

Section

6

Carers

Introduction

The FRS collects information on those giving and receiving help on an informal basis, that is, not as part of a paid job. What should be counted as care is not prescriptively defined. Respondents are asked if anyone in the household receives care, or if anyone gives care to anyone living outside the household.

Questions are then asked about who is receiving the help or being looked after. There are then follow-up questions for each person named about who provides the help and frequency.

Note that the follow-up questions are only asked for those receiving help at least once a week.

Contents and points to note when interpreting tables

Tables 6.1 to 6.4 look at those providing care. Carers are counted only once, even if they look after more than one individual. Carers outside the household are not included in these tables as they are not identified individually within the questionnaire, and they may also produce instances of double counting.

Tables 6.2 and 6.4 show information on all informal carers. Tables 6.1 and 6.3 only show adult informal carers. This is because Table 6.3 looks at employment status while there are small sample sizes in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 provides analysis of adult informal carers by age, sex and frequency of care.

Table 6.2 looks at the sex of the carer and their relationship with the person being cared for. Those giving care to more than one person have been combined into one group. For non-household members, more than one person receiving care means more than one entry in either the "relative", "friend or neighbour", "client of voluntary organisation" or "other non-household" group. However, if, for example, someone cared for more than one friend or neighbour, this would not be picked up by the questionnaire.

Table 6.3 shows the sex and employment status of adult carers, using ILO definitions of employment in harmonisation with other government surveys.

Tables 6.5 and 6.6 look at household members receiving care. An individual is recorded as receiving care if they receive care from another person in the household, and/or from someone outside the household. They are counted only once no matter how many people provide care to them. In the NI 2003-04 sample, the number receiving care was lower than the number providing care (232 and 337 respectively). This will be, in part, because many recipients of care received help from more than one person within their household – each of whom was recorded as a separate carer.

Table 6.5 provides analysis of household members receiving care by sex and frequency of care.

Tables 6.4 and 6.6 show the main source of income received by the household in which the carer and the person being cared for live respectively, by sex. "Main source" is calculated as the category of income that gives the highest amount, and results should be interpreted with caution since some households may have more than one source that provides similar proportions.

It should also be noted that the FRS does not record information on individuals in retirement or nursing homes. This means that figures relating to the most elderly individuals may not be representative of the Northern Ireland population, as many of those who require care at this age will have moved into homes where they can receive more frequent help.

Key definitions used

(For a full explanation of all definitions please refer to the Glossary)

- Adult
- Age
- Child
- Employment status
- Household
- Individuals
- Informal Carers
- Main source of weekly income
- Sources of income
- Total weekly household income

Changes to tables between 2002-03 and 2003-04

Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit were introduced in April 2003, and are included in Tables 6.4 and 6.6 combined with other Tax Credits (see Introduction for further details).

Pension Credit was introduced from October 2003 and is included in Tables 6.4 and 6.6 combined with other Tax Credits (see Introduction for further details).

Section 6 Summary

42% of informal carers provide '10 or more' hours of care per week.

15% of informal carers provide varying hours of care in excess of 35 hours.

20% of informal carers are caring for a partner or spouse.

43% of informal carers providing care for relatives are non-household members.

41% of adult informal carers are also in full time or part time employment.

81% of those receiving care are attended to at least once a day, with 44% receiving care continuously.

45% of those receiving care stated Retirement pension (state and other) as their main source of income; 20% from employment; 17% disability benefits; 17% other benefits; and 1% other.

Table 6.1: Informal adult carers by sex, age and number of hours per week providing care

						Percentage of informal carers
Informal carers	Less than 10	10 or more	Varies, less than 35 hours	Varies more than 35 hours	Undefined	Sample size (=100%)
All carers						
16 to 44	42	43	6	9	.	133
45 or over	30	41	9	19	.	190
All male carers	37	37	8	18	.	124
All female carers	34	45	8	13	.	199
All carers	35	42	8	15	.	323

Table 6.2 Informal carers¹ by relationship to person being cared for and whether living in or outside the household

				Percentage of informal carers
Person being cared for	Carers		All informal carers	
	Male	Female		
Household member				
Parent	11	10	10	
Partner/spouse/cohabitee	30	13	20	
Son/Daughter	12	12	12	
Brother/Sister	1	4	3	
Other relative	6	2	3	
Non relative	.	1	-	
Non household member				
Relative	34	49	43	
Friend/neighbour	2	2	2	
Client of voluntary organisation	1	-	1	
Other non-household	1	-	-	
More than one person cared for	4	7	5	
Sample size (=100%)	129	208	337	

1. Includes children aged 15 and under

Table 6.3 Adult informal carers by employment status and sex

Employment status	Percentage of adults					
	Adult carers			All adults		
	Male	Female	All adult carers	Male	Female	All adults
Employee						
full time	34	29	31	48	31	39
part time	1	17	10	4	17	11
Self employed						
full time	12	2	6	13	2	8
part time	1	1	1	1	2	1
ILO unemployed	3	1	2	3	1	2
Retired	26	20	22	16	24	20
Permanently sick or disabled	12	8	10	9	10	9
Other inactive	11	23	18	5	14	10
Sample size (=100%)	124	199	323	1,571	1,799	3,370

Table 6.4: Informal carers¹ by sex, main source of total weekly household income and hours caring

Main source of household income	Percentage of informal carers							
	Less than 10	10 or more	Varies,		Undefined	Male Carers	Female Carers	All Carers
			less than 35 hours	more than 35 hours				
All carers								
Wages and salaries	64	44	.	.	.	39	50	46
Self employment income	12	6	.	.	.	11	8	9
Investments	.	1	.	.	.	1	.	-
Tax Credits	1	1	.	.	.	.	1	1
Retirement Pension plus any IS / MIG / Pension Credit	6	15	.	.	.	16	13	14
Other pensions	7	5	.	.	.	9	5	6
Disability related state support	1	13	.	.	.	11	8	9
Other state support	7	15	.	.	.	13	14	13
Other sources	1	2	.	.	.	1	1	1
Sample size (=100%)	118	149	24	46	.	129	208	337

1. Includes children aged 15 and under

Table 6.5: Household members receiving care by sex, age and frequency of care

Age	Frequency of help					Percentage of individuals
	Continuously	Several times a day	Once or twice a day	Several times a week	Once a week	Sample size (=100%)
All individuals						
64 and under	45	30	15	8	1	101
65+	42	16	15	16	11	131
All males receiving care	.	.	.	.	.	91
All females receiving care	42	20	16	15	7	141
All those receiving care	44	22	15	12	7	232

Table 6.6 Household members receiving care by main source of total weekly household income and sex

Main source of household income	Individuals receiving care			Percentage of individuals		
	Male	Female	All receiving care	Male	Female	All individuals
Wages and salaries	.	15	17	57	52	54
Self employment income	.	2	3	13	11	12
Investments	.	.	-	-	-	-
Tax Credits	.	-	-	1	2	2
Retirement Pension plus any IS / MIG / PC	.	43	39	7	11	9
Other pensions	.	7	6	4	4	4
Disability related state support	.	15	17	4	4	4
Other state support	.	18	17	12	14	13
Other sources	.	.	1	1	1	1
Sample size (=100%)	91	141	232	2,245	2,446	4,691

