

Survey of Adult Carers in England 2021-22

Methodology Change Notice

Published June 2022

**Improving lives with
data and technology**

Contents

Background	3
Methodological Changes	3
Impact of change	4
Timing	4
Further Information	4

Background

The [Personal Social Services Survey of Adult Carers in England \(SACE\)](#) is a biennial survey that took place for the first time in 2012-13. The survey asks carers questions to seek their opinions on a number of topics that are considered to be indicative of a balanced life alongside their caring role. The survey covers informal, unpaid carers aged 18 or over, caring for a person aged 18 or over.

The survey asks carers questions about their caring responsibilities around the following themes:

- Information about the carer
- Information about the cared-for person
- The impact of caring and quality of life
- The quality of any information and advice received
- The carer's needs and experiences of support
- Carers' involvement in arranging services for the cared-for person

The data collected are sent to NHS Digital by Councils with Adult Social Service Responsibilities (CASSRs) and are used as the basis of analyses that are included in national level Official Statistics reports. Data are also used to populate several measures in the [Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework \(ASCOF\)](#). These data are used to inform and support policy and decision making at both the local and national level; to improve care, services and outcomes for local populations.

The resulting Official Statistics report focuses on some of the key findings from the mandatory questions from the survey, a summary on information about the carers and analysis on questions which have notable changes to the previous survey.

Methodological Changes

Significance testing was introduced to the SACE in 2016-17 to evaluate the key findings. Significance tests are carried out in order to test the relationship between variables. The test is for the main effects only, using a Wald test. The Wald test is a statistical test used to calculate the significance of parameters in a statistical model. In addition to the Wald value, the p-value is also used. A p-value is the probability of the observed result occurring due to chance alone. A p-value of less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) indicates statistical significance between two variables. i.e. the relationship between these variables reject the null hypothesis. In previous publications, backward elimination logistic regression was used to calculate the Wald value and the p-value.

As part of the continuing development of the survey, NHS Digital have reviewed the statistical testing and made a change for the 2021-22 publication.

NHS Digital explored numerous statistical techniques to decide which method worked best with the survey data. To ensure as much data as possible is included when carrying out the statistical tests, nulls will be removed for just the 2 variables in the test, and not from the whole dataset. It was concluded that Spearman correlation analysis was the most suitable technique to use. The new methodology used to identify statistically significant findings will be to use Spearman correlation analysis to find the correlation coefficient and chi-squared tests for the p-values. For consistency the statistical tests will be carried out using weights so that it is in line with the methodology used elsewhere in the survey.

The acceptance criteria for identifying variables that are statistically significant have been set as a p-value less than 0.05 and a correlation coefficient of 0.4 or higher. A correlation coefficient greater than 0.4 indicates a moderate to strong correlation.

Impact of change

As part of the review, testing was carried out to see if the statistical findings identified in the new methodology matched those previously identified using the logistic regression method. For the questions included in the review, all variables that were identified in the logistic regression process as statistically significant, also met the new acceptance criteria. Due to this we consider the impact of the change to be very low.

Timing

NHS Digital will be using the new methodology to identify key findings in the 2021-22 SACE publication.

Further Information

Further details on the 2021-22 SACE can be found here:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/data-collections-and-data-sets/data-collections/social-care-user-surveys/social-care-carers-survey-2021-22>

Questions and feedback on the publication are welcomed and should be sent to enquiries@nhsdigital.nhs.uk or alternatively call 0300 303 5678.