

An ordinary life?

Caring in Northern Ireland today

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CARERS Northern Ireland
the voice of carers



Every year in the UK.....

10,000 people have a stroke

36,000 people are seriously injured in a road accident

27,000 children are born or diagnosed with a serious disability or rare syndrome

220,000 are diagnosed with cancer

2,500 are diagnosed with MS

Anyone's life can change in an instant



Does Care in the Community equal care by the community?

Who is caring in Northern Ireland
today?

What is the cost of unpaid care?



2010 Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) Survey

- Up to date (October to December 2010)
- Reliable (1205 adults, representative sample)
- Comparable with both 2006 NILT and 1994 NI Social Attitudes Survey (NISA)
- Additional information to add to our understanding



Key findings (1)

One quarter of respondents (26%) had caring responsibilities

- Same level as 1994
- Slightly higher than 2006
- Demographic factors such as geographical mobility, women in paid work, changes in family and community structure are not undermining people's commitment to caring



Key findings (2)

30% of carers spend 30 hours or more per week caring

18% of carers spend 60 hours per week or more – this is a huge commitment

- Same as 2006
- Significant because of known health impacts of caring for 20 hpw or more
- 52% living with those they care for spend 60 hpw



Key findings (3)

27% of carers meet the minimum Carers Allowance threshold of caring for 35hpw

- This is new and valuable information
- May help DSD set targets for take-up of carer benefits
- Many carers will still not be eligible due to age or overlapping benefit regulations



Key findings (4)

Caring is largely a family affair, with the proportion caring for neighbours or friends remaining low at just 6% of all carers

- A parent or parent-in-law is the person most likely to be cared for
- Both men and women provide care for a wide range of family members
- Overall, 22% of men are carers, compared with 30% of women



Key findings (5)

The results demonstrate the impact of caring on the individual's health, emotional well-being and financial situation

- one in five carers feel under pressure most of the time, and another 40% feel this sometimes
- 64% of carers say that their health is excellent or good compared to 72% of non-carers of their own age
- carers (63%) are more likely than non-carers (55%) to say that their income had fallen behind prices



Key findings (6)

For the first time, NILT tried to identify the satisfactions as well as the difficulties that can come with the caring role

- three quarters of carers are happy most of the time that they are able to help someone
- only 6 percent do not feel this
- six out of ten (58%) feel that they are giving something back most of the time, and a further 28 percent feel this sometimes



Summary

- Large numbers of people in Northern Ireland provide many hours of support to others
- Many of us will care for a family member at some point in our lives, some for a long time
- Carers do want to care, and most feel happy that they are able to give something back
- Carers need help to protect their own financial security, health and well-being
- We need to make sure that carers have the same chance as anyone else of an ordinary life

