

2022 NATIONAL CARER SURVEY

Caring for an older person

Fact sheet 1, February 2023

The 2022 National Carer Survey heard from a total of 6,825 carers from across Australia. Around half (3,191) were caring for someone aged 65 or older. The majority (78.3%) of these respondents identified as female, however, significantly more men were engaged in aged care than in any other carer cohort. Carers of those aged 65+ were also generally ageing themselves: on average they are 65.6 years old, with 1 in 4 aged 74 years or older. More than 1 in 5 were born overseas; more than 1 in 10 spoke a language other than English at home and 1.6% identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

The 2022 National Carer Survey was conducted from June to July 2022 by Carers NSW with the support of the State and Territory Carer Organisations and funding from the NSW Government. A carer is any individual who provides care and support to a family member or friend who lives with a disability, mental illness, alcohol or drug dependency, chronic condition, terminal illness or who is frail due to age.

About the people they care for

Most commonly, respondents were caring for their partner or their parents. In addition to caring for someone older, 12.5% also were caring for a child (including adult children) living with a health condition or disability. The majority (69.6%) reported that the person they cared for experienced more than one condition. The people cared for by respondents were on average 75.6 years of age.



1 in 4
74 years or older

About the caring experience

Most respondents cared for one person (75.5%), and they were most commonly the sole carer (61.3%), caring for an average of 9 years. Respondents typically spent 98 hours per week caring, with 48.3% providing 24/7 care. Only 1 in 4 carers were not living with the person they care for.

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Experiences accessing services

The Survey asked carers about their experience of aged care and other services, and how included and supported they felt when accessing these services with or on behalf of the person they care for. Most (71%) of those caring for someone aged 65+ were engaged with aged care services, however, nearly 1 in 5 were caring for someone who does not receive formal, long term-supports.

Overall, most carers felt that aged care services involved them in planning and decision making. However, 1 in 3 reported not being asked about their needs as a carer and a similar proportion reported that aged care services didn't meet their needs. Around 1 in 3 reported that aged care services allowed them to stay in or get back to paid work.



1 in 3
asked about their
needs as a carer

The most frequently reported issues with aged care services were interruptions and cancellations due to COVID-19 restrictions (40.9%), long wait times for services (39.9%) and assessments (33.4%), difficulty finding information (34.3%), and that it takes too much time and energy to organise these services (30.2%).

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**I do my best
to care for my
dad with little
assistance.**

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Key challenges

Approximately half of respondents caring for someone aged 65+ reported financial stress, with 1 in 12 reporting financial distress. 50% reported being socially isolated and 50% reported high/very high psychological distress. While respondents who were caring for someone aged 65+ reported higher wellbeing than other carers, they still reported lower wellbeing than the population average.

Key points

- Carers of older people are more likely than other carers to be older themselves
- Carers of people who are accessing aged care services are often included in discussions about services, but many are not asked about their own needs
- Carers of older people report better wellbeing than other carers, however their wellbeing is still lower than the population average.