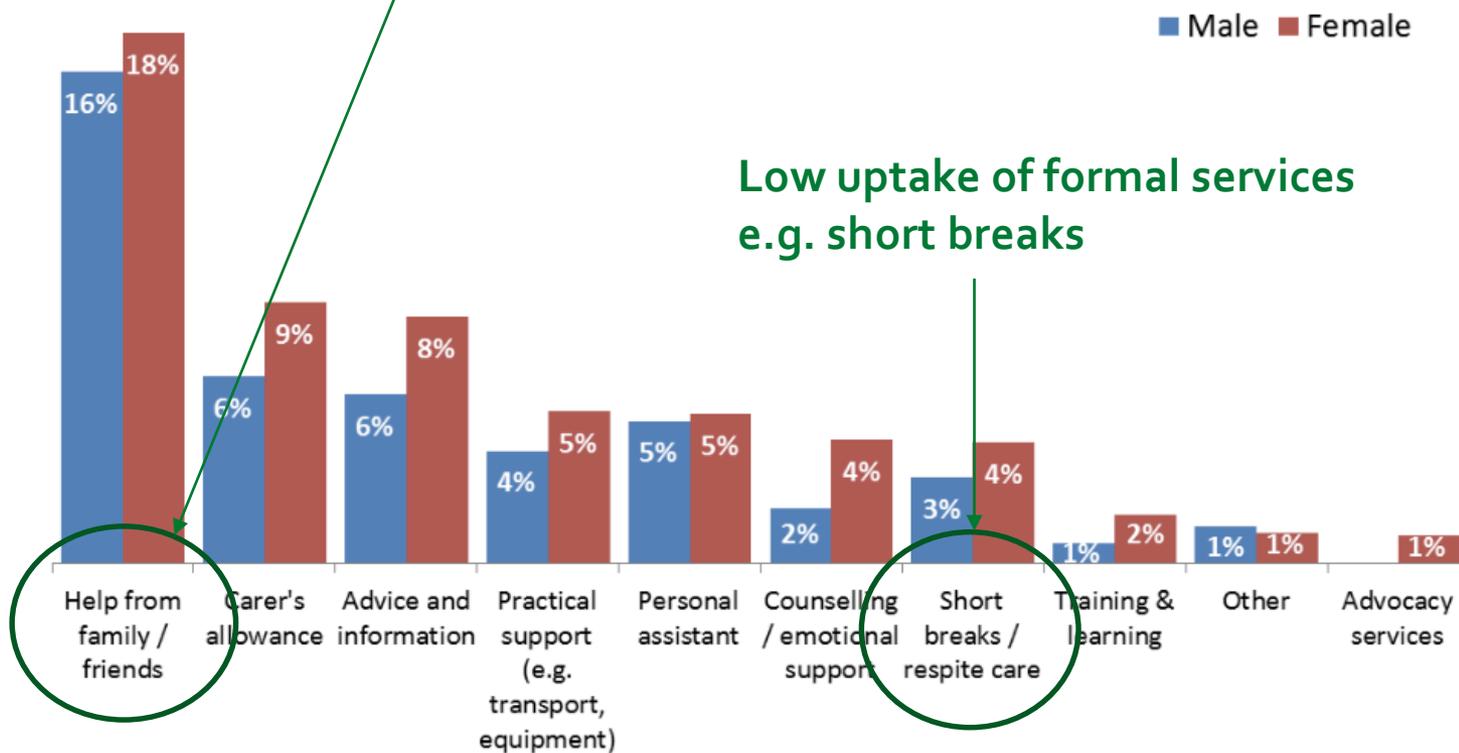
Burton, Christopher R., et al. "Investigating preferences for support with life after stroke: a discrete choice experiment." *BMC health services research* 14.1 (2014): 63

BE THE DIFFERENCE

# Existing survey data

Informal sources of support are important

Literature review



Low uptake of formal services e.g. short breaks

Source: Scottish Health Survey 2012/2013

# Existing survey data

Only a small proportion of carers engage with support groups

**Table 5** Receipt of support services by caregivers, by type of carer

|                                       | Personal care<br>(n = 104)<br>(%) | Keeping comp/<br>an eye on only<br>(n = 111)<br>(%) | Practical help <sup>+</sup><br>(n = 304)<br>(%) | Practical help<br>only<br>(n = 139)<br>(%) | All carers<br>(n = 658)<br>(%) |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|--------------------------------|
| <i>Support services:</i>              |                                   |   |   |  |                                |
| Support groups                        | 3.9                               | 2.7   | 2.6   | 2.2  | 2.9                            |
| Training                              | 3.9                               | <1  | 1.0   | <1   | 1.2                            |
| Relief service <sup>***</sup>         | 14.4                              | 3.6   | 3.6   | 1.4  | 4.9                            |
| Financial support                     | 4.8                               | 1.8   | 2.0   | 2.9  | 2.6                            |
| None of these<br>options <sup>*</sup> | 78.9                              | 91.2  | 91.1  | 92.3                                       | 88.9                           |

\*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$ . \* =  $p < 0.05$ .

Jegermalm, M., 2004. Informal care and support for carers in Sweden: patterns of service receipt among informal caregivers and care recipients. *European Journal of Social Work*, 7(1), pp.7-24.

Literature  
review

# Carers Time Use interview data

Literature  
review

Interview  
data

- Interviews with 62 carers of older people (aged 55 and over) - variously located in Scotland, England and Wales
- 50 Female, 12 Male: 22 co-resident 40 not co-resident
- Primarily on the topic of time use
- **“Do you feel you have enough time to do other things?”**

# Carers Time Use interview data

Literature  
review

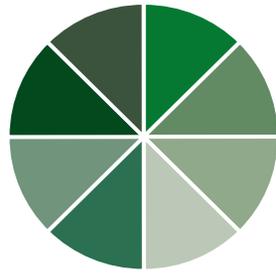
Interview  
data

- “Do you feel you have enough time to do other things?”



- Preferences varying by age group (51-60 hobbies, 71-80 outings, 80+ no perceived need)
- Friends and neighbours more likely to consider time with care recipient in their break

# Focus groups



Literature  
review

Interview  
data

Focus  
groups

Three focus groups with carers across Lanark

The purpose of focus groups is to **attributes** are realistic and trade-able

To sense-check the context of choice scenarios for short breaks

- Types of support service
- Information and advice
  - Practical support
  - Counselling and emotional support
  - Short breaks
  - Training and education
  - Financial support
  - Advocacy services
  - Personal assistant

# Discrete Choice Questionnaire

Develop an online questionnaire to identify the distribution of preferences, and analyse any impact contextual variables have on them

Data will be collected from ~500 carers in collaboration with National Carers Organisations

A. Information about me and current behaviour

B. Stated choice experiment

C. Personal attitudes and evaluation

Literature review

Interview data

Focus groups

Next steps

# Key messages

Literature review

Interview data

Focus groups

Next steps

- Carers of older adults have a diverse profile, with different needs and preferences with regard to their own support
- Discrete choice methodology can examine the patterning of preferences, which can be used to inform the allocation of resources
- Revealed preferences suggest generic preferences for family and friends to deliver support, and heterogeneity of preferences towards short breaks

# Thank you for listening!

Literature  
review

Interview  
data

Focus  
groups



Nadine Thomas  
[nadine.thomas@stir.ac.uk](mailto:nadine.thomas@stir.ac.uk)



Prof Alison Bowes  
[a.m.bowes@stir.ac.uk](mailto:a.m.bowes@stir.ac.uk)



Dr Alison Dawson  
[a.s.f.dawson@stir.ac.uk](mailto:a.s.f.dawson@stir.ac.uk)

Next  
steps