

Characteristics of and living arrangements amongst informal carers at the 2011 and 2001 Censuses: stability, change and transition

James Robards^{a*}, Maria Evandrou^{a,b,c}, Jane Falkingham^{a,b}, Athina Vlachantoni^{a,b,c}

^aEPSRC Care Life Cycle, Social Sciences, University of Southampton, SO17 1BJ, UK

^bESRC Centre for Population Change, Social Sciences, University of Southampton, SO17 1BJ, UK

^cCentre for Research on Ageing, Social Sciences, University of Southampton, SO17 1BJ, UK

*james.robards@soton.ac.uk, telephone 023 8059 8981

1. Introduction

The EPSRC Care Life Cycle (CLC) research project at the University of Southampton is examining and modelling the supply of and demand for social care in the context of an ageing population. A crucial component of social care in England and Wales is the supply of informal care. In the 2001 and 2011 United Kingdom Censuses, questions were included asking about the provision of informal care. Results from aggregate 2011 Census data show that informal caring increased from 2001; especially among those providing 20-49 hours and 50 hours or more care per week¹. A gendered dimension to unpaid care provision was also found with females making up 58% of informal carers at 2011². The Office for National Statistics Longitudinal Study (ONS LS) is a 1% sample of 2011 England and Wales census records linked to earlier census responses (1971, 1981, 1991 and 2001). This provides information on the life course of study members. Using this data it is possible to follow up carers from 2001 and examine their caring and other characteristics ten years later.

2. The demographic and socio-economic characteristics of informal carers in 2011 and in 2001.

Research questions - examining informal carers at 2011 in comparison to 2001

- What is the prevalence of informal caring and the number of hours of care provided (per week) in 2011, and how do such patterns differ from 2001?
- What are the determinants of informal caring and how do they differ from 2001?

Selected results

- At 2011 provision of 50 hours or more informal care per week was higher at the oldest ages; particularly among men.
- Results from multivariate analyses suggest that there is stability in the characteristics associated with any level of informal caring at 2001 and 2011.

3. Transitions in-and-out of informal care between 2001 and 2011.

Research questions – examining ‘transitions’ between informal caring and non-caring roles

- Between the 2001 and 2011 Census points, what proportion of individuals transitioned between caring and non-caring roles?
- What are the characteristics of those who transitioned between caring and non-caring roles?
- What are the determinants of caring at 2011 for the carers at 2001?

Selected results

- This is the first analysis to consider and present results for informal carers at 2001 and whether they were caring ten years later.
- Over one third of those caring at the 2001 census were also caring ten years later.
- Of all informal carers at both 2001 and 2011, a total of 16.8% were providing 50 hours or more care per week at both dates.
- Among those providing 50 hours or more care per week in 2001, 55% did not provide care at 2011.
- Informal carers who were providing care at 2001 and 2011 were mainly aged between 55-85 years in 2011.
- Future work will focus on the examination of the health status of informal carers at the two Census points.

¹ Office for National Statistics (2013) *2011 Census Analysis: Unpaid care in England and Wales, 2011 and comparison with 2001*, 15 February 2013.

² Office for National Statistics (2013) *Inequality in the provision of unpaid care in England and Wales*, 16 May 2013.