

Survey of Adult Carers in England 2021/22 Summary Report

Introduction

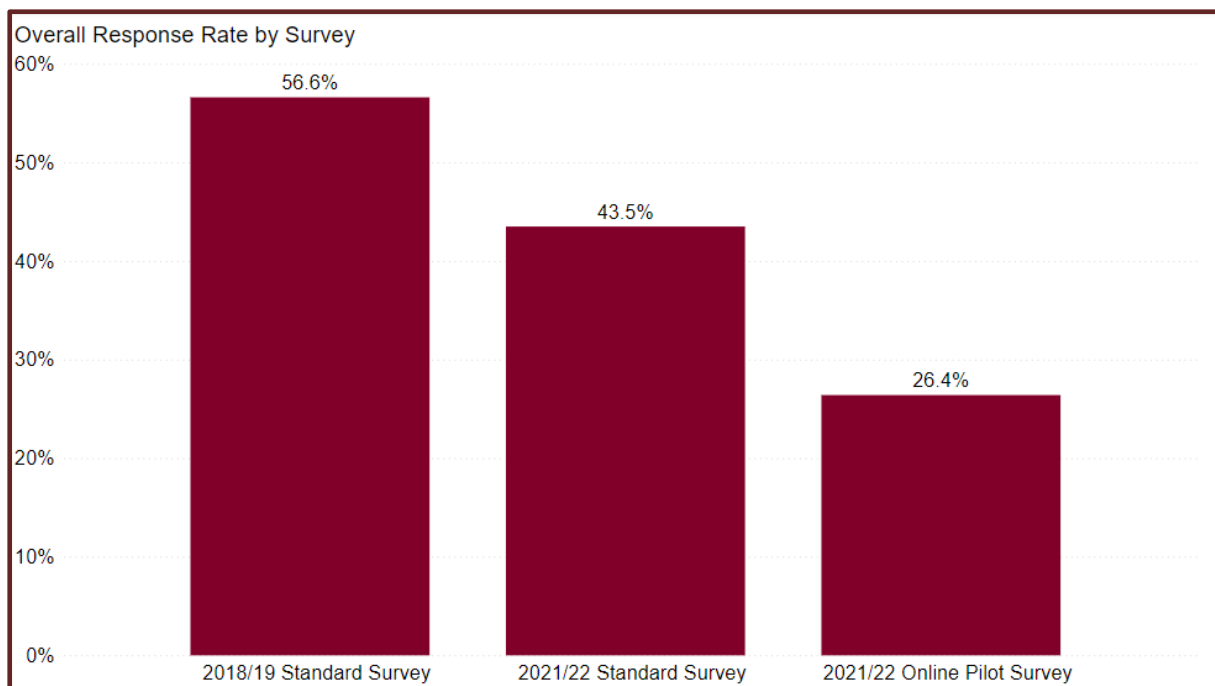
In October 2021, the Survey of Adult Carers in England (SACE) was coordinated for Worcestershire County Council (WCC) by the Business Intelligence Team - Adult Social Care. This is a national survey carried out every two years on behalf of NHS Digital. It was postponed in 2020 due to the ongoing situation with the Covid-19 pandemic.

The survey asks participants to answer a set of questions relating to their caring role and responsibilities as well as their opinions on their quality of life.

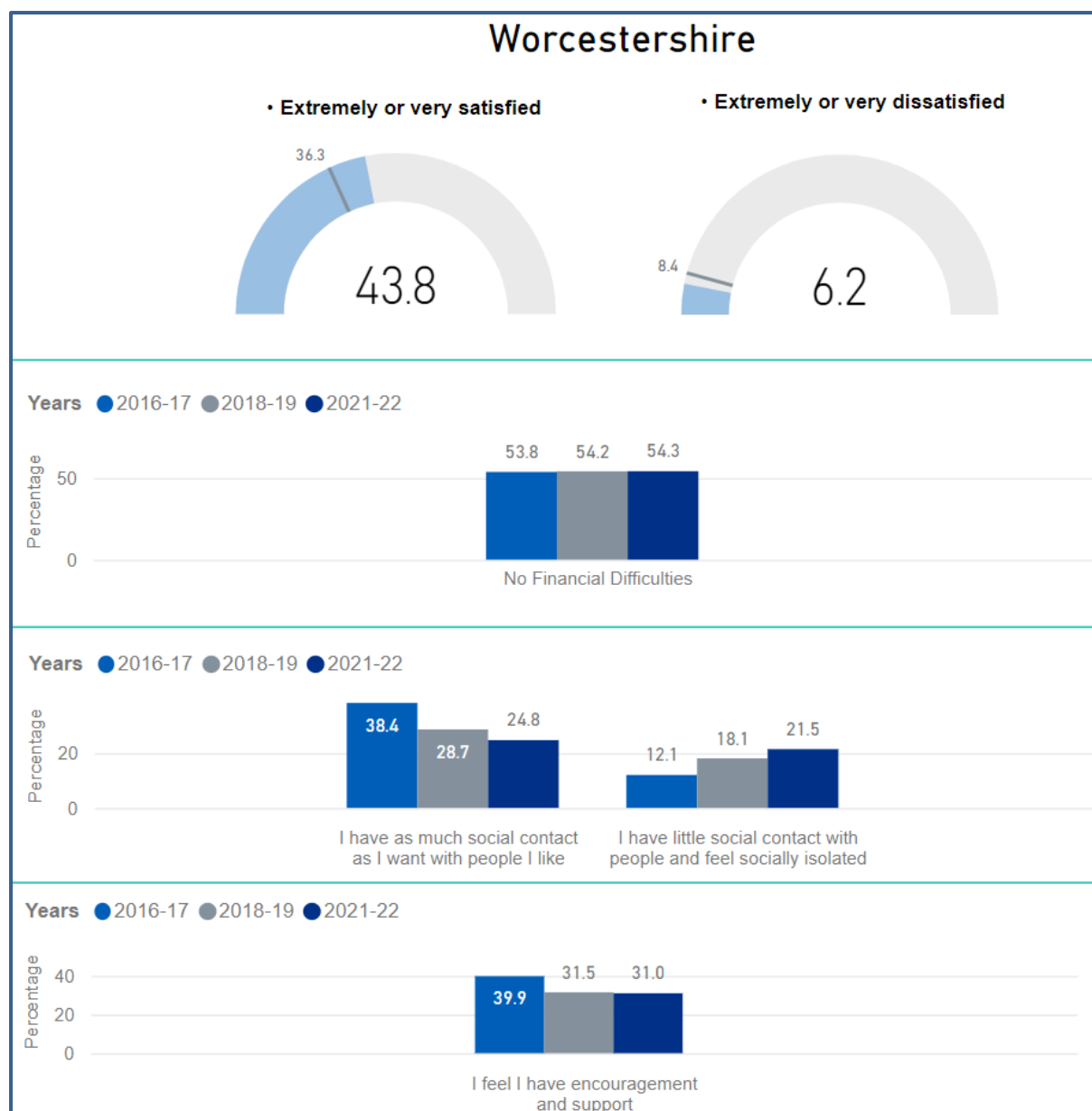
Sample and Response Rate

A random sample of 695 carers was taken from the social care case management system on 31st August 2021. These were sent a paper copy of the questionnaire. 280 carers responded to the survey giving a response rate of 43.5%.

A second sample of 428 carers was selected to participate in an online pilot. These were sent an invitation letter to complete the questionnaire online, with a paper questionnaire sent with the follow up reminder letter. 112 carers responded to the online pilot, of which 35 responded online and the remaining 77 by paper questionnaire. The pilot response rate was 26.4%.



NHS Digital Key Findings



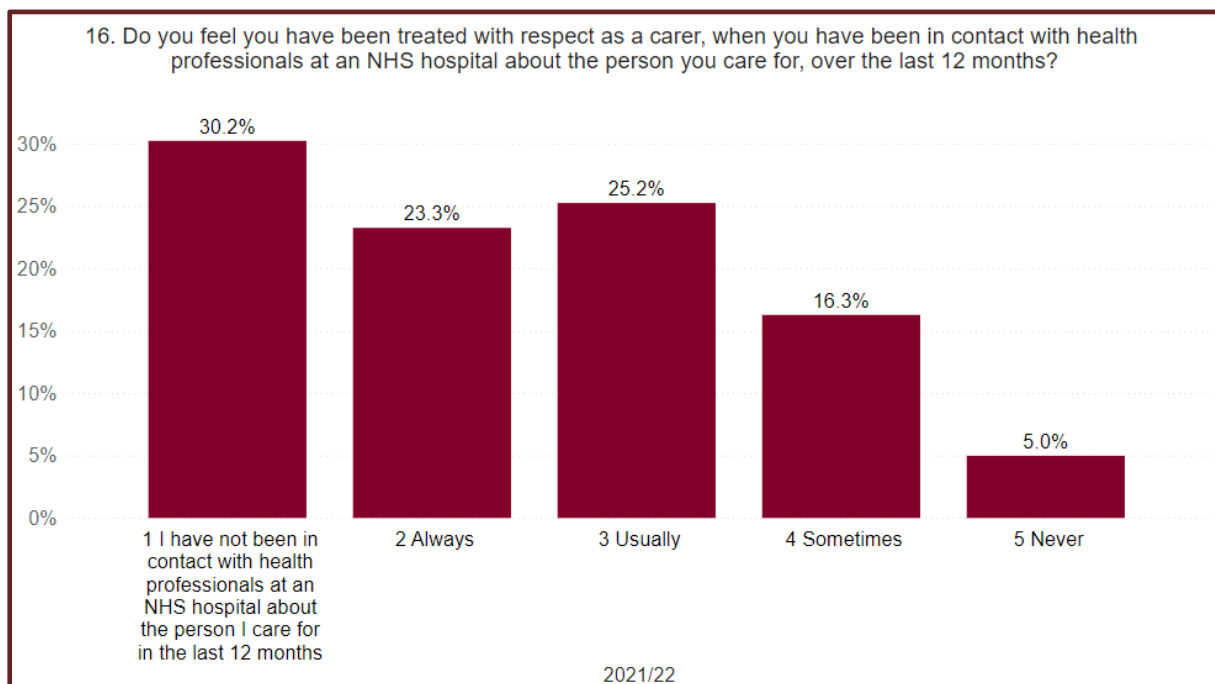
- Just under half (43.8%) of carers are extremely or very satisfied with WCC social services, which is higher than the England average of 36.3%, and 26.5% are quite satisfied. Only 6.2% are extremely or very dissatisfied, which is lower than the England Average of 8.4%.
- Just over half of carers (54.3%) reported that their caring role had not caused any financial difficulties in the last 12 months up to Oct 2021. This has been increasing for the last 3 surveys.
- Carers had less social contact and felt more socially isolated than the previous 2 surveys. This is likely to have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Carers feel they have less encouragement and support than the previous 2 surveys. This has decreased to 31.0%. This is likely to have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Worcestershire County Council Carers Strategy

WCC's Carers Strategy has been developed with three key themes as the focus:

- Recognised and Valued
- A Life of My Own
- Supported to Be Well

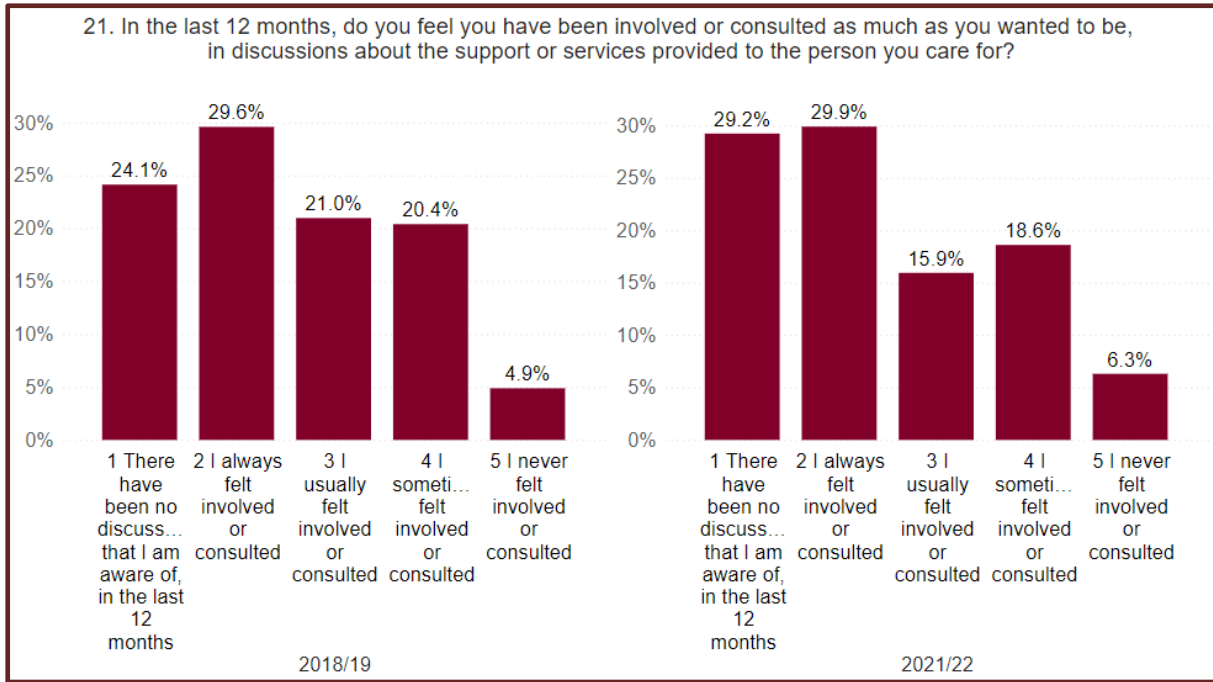
The key findings from the survey within each of these themes are as follows:

Recognised and Valued

You Said: Of the carers who have been in contact with a health professional at an NHS hospital, the majority (48.5%) were always or usually treated with respect, which shows that carers do feel recognised and valued.

We Did: Overall, this is a positive message that WCC will share with the NHS Integrated Care Board for Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

People Directorate – Adult Social Care



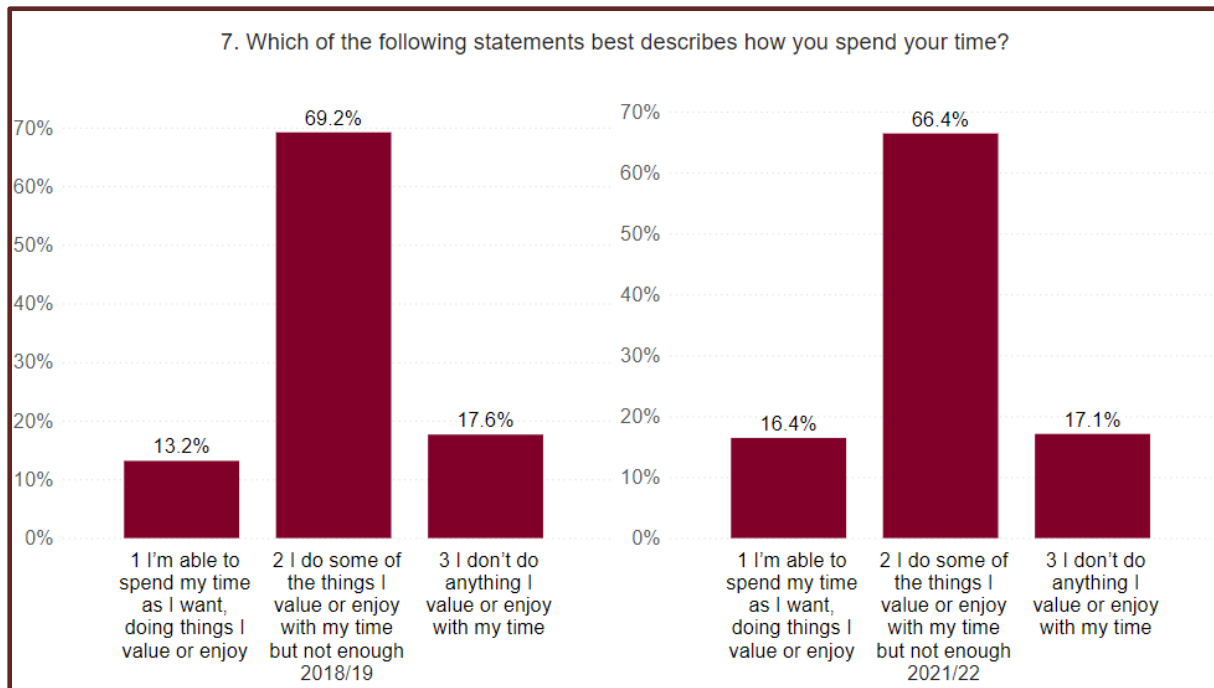
You Said: The majority of carers (54.1%) either did not have or felt they were rarely involved in discussions about support for the person they care for. This is an increase on the previous survey result of 49.4%, which could lead to carers not feeling recognised and valued.

We Did: WCC has commissioned Worcestershire Association of Carers (WAC) to provide support for carers. As part of this, WAC has visited to social work teams to raise carer awareness and enhance working relationships between the Integrated Carers Hub (ICH) and social work teams. This will help with the identification and involvement of carers in discussions about support for the people they care for.

WCC has also promoted e-learning modules on carer awareness with WCC staff, including Mental Health First aiders.

People Directorate – Adult Social Care

A Life of My Own



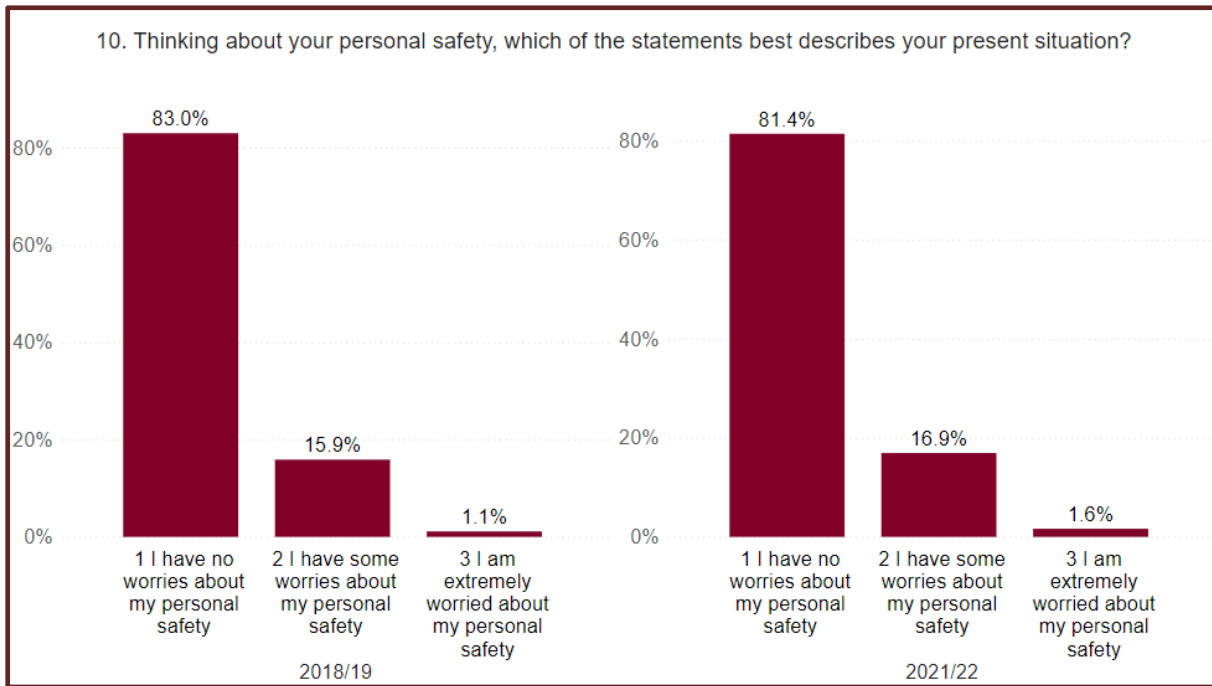
You Said: More carers (16.4%) are able to spend their time as they would like than the previous survey (13.2%). This shows that some carers do feel that they have a life of their own. However, the majority (66.4%) are only able to do some of the things they value and enjoy.

We Did: WCC discuss the 'A life of my own' theme within the information and support service provided through the ICH. This topic is also discussed as part of carers' assessments and support plans using a strengths-based approach and includes community assets. This focus on having a life of your own is important to sustain the caring role.

WAC provide carer training sessions provided on carer wellbeing as part of their contract with WCC.

WCC also approach this from the person with carer and support needs' perspective as social workers include carer breaks within their support plans, which has a direct impact on carers achieving a life of their own.

People Directorate – Adult Social Care



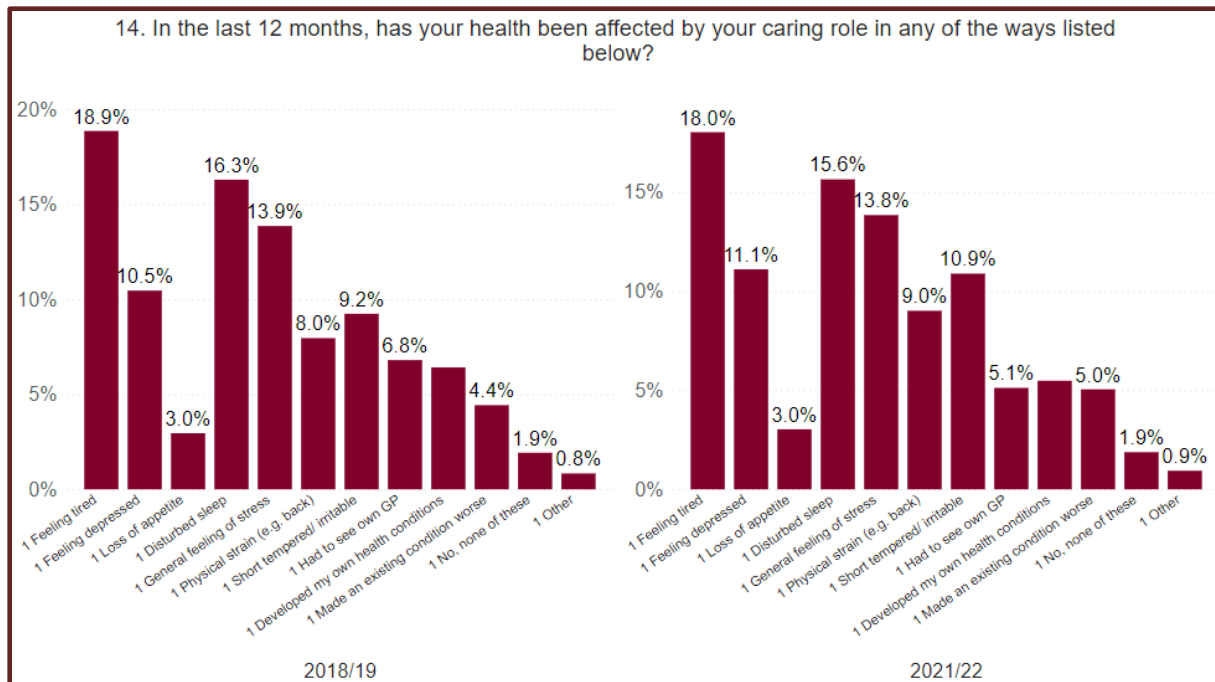
You Said: The majority of carers (81.4%) do not have any worries about their personal safety. This has decreased from the previous survey result which was 83.0% and is likely to have been affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

We Did: WCC and WAC provide information and advice as part of their conversations with carers to give them confidence to reengage within society.

One of the positive outcomes of the Covid-19 pandemic was this introduction of a hybrid offer so carers have a choice in how they can access services either face to face or online.

People Directorate – Adult Social Care

Supported to be Well



You Said: This is a multiple choice question and 307 carers responded. 81.4% reported feeling tired and 70.7% reported that they had disturbed sleep. 62.5% reported feeling stressed, 50.1% reported feeling depressed and 49.2% reported being short tempered/ irritable, all of which are not helped by poor sleep or tiredness. These rates are all higher than the previous survey which suggests carers need more support to be well.

We Did: WCC will share with the NHS Integrated Care Board for Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

WCC discuss the ‘Supported to be well’ theme within the information and support service provided through the ICH. This topic is also discussed as part of carers’ assessments and support plans using a strengths-based approach and includes community assets. This focus on being supported to be well important to sustain the caring role.

WAC provide support and training with physical and mental health and wellbeing, including peer support.

Carer Comments

The survey also asked carers for suggestions for improvement for social care and any other comments. The main points raised were:

You Said	We Did
<p>Carers have little contact or support from social services, find it difficult to contact them and have to explain their situation more than once. This suggests the ‘Tell Us Once’ policy needs to be reviewed.</p>	<p>Worcestershire Association of Carers (WAC) are commissioned to provide services for carers on behalf of WCC. They can be contacted on their helpline on 0300 012 4272 from Monday to Friday from 9am to 7pm and Saturday from 9am to 12pm.</p> <p>WCC will review the ‘Tell Us Once’ policy to ensure carers do not have to repeat information. The process of recording carers information on our social care case management system is changing to include Conversation 1s completed by WAC as well as Conversation 3s. This will improve information sharing and reduce the need for carers to repeat themselves as all relevant information will be available on the carers record.</p>
<p>Carers would like more recognition for the service they provide and would like their views to be listened to. Introducing a ‘You Said We Did’ for carers may help them to feel valued and that they are able to make a difference.</p>	<p>This survey results report has been introduced in response to this.</p>

You Said	We Did
<p>Introduce an identity card so carers can be recognised outside of WCC.</p>	<p>Carers can apply for a Carers Emergency Card.</p> <p>WCC will look at promoting the Emergency Card as well as the Carer Passport Scheme.</p> <p>WCC has also introduced a reasonable adjustment passport for WCC employees that are also carers to help support them to continue to work whilst managing their caring role.</p>
<p>Increase support for health and wellbeing including providing relevant support groups, e.g. a gardening service and a carer's bus pass.</p>	<p>Support groups are provided by WAC.</p> <p>Carers of people with a disability can apply for a Disabled Bus Pass with Companion. More information can be found at</p>
<p>Provide clearer information and advice, both online and physical, on services and support that is available in the local area.</p>	<p>WCC are currently developing a new website that will be more accessible, easier to navigate and more user friendly.</p> <p>There is also a new Here 2 Help (H2H) Community Services Directory</p>
<p>Introduce an out of hours support service to help with emergencies.</p>	<p>WAC are commissioned to provide services for carers on behalf of WCC. They can be contacted on their helpline on 0300 012 4272 from Monday to Friday from 9am to 7pm and Saturday from 9am to 12pm. Their website is</p>

You Said	We Did
Provide a designated social worker so there is continuity of service and have more frequent visits from their worker.	WCC Learning Disabilities service have been trialling designated social workers to provide a continuity of service to carers and people with care and support needs. WCC will consider implementing this within the other social work areas.
Provide clearer and proportionate paperwork, especially for Direct Payments, invoices, and assessment processes.	Processes and paperwork for Direct Payments is currently being reviewed and streamlined. WCC are promoting prepayment accounts, which allow all information to be viewed online and remove the need for carers to submit invoices.
Increase the flexibility to use funds as appropriate and not have them reclaimed because of unforeseen circumstances.	WCC recognise that the Covid-19 pandemic was unprecedented, and this meant Direct Payments were not able to be utilised as they were before the pandemic. Each case was reviewed on an individual basis and decisions made as appropriate at the time.
Increase capacity and resources across the sector which would ease the burden on carers and help them to have a life of their own.	WCC make best value of the resources available and continue to lobby government for additional funding and grants. An additional £16.4 million has been allocated for adult social care in the 2023/24 budget.

Further Analysis

More information can be found on the [NHS Digital Website](#).

The question analysis for this report has been completed using data from both the standard and online pilot surveys. As such, results will differ to those published by NHS digital which will only use the data from the standard survey.