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# Overcoming Barriers Unpaid Care and Employment in England

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# Introduction

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# Overcoming Barriers: Unpaid Care & Employment

## Project in brief

- Increasing emphasis in social policy on combining provision of unpaid care and employment
- However, carers face barriers to remaining in employment
- Key barrier is difficulty many carers face in obtaining support and services for **person cared for**
- ‘Dual focus’ of caring: carer & cared-for (Twigg 1996)
- This 12-month scoping study (Jan-Dec 2011) aims to
  - identify local authority interventions, provided to the cared-for person, that would support working carers in England to remain in employment
  - evaluate costs of these interventions to local authorities and potential savings to public sector

# Background: working carers in England

- Millions of people in England are unpaid 'carers'  
They provide care to family, partners or friends who are ill, frail or have a disability
- Many unpaid carers are of 'working age' – adult women under 60 years and men under 65 years
- There are 4.27 million carers of working age in Britain, of whom 2.83 million are in paid employment (2001 Census)
- 1.44 million working age carers in Britain are not in paid employment
- Key to improving employment rates of working age people is to improve employment rates of carers

# Background: government policy

- Recent Carers Strategy puts priority on “supporting people of working age with caring responsibilities to remain in work, if they wish to do so” (HMG 2010: 15)
- Emphasis is on flexible working arrangements
- However, increasing emphasis also on ‘replacement care’ for the cared-for person
- Carers Strategy emphasises developing social care markets, partly to meet carers’ needs for “replacement care to enable them to continue to work” (HMG 2010: 16)
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will pay for replacement care to enable carers to participate in interviews and training

# Background: economics of interventions

- Emphasis in Department of Health (DH) eligibility criteria on local authority provision of services to cared-for person, where carer's employment is at risk
- How far do councils provide services for cared-for person to support carers in employment?
- Considerable costs if local authorities intervene systematically to sustain carers in employment by providing services for care-recipients
- May be offset by wider financial gains to public sector, e.g. savings in Carers' Allowance
- Concept of 'place-based' initiatives: one public sector organisation invests, another benefits

# Stages of project

## (1) Literature and practice review

- review of literature on unpaid care and employment
- review of practice by local councils to support carers in employment
- consultation with key stake-holders

## (2) Analysis of large-scale survey data

- English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA)
- Survey of Carers in Households in England 2009/10

## (3) Synthesis and proposals for further research

- initial economic modelling of costs and savings of interventions
- development of a potential follow-on study
- communication of findings

# Carer, user and practitioner involvement

## (1) Project Advisory Group

- Carers, users and practitioners from PSSRU Service User and Carer Advisory Group and SSCR User, Carer, Practitioner Reference Group
- Representatives of organisations concerned with supporting carers and users (Carers UK and Age UK)
- Representative from a local authority (Kent County Council)
- Key stakeholders (Department of Health, Department for Work and Pensions)
- Eminent scholar: Dr Hilary Arksey

## (2) Consultation with key stakeholders



# Initial findings

- Initial findings from work to date
  - literature review
  - practice review
  - data analysis (ELSA)
- Initial findings relate to two key areas
  - unpaid care and employment
  - research and practice relating to service interventions to support carers in employment

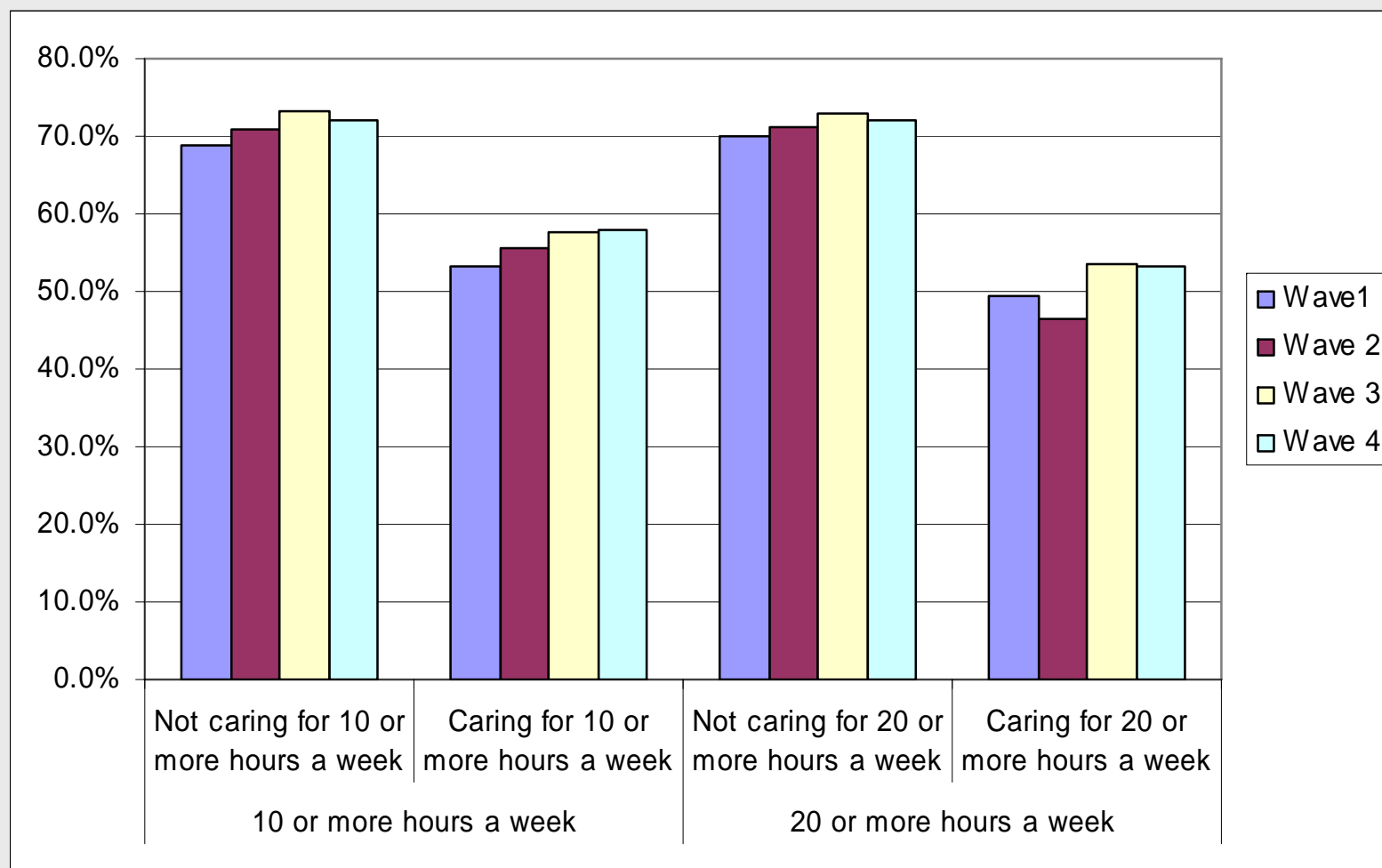
# Initial findings: unpaid care and employment

- Literature search identified 160 recent papers on unpaid care and employment
  - 30 subject of detailed study, 18 reviewed so far
- Unpaid care provision has a negative effect on employment especially if provided for long hours or on co-resident basis (Carmichael et al 2010, Heitmueller 2007)
- Estimated 400,000 people of working age in England say they left employment to provide care (based on *2009/10 Survey of Carers in Households in England* (NHS Information Centre (IC) 2010)
- Affected by age, gender, marital status, health, wage rates, type of work (Henz 2004, 2006, Carmichael & Charles 1998)

## Thresholds at which caring affects employment

- Some studies show employment is negatively affected when care is provided for 20 or more hours a week (Carmichael et al 2010, Heitmueller 2007)
- But most studies do not test for alternative thresholds
- When tested, threshold of 10 or more hours of care a week also identified (Carmichael & Charles 2003a, 2003b)
- People providing care at less than threshold may require little support - policy should aim to support carers in employment where care is above threshold
- Thresholds being examined in our research using ELSA data
- Longitudinal data on people in England aged 50+, four 'waves', first collected in 2002/3, repeated every 2 years
- Includes information on both unpaid care and employment

## ELSA analysis – Employment rate by provision of care for 10 and 20 or more hours a week – WOMEN aged 50 to 59



# Initial findings: service interventions

- Practice review is using a number of sources
  - Carers, Employment and Services (CES) reports (CIRCLE)
  - Regional Factsheets (CIRCLE)
  - information on Carers Strategy Demonstrator sites
  - Care Quality Commission Performance Assessment Reports
- Types of support for carers in employment
  - councils' identification of own employees as carers
  - promotion of carer-friendly or flexible working
  - information, advice, training to help carers re-enter labour market
- Little evidence so far that councils systematically use services for cared-for person as means of supporting carers in employment

# Receipt of services by care-recipients of working carers

- Services for cared-for person may be accessed through carers' assessments
- Only 4% of carers working full-time, and 6% working part-time, are offered assessment or review (IC 2010)
- Only 13% of carers say main person cared for has home care worker and 8% attend day centre (IC 2010)
- Only around a quarter of employed carers have adequate support from formal services to enable them to combine work and care (Yeandle et al 2007)
- No research identified so far on effectiveness of social care services to support carers in employment in England

# Conclusions

- So far, little research identified in England on social care interventions, provided to cared-for person, that would enable carers to remain in employment
- Research gap reflected in current practice
- Aim of 'Overcoming Barriers' project is to contribute to filling gaps

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