

Carers Census - Baseline data

Introduction:

One of the key things we want to measure is the impact of the new Carers Act. In order to do this we need a good understanding of how many carers are currently known to local authorities so that we can determine if implementation of the Act results in increased demand for services.

The current draft data specification is quite extensive and asks for a lot of information which is not recorded locally in such a way that it can be easily extracted from information systems.

For the baseline data, we need to get a balance between asking for a lot of detailed information and ensuring that we receive a count of all carers who are known to the local area. Therefore for the baseline period, propose that we ask for a minimum number of mandatory fields to be submitted and for local areas to expand the variables that they submit as they develop their systems.

Proposal for baseline data:

The scope for this data is the same as that set out in the current draft data specification which is as follows:

Include in Survey all persons who meet any of the following criteria:

- have had an assessment or review of their needs as carers during the reporting period; or
- have been offered a carer's assessment, during the reporting period (including those who turned down the offer of assessment); or
- have requested a carer's assessment, during the reporting period; or
- have received one or more of the support services in the list below at any time during the reporting period; or
- care for a person who has received respite or replacement care at any time during the reporting period;

Support services

A carer who has received one or more of the services listed below should be included in the data returned.

- short breaks or respite
- information and advice
- practical support (e.g. transport, equipment, adaptations)
- counselling or emotional support
- training or learning
- advocacy services
- help applying for carer's allowance and other financial assistance
- a "carers payment" made by a local authority or IJB

It is important that the scope is the same for both the baseline data and the on-going data collection as this will allow us to determine the impact following implementation of the Carers Act.

Proposed variables:

For each carer:

- UniqueID or CHI
- Postcode
- Date of birth / age
- Gender
- Hours spent caring each week (hour bands)

Assessment:

- Date assessment offered / requested
- Type of assessment – new/review
- Date assessment completed
- Date assessment declined
- Eligible for support (y/n)

The important thing here is capturing the volume of contact with carers taking place rather than the detail of these carers circumstances. Therefore we have tried to keep these variables to an absolute minimum to ensure that data is returned and of good quality.

Recommendation:

The group is asked to agree which variables are key for the baseline data collection.