

JUST. NEWS RELEASE

Friday 19th April 2024



Women suffer disproportionate burden of unpaid care

- **Unpaid care taking a higher toll on women's physical, financial and mental health**
- **Female unpaid carers more likely to report general stress and depression compared to men**
- **At 50 years old, women estimated to be dedicating more than 10% of life expectancy towards care**

Analysis of Census data by retirement specialist Just Group shows the disproportionate burden women are bearing when it comes to providing unpaid care.

During 2020 to 2022, at 50 years old, women could expect to spend 4.7 years of their remaining life providing unpaid care (14% of remaining life expectancy), while males were expected to spend 3.5 years providing unpaid care (11% of remaining life expectancy).

Based on data collected in 2015, 2017 and 2019, nearly half (49%) of unpaid carers reported at least one adverse health effect from providing unpaid care; this was higher among females (53%) than males (43%) and was also higher among those providing more hours of unpaid care.

Female unpaid carers were also significantly more likely to report general stress (35%) and depression (18%) compared to men (24% and 15% respectively).

Stephen Lowe, group communications director at Just Group, said: "While supporting loved ones with their care can be hugely rewarding, it also extracts a high price on carers, negatively impacting their physical, financial and mental health.

"At age 50, unpaid carers are estimated to be dedicating more than 10% of their life expectancy towards care. This role of caring brings with it negative health implications, as laid bare in this report. As the data shows, women carry a disproportionate amount of responsibility for caring and as a consequence are more adversely affected by this additional responsibility.

"Looking specifically at the financial cost of providing unpaid care, our own research found that more than one in 10 (11%) of Generation X are chipping in to provide financial support for the care of their elderly relatives. The average estimated cost of this being £237.50 a week, £12,350 a year, that's around £800 more than the full new State Pension."

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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/socialcare/bulletins/unpaidcareexpectancyandhealthoutcomesofunpaidcarersengland/april2024>

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Notes to Editors

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