Attitudes to Homecare in England
Research Conducted by Guardian Professional in association with
Department of Health

Top line Findings

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Background

- Guardian Professional, together with Department of Health, have produced this piece of research in order to understand current attitudes towards Homecare in England.

- The survey, which is the basis of this research, went out to the entire Guardian Professional public sector and voluntary sector database (over 60,000 people).

- The survey was released on 15th July 2013 and closed on 7th August 2013.

- 2,020 people started this survey and 1,443 completed it, representing a completion rate of just over 70%.
Research Objectives

Support the aims of the Homecare Innovation Challenge by:

• helping people to think about homecare
• asking about people’s perception and experience of homecare
• asking about people’s ideas to improve homecare
• collating and demonstrating people’s views in a way that:
  o stimulates further debate and
  o supports all relevant people and organisations to make improvements
Report Structure

1. Profile of respondents
2. Views on homecare in England
3. Involvement
4. Challenges
5. Conclusions
1. PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS
Involvement in Homecare

Q1. How are you involved in homecare? Please select the one option that best describes how you are involved

- Friend/relative of person receiving/who has received homecare: 36%
- Homecare provider: 24%
- Work in a council: 18%
- Care worker: 10%
- Recipient of homecare: 3%
- Volunteer: 2%

The survey reached out to a lot of people informally involved in homecare.
Work situation

Q2. What best describes your work situation? Please select one option

- Employed in the public sector: 35%
- Employed in the private sector: 20%
- Employed in the voluntary and community sector: 20%
- Self-employed: 9%
- Retired: 9%
- Unemployed: 3%
- Student: 2%

Survey showed a wide spread of formal employment...
Involvement in homecare by work situation (no. of respondents)

... And a large number of informal homecarers
1. PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Age and gender

Q3. Your gender?

- Male: 27%
- Female: 73%

Q4. Your age?

- 16-29: 7%
- 30-49: 37%
- 50-64: 45%
- 65+: 9%

Respondents are female-centric and overwhelmingly 30-64 age group
Male respondents more likely to work for formal providers. Females more likely to be informal carers.
**Location**

*Q5. This survey relates to homecare in England. Where do you live?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire and The Humber</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside England</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regional breakdown reflects the working population in England at large (*)

(*) https://almanac.ukces.org.uk/context/A5/A5.2_Population_by_Region.xls
2. VIEWS ON HOMECARE IN ENGLAND
Q6. How would you rate your own experiences of homecare in England within the last two years?

Local councils that assess needs, arrange homecare and offer homecare information
- Excellent: 2%
- Good: 15%
- Adequate: 33%
- Poor: 27%
- Very Poor: 12%
- Don’t know/no opinion: 10%

Organisations that provide homecare that you have experience of
- Excellent: 5%
- Good: 23%
- Adequate: 35%
- Poor: 20%
- Very Poor: 8%
- Don’t know/no opinion: 9%

Individual care workers you have experience of
- Excellent: 12%
- Good: 34%
- Adequate: 28%
- Poor: 12%
- Very Poor: 3%
- Don’t know/no opinion: 10%

Overall
- Excellent: 3%
- Good: 23%
- Adequate: 37%
- Poor: 22%
- Very Poor: 6%
- Don’t know/no opinion: 9%

Respondents are more positive about individuals than about organisations.
Q7. Please select the **top 3 factors** that are the most important in offering good homecare – with 1 being the most important?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Total Rankings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient time for care</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly, respectful, capable care workers</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice about services (e.g. when visits happen, who visits, what care workers do)</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good management of care staff and services</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay and conditions of care workers</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication between formal care workers and families/friends/carers</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect for homecare as a career</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of care provider</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication between formal care workers and local community groups</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

'Sufficient time for care' and 'friendly, respectful, capable care workers’ were considered to be in the top 3 priorities for the majority of respondents.

The personal touch, rather than choice, organisations or structures, comes out top.
Q7. Please select the **top 3 factors** that are the most important in offering good homecare – with 1 being the most important?

![Bar chart showing the top 3 factors for good homecare]

- **Friendly, respectful, capable care workers**: 48% 30% 22%
- **Sufficient time for care**: 39% 37% 23%
- **Choice about services (e.g. when visits happen, who visits, what care workers do)**: 37% 33% 30%
- **Good management of care staff and services**: 26% 33% 41%
- **Pay and conditions of care workers**: 22% 36% 42%
- **Communication between formal care workers and families/friends/carers**: 22% 34% 44%
- **Respect for homecare as a career**: 26% 23% 51%
- **Choice of care provider**: 36% 33% 31%
- **Communication between formal care workers and local community groups**: 11% 44% 45%

*These tended to be seen as the most important factors*

*Less than a quarter of respondents put these in their top 3 most important factors*
Q10. Based on your experience in the last two years, how far do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the role of the Council in arranging homecare?

- **Councils provide good information about homecare services**
  - Strongly agree: 3%
  - Agree: 20%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 29%
  - Disagree: 26%
  - Strongly disagree: 14%
  - Don’t know/no opinion: 7%

- **Councils work well with others to arrange good quality homecare**
  - Strongly agree: 3%
  - Agree: 18%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 28%
  - Disagree: 30%
  - Strongly disagree: 14%
  - Don’t know/no opinion: 7%

- **Councils positively influence the quality of homecare received**
  - Strongly agree: 10%
  - Agree: 24%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 22%
  - Disagree: 23%
  - Strongly disagree: 15%
  - Don’t know/no opinion: 7%

Fewer than 4 in 10 respondents were positive about any of the roles of the Council.
Q10 subdivided by type of involvement in homecare
Q10. Based on your experience in the last two years, how far do you agree or disagree that:

**Councils provide good information about homecare services?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Don’t know/no opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work in a council (214)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>(3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care worker (107)</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>(10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homecare provider (310)</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>(4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend/relative of person receiving/who has received homecare (452)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>(8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipient of homecare (46 *)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>(11%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Caution – low base size*

Intended recipients of information were more likely to be dissatisfied with its quality.
Q10. Based on your experience in the last two years, how far do you agree or disagree that:

**Councils work well with others to arrange good quality homecare?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don’t know/no opinion

### Work in a council (214)
- Strongly agree: 6%
- Agree: 38%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 30%
- Disagree: 20%
- Strongly disagree: 4%
- Don’t know/no opinion: 3%

### Care worker (107)
- Strongly agree: 7%
- Agree: 17%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 26%
- Disagree: 37%
- Strongly disagree: 6%
- Don’t know/no opinion: 7%

### Homecare provider (310)
- Strongly agree: 3%
- Agree: 14%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 22%
- Disagree: 37%
- Strongly disagree: 20%
- Don’t know/no opinion: 4%

### Friend/relative of person receiving/who has received homecare (452)
- Strongly agree: 2%
- Agree: 14%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 29%
- Disagree: 29%
- Strongly disagree: 18%
- Don’t know/no opinion: 9%

### Recipient of homecare (46 *)
- Strongly agree: 0%
- Agree: 17%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 24%
- Disagree: 26%
- Strongly disagree: 20%
- Don’t know/no opinion: 13%

* Caution – low base size

Those working for the council agreed more than other groups and homecare providers were least likely to agree.
Q10. Based on your experience in the last two years, how far do you agree or disagree that:  
_Councils positively influence the quality of homecare received?_

Contrasting views between those working in the council and homecare providers

- Work in a council (213)
  - Strongly agree: 14%
  - Agree: 50%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 15%
  - Disagree: 17%
  - Strongly disagree: 2%
  - Don’t know/no opinion: 2%

- Care worker (107)
  - Strongly agree: 19%
  - Agree: 18%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 26%
  - Disagree: 23%
  - Strongly disagree: 7%
  - Don’t know/no opinion: 7%

- Homecare provider (308)
  - Strongly agree: 8%
  - Agree: 19%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 19%
  - Disagree: 27%
  - Strongly disagree: 22%
  - Don’t know/no opinion: 4%

- Friend/relative of person receiving/who has received homecare (454)
  - Strongly agree: 7%
  - Agree: 18%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 26%
  - Disagree: 22%
  - Strongly disagree: 17%
  - Don’t know/no opinion: 9%

- Recipient of homecare (47 *)
  - Strongly agree: 13%
  - Agree: 19%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 19%
  - Disagree: 26%
  - Strongly disagree: 13%
  - Don’t know/no opinion: 11%

*Caution – low base size*
Q11. Based on your experience in the last two years, how easy do you think it is to ……

- Make a complaint: 8% Very easy, 29% Quite easy, 18% Neither easy nor difficult, 21% Quite difficult, 13% Very difficult, (12%) Don’t know/no opinion
- Find out about different homecare services: 4% Very easy, 25% Quite easy, 19% Neither easy nor difficult, 37% Quite difficult, 11% Very difficult, (5%) Don’t know/no opinion
- Change care provider or care worker if someone is not happy with their care: 3% Very easy, 14% Quite easy, 13% Neither easy nor difficult, 34% Quite difficult, 22% Very difficult, (13%) Don’t know/no opinion
- Choose how homecare services are delivered (e.g. time of visits, who visits, what care workers do): 2% Very easy, 13% Quite easy, 14% Neither easy nor difficult, 40% Quite difficult, 26% Very difficult, (6%) Don’t know/no opinion

Being able to make active choices about how, and by whom, homecare services are provided were highlighted as areas of most difficulty.
Q11 subdivided by type of involvement in homecare
Q11. Based on your experience in the last two years, how easy do you think it is to:

**Make a complaint**

- **Work in a council (211)**
  - Very easy: 6%
  - Quite easy: 42%
  - Neither easy nor difficult: 22%
  - Quite difficult: 21%
  - Very difficult: 4%
  - Don’t know/no opinion: 5%

- **Care worker (106)**
  - Very easy: 14%
  - Quite easy: 31%
  - Neither easy nor difficult: 13%
  - Quite difficult: 17%
  - Very difficult: 14%
  - Don’t know/no opinion: 10%

- **Homecare provider (301)**
  - Very easy: 20%
  - Quite easy: 41%
  - Neither easy nor difficult: 17%
  - Quite difficult: 13%
  - Very difficult: 4%
  - Don’t know/no opinion: 6%

- **Friend/relative of person receiving/who has received homecare (443)**
  - Very easy: 4%
  - Quite easy: 20%
  - Neither easy nor difficult: 18%
  - Quite difficult: 23%
  - Very difficult: 19%
  - Don’t know/no opinion: 17%

- **Recipient of homecare (46 *)**
  - Very easy: 15%
  - Quite easy: 13%
  - Neither easy nor difficult: 20%
  - Quite difficult: 35%
  - Very difficult: 15%
  - Don’t know/no opinion: 15%

* Caution – low base size

Disconnect between perceptions of those formally involved and those informally involved
Q11. Based on your experience in the last two years, how easy do you think it is to:

Find out about different homecare services?

Service users and their friends/relatives saw it as more difficult to access information than other groups.

Don’t know/no opinion

* Caution – low base size
Q11. Based on your experience in the last two years, how easy do you think it is to:
Change care provider or care worker if someone is not happy with their care

Service users and their friends/relatives saw it as more difficult to change provider/care worker than did the providers.

Don’t know/no opinion

Work in a council (211)
Very easy 23%
Quite easy 19%
Neither easy nor difficult 38%
Quite difficult 11%
Very difficult (6%)

Care worker (109)
Very easy 9%
Quite easy 15%
Neither easy nor difficult 28%
Quite difficult 22%
Very difficult (9%)

Homecare provider (300)
Very easy 9%
Quite easy 24%
Neither easy nor difficult 15%
Quite difficult 33%
Very difficult 13%

Friend/relative of person receiving/who has received homecare (446)
Very easy 1%
Quite easy 7%
Neither easy nor difficult 34%
Quite difficult 29%
Very difficult 19%

Recipient of homecare (48 *)
Very easy 13%
Quite easy 8%
Neither easy nor difficult 25%
Quite difficult 40%
Very difficult (15%)

* Caution – low base size
Q11. Based on your experience in the last two years, how easy do you think it is to:

**Choose how homecare services are delivered** (e.g. time of visits, who visits, what care workers do)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Very easy</th>
<th>Quite easy</th>
<th>Neither easy nor difficult</th>
<th>Quite difficult</th>
<th>Very difficult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work in a council (212)</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care worker (109)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homecare provider (303)</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend/relative of person receiving/who has received homecare (450)</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipient of homecare (47 *)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>(4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Caution – low base size

Consistency of feeling across all groups about the difficulty of choosing how homecare is delivered
Q12. To what extent do you agree/disagree that professional homecare services link up effectively with...

- Local community organisations/activities?
  - Strongly agree: 3%
  - Agree: 15%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 21%
  - Disagree: 36%
  - Strongly disagree: 16%
  - Don't know/no opinion: 9%

- Family and friends (of those needing homecare)?
  - Strongly agree: 8%
  - Agree: 27%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 25%
  - Disagree: 25%
  - Strongly disagree: 9%
  - Don't know/no opinion: 5%

Over half of respondents disagreed that professional homecare services linked up effectively with local community organisations/activities.
3. INVOLVEMENT
Q14. How would you like the following groups to be involved in supporting older and disabled adults over the next 5 years?

- Become more involved
- Remain involved at about the same level
- Become less involved

Don’t know/no opinion

Family and friends (of those needing homecare)?
- 62% Become more involved
- 30% Remain involved at about the same level
- 4% Become less involved

Local community organisations / activities?
- 77% Become more involved
- 15% Remain involved at about the same level
- 2% Become less involved

When asked directly, there is strong support for increased involvement from family and friends as well as local community organisations and activities.
Q15. Older and disabled adults can feel lonely and isolated in their home. How do you think we could change this?
Please rank the following in order of importance where 1 is the most important part of the solution.

1. Through support from community and voluntary groups
   - 37% for rank 1
   - 38% for rank 2
   - 26% for rank 3

2. Through support from family and friends
   - 35% for rank 1
   - 34% for rank 2
   - 30% for rank 3

3. By providing professional homecare services
   - 32% for rank 1
   - 27% for rank 2
   - 41% for rank 3

“all of the above” appears to be the underlying theme.
4. CHALLENGES
Q16. What do you see as the key challenges for individual care workers who currently provide homecare in England? Tick the top 3 most important challenges with 1 being the most important?

- Time limitations: 73%
- Pay and conditions: 67%
- Not trained sufficiently: 56%
- Workload: 46%
- Respect for homecare as a career: 39%
- Issues with care and support plans: 19%
- Behaviour of recipients of homecare: 15%

Total rankings - based on number of selections, whether 1, 2 or 3 (shown as percentage of those answering)

Time and money seen as the major challenges
Q16. What do you see as the **key challenges** for individual care workers who currently provide homecare in England? Tick the top **3 most important challenges** with 1 being the most important?

- **Time limitations**
  - 1st: 45%
  - 2nd: 31%
  - 3rd: 24%
  - Total: 1,057

- **Pay and conditions**
  - 1st: 46%
  - 2nd: 31%
  - 3rd: 22%
  - Total: 977

- **Not trained sufficiently**
  - 1st: 48%
  - 2nd: 27%
  - 3rd: 25%
  - Total: 808

- **Workload**
  - 1st: 28%
  - 2nd: 32%
  - 3rd: 39%
  - Total: 660

- **Respect for homecare as a career**
  - 1st: 29%
  - 2nd: 36%
  - 3rd: 35%
  - Total: 569

- **Issues with care and support plans**
  - 1st: 30%
  - 2nd: 38%
  - 3rd: 32%
  - Total: 274

- **Behaviour of recipients of homecare**
  - 1st: 28%
  - 2nd: 30%
  - 3rd: 43%
  - Total: 231

Specific 1,2,3 rankings are consistent with overall results.
Q17. What do you see as the **key challenges**, facing organisations that currently provide homecare in England? Tick the top 3 most important challenges with 1 being the most important.

**Skills shortage – too few fully trained care workers**: 63%

**Council commissioning**: 58%

**Recruitment - shortage of care workers**: 55%

**Management skills**: 40%

**Attracting 'self-funders' - i.e. people who pay for care themselves and do not qualify for council...**: 27%

**Lack of support available in the community**: 27%

**Lack of involvement with friends and families**: 25%

**Level of competition**: 18%

**Shortage of skills and people, plus council commissioning, are the top three**
Q17. What do you see as the **key challenges, facing organisations** that currently provide homecare in England? Tick the top 3 most important challenges with 1 being the most important.

- **Skills shortage – too few fully trained care workers**
  - 46% (1)
  - 33% (2)
  - 21% (3)
  - Total: (887)

- **Council commissioning**
  - 52% (1)
  - 27% (2)
  - 21% (3)
  - Total: (824)

- **Recruitment - shortage of care workers**
  - 44% (1)
  - 33% (2)
  - 23% (3)
  - Total: (781)

- **Management skills**
  - 33% (1)
  - 35% (2)
  - 32% (3)
  - Total: (558)

- **Attracting 'self-funders' - i.e. people who pay for care themselves and do not qualify for**...
  - 25% (1)
  - 34% (2)
  - 42% (3)
  - Total: (379)

- **Lack of support available in the community**
  - 28% (1)
  - 38% (2)
  - 35% (3)
  - Total: (378)

- **Lack of involvement with friends and families**
  - 23% (1)
  - 38% (2)
  - 39% (3)
  - Total: (349)

- **Level of competition**
  - 26% (1)
  - 35% (2)
  - 39% (3)
  - Total: (250)

Specific 1,2,3 rankings are consistent with overall results.
Familiarity with care and support plans

Q9. Care and support plans set out what care and support a person needs and how it will be arranged and delivered. Are you familiar with care and support plans?

- The vast majority (88%) said they were familiar with care and support plans
5. CONCLUSIONS
Conclusions

• Responses on Council involvement are more negative than positive
• Respondents value the individual more highly than the organisation
• Lack of training & skills shortage appear as top challenges
• Respect as a career not seen as a high priority
  o But note that respondents are answering from a personal, not strategic, standpoint so may not have career thoughts in mind
• Views of those formally involved in homecare contrast with views of friends/family in some areas
• Large number of responses and lots of comments, indicating a strong desire to engage on this subject
  o Nearly 8,400 comments in total
  o 838 respondents assented to a follow-up contact and gave their phone number or email address