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# Conceptualising care – a gender lens on contemporary developments

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12 October 2017

Public Symposium, RMIT University Melbourne, Australia:  
Future Social Services Institute/Centre for People Organisations and Work

# *Overview: gender issues in a changing world of care*

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- **Shifting sands**
- **The big picture**
- **Some indicative data**
- **Framing the developments**
- **Future positive?**

# *Shifting arrangements for care in Australia*

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- Aged Care Reforms
- NDIS
- Implications for older and disabled people
- Implications for carers and families
- Implications for care workers / services
- Will technology transform experiences of care?
  - *Care giving, care receiving, the work of care*
- Autonomy and independence – realistic policy goals?
  - *Values: Interdependence and co-operation? 'Resilience and self-mastery'? Gender, race, class....*

# *Shifting arrangements for care in the UK*

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- **Austerity measures**
  - *Since 2010, after GFC*
- **Care Act 2014**
  - *Wellbeing and prevention principles*
- **Support for carers and families**
- **Implications / consequences for care workers / services**
- **Privatisation**
  - *of formerly public services*
  - *plus emergence of novel consumer services / products*
- **Technological 'solutions' (?)**

# Care in ageing and diverse societies

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## Global context

- **Increased longevity** - *care required by the very old*
- **Longer lives of people with LTCs and disabilities**
- **Diversity of populations**
- **Urban / rural contexts and consequences**
- **Mobilities and migration** - *more frequent and complex*
- **Culture** – *values, varieties, interconnections – convergence?*

# *Care provision and receipt: Australia and the UK*

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## *Caring / caregiving* ('informal care')

- De-feminising? new gender divisions?
- Role of race, ethnicity, culture, class?

## *Receiving / managing care and support* ('care users')

- Growing complexity/variety of care and support requirements
- Are technologies displacing (some) need for human input?

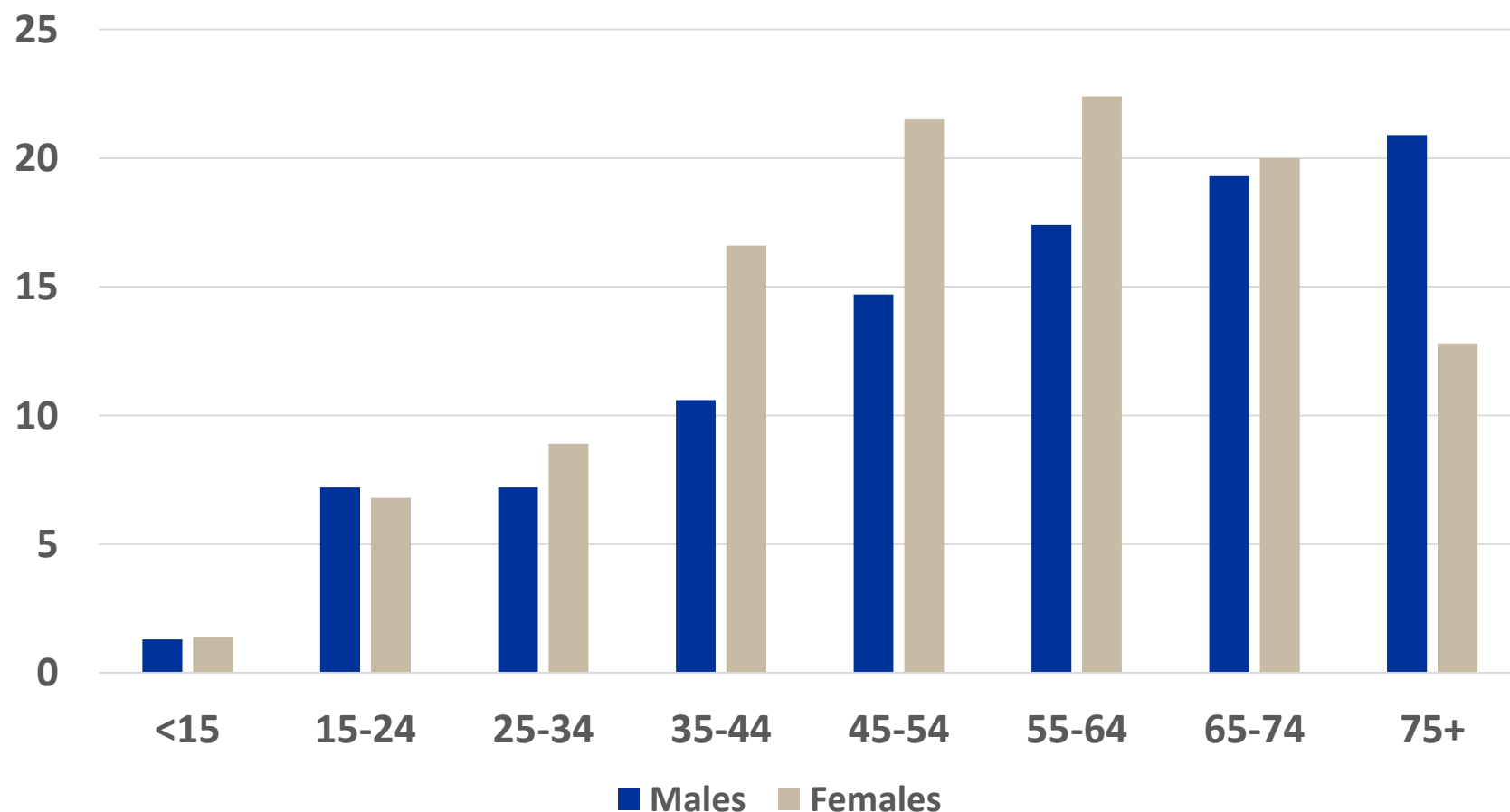
## *Care workers / personal assistants*

- Employed / self-employed / remunerated
- Support with ADLs, specific tasks, to enable societal participation

**Varieties of care: relational, transactional, reciprocal**

## Australia: all carers, by age and sex, 2015

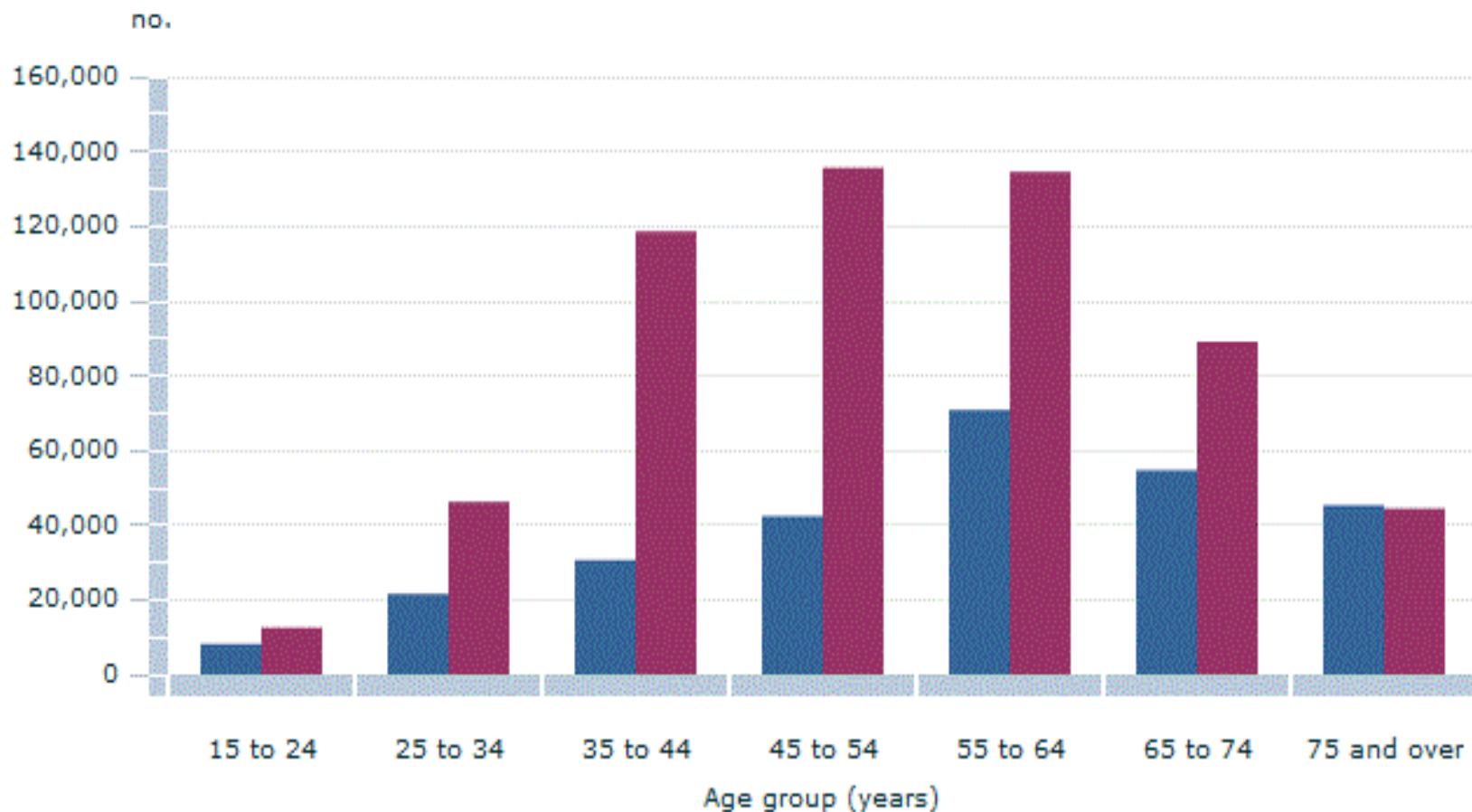
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Source: ABS 2017, SDAC 2015

# Australia: primary carers by age and sex, 2015

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 Males  
 Females

Source: ABS 2017, SDAC 2015



## Australia: primary carers: sex, age, relationships (%)

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Age	Partner of recipient	Child of recipient	Parent of recipient	Other relationship
<b>MALES</b>				
<b>15–24</b>	*	*	*	*
<b>25–44</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>45–64</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>65+</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>FEMALES</b>				
<b>15–24</b>	*	*	*	*
<b>25–44</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>45–64</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>65+</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>

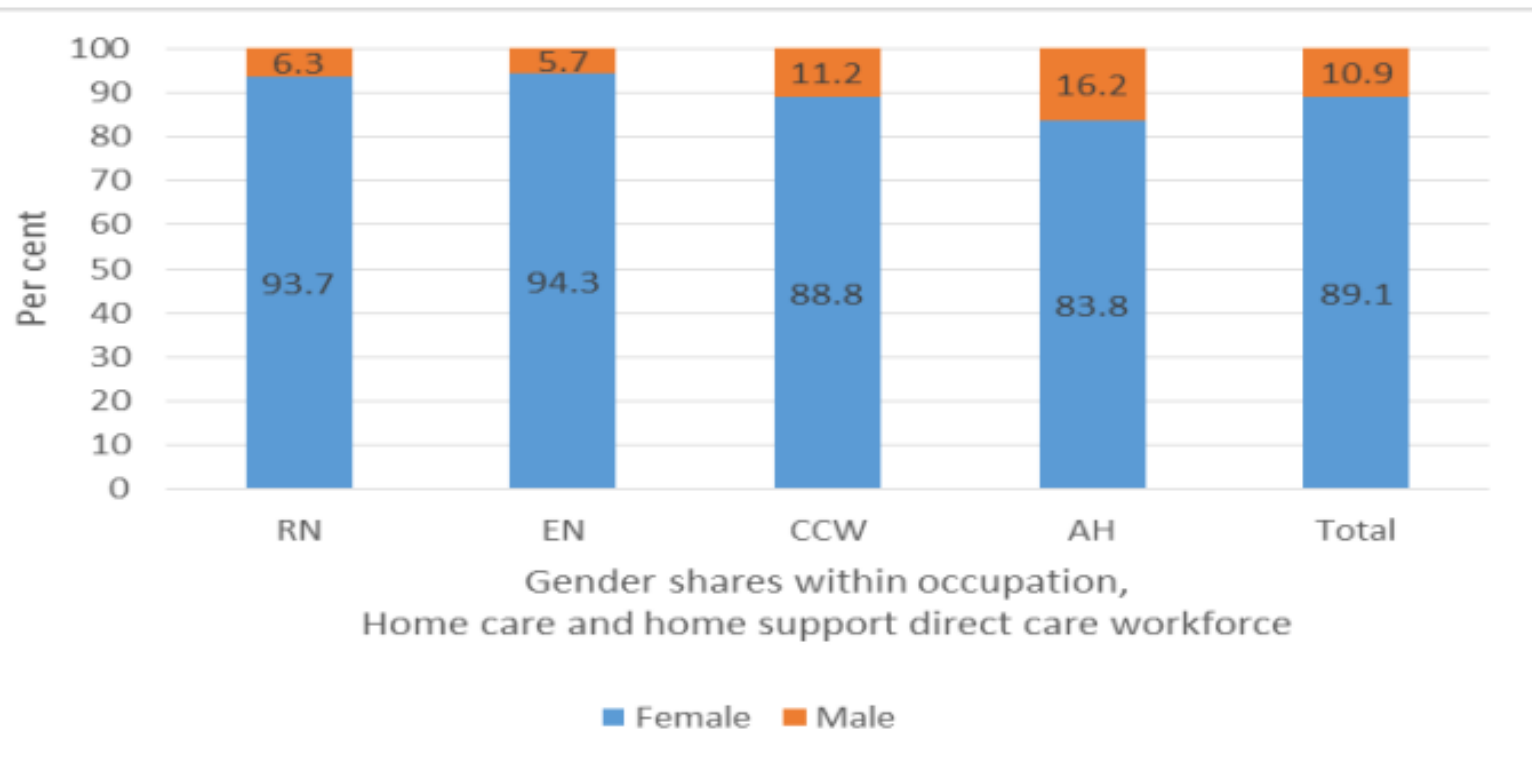
Source: ABS SDAC 2015 Table 38.3 - \*= estimate, based on available data, 'unreliable'

# Australia: care workers

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- Aged care sector – female dominated, though % of males is growing
- In residential aged care, 87% of workers are female; in home care/home support, 89%<sup>1</sup>

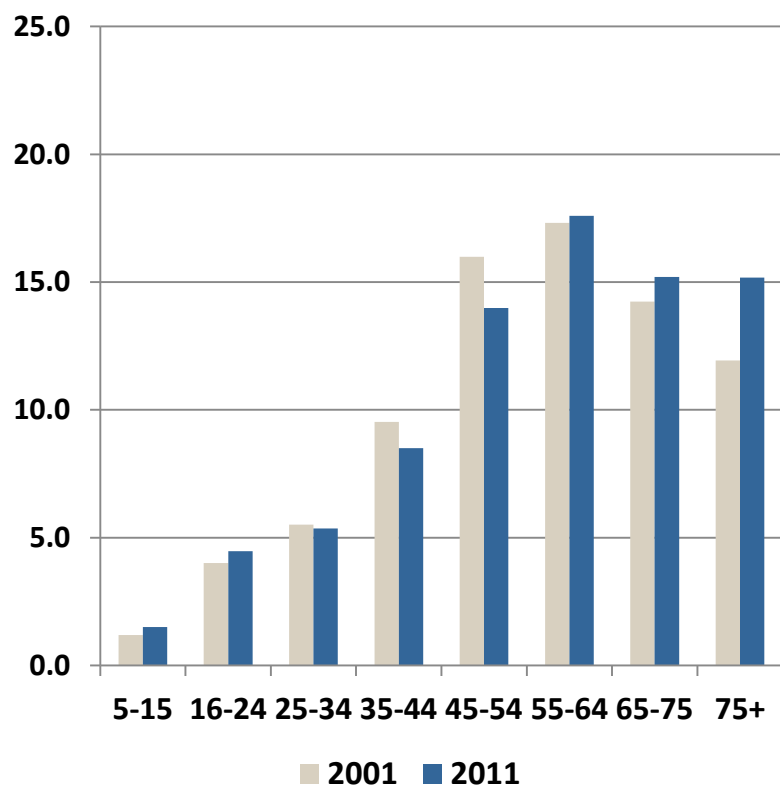
## Gender distribution of home care & home support aged care workforce: 2016 (%)



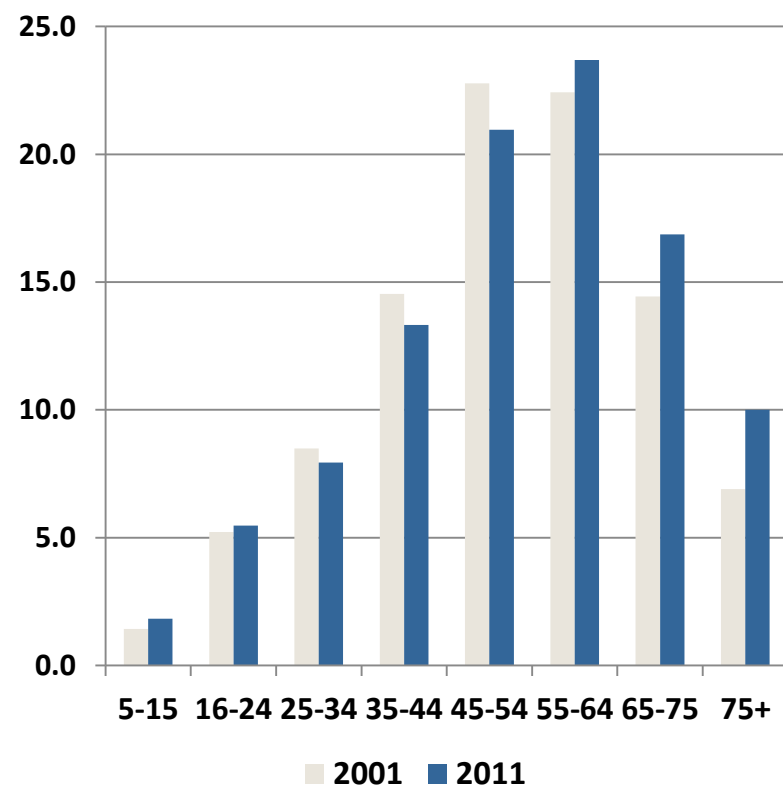
1. [https://agedcare.health.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1426/f/documents/03\\_2017/nacwcs\\_final\\_report\\_290317.pdf](https://agedcare.health.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1426/f/documents/03_2017/nacwcs_final_report_290317.pdf)

# Carers in the UK population, by age and sex

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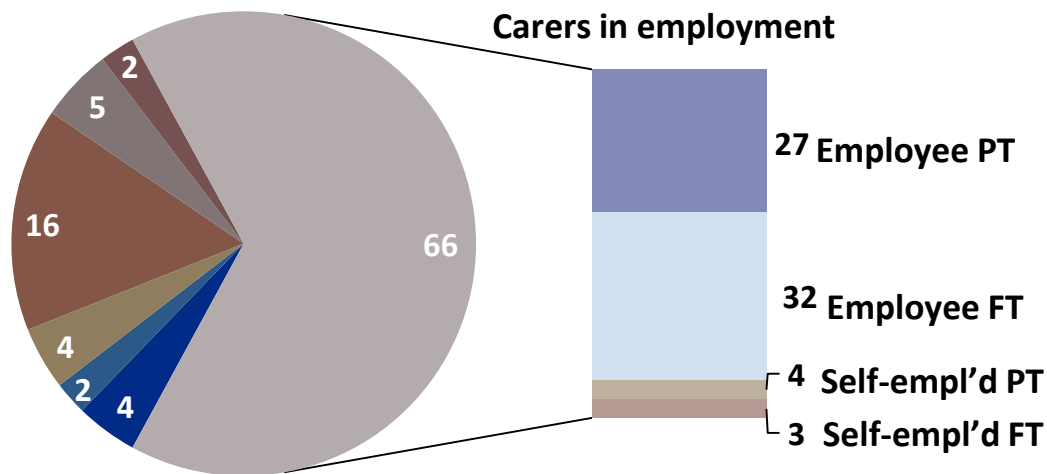


% of MALES who are carers (UK)



% of FEMALES who are carers (UK)

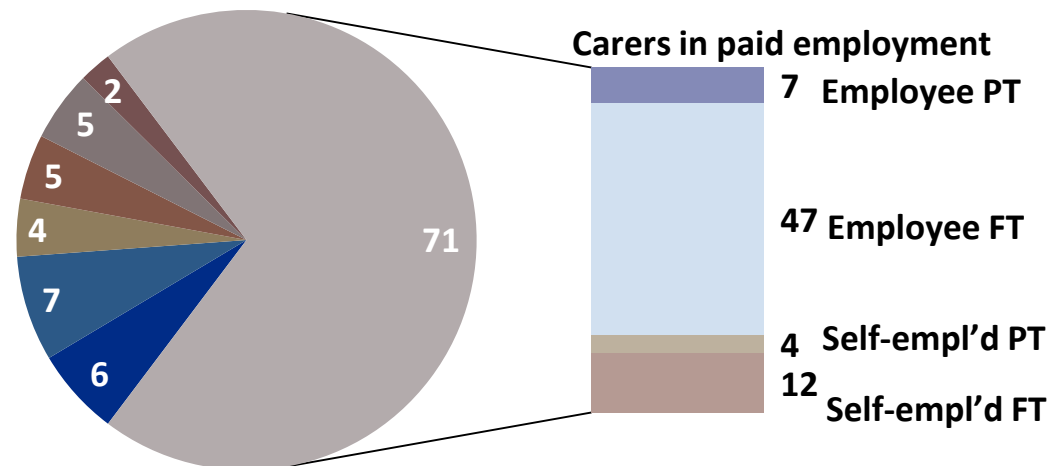
# EMPLOYMENT STATUS of CARERS of WORKING AGE, 2011 (England & Wales)



**FEMALE carers of working age by economic activity status, England & Wales, 2011**

■ Unemployed ■ Early retired ■ Student  
■ Looking after home/ family ■ Long-term sick/ disabled ■ Inactive Other

**MALE carers of working age by economic activity status, England & Wales, 2011**



■ Unemployed ■ Early retired ■ Student  
■ Looking after home/ family ■ Long-term sick/ disabled ■ Inactive Other

## England: relationship of carer to main cared for person

Relationship <i>person cared for is the...</i>	Where care provided		Time spent caring each week		All carers
	Same household	Other household only	< 20 hours	20+ hours	
Parent	19	48	39	26	33
Parent-in-law	3	12	10	4	7
Grandparent	1	7	6	2	4
<i>All the above</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>44</i>
Spouse / partner	51	1	13	41	26
Child	22	3	7	19	13
Other relative	3	11	10	4	7
Friend or neighbour	1	18	14	3	9
Other	1	1	1	1	1
Base: All (no. respondents)	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	2,200

Source: Health & Social Care Information Centre. **Survey of Carers in Households, 2009-10**, England

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***“Home care is a vital part of our economic infrastructure.”***



Source: Koehler (2014) 'Key to Care', Burstow Commission on the future of the home care workforce  
<https://www.lgiu.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/KeyToCare.pdf>

# *Some theoretical framings (1)*

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- **Paula England (2005)**

- ▣ **‘Emerging Theories of Care Work’** *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol 31 381-99

- **Women’s Budget Group (2016)**

- ▣ **‘Plan F: a feminist economic strategy for a caring and sustainable economy’** <https://wbg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/PLAN-F-2015.pdf>

- **Joan Tronto (2017)**

- ▣ **‘There is an alternative: *homines curans* and the limits of neoliberalism’,** *International Journal of Care & Caring*, Vol 1 (1) 27-43

# Some theoretical framings (2)

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## England: theories of care work

- **'Devaluation'** ('association with women')
- **'Public good'** ('indirect benefits')
- **'Prisoner of love'** (altruistic motivations / intrinsic rewards)
- **'Commodification of emotion'** ('alienates workers' true feelings')
- **'Love AND money'** -rejects dualism of selfish markets v altruistic family or informal care

Women's employment is *'here to stay'*. Much care will be given by family members, but much will also be provided by paid care workers. *"How this sector is organized is consequential not just for gender, class, and race inequality, but for all of society"*

(England, P., 2005, p 396)

## WBG: advocates for *'an economic strategy that values care'*

- **Invest** in social infrastructure
- **Improve the T&Cs** of the paid work force
- **Strengthen workers' rights** (whole economy)
- **Ensure access** to affordable care for all
- **Improve support** for those (mainly women) who provide unpaid care
- **Create a social security system** that shares caring and its costs more fairly

## Tronto's conceptualisation of care

### 5 types: Caring .....

- **'about'** – noticing unmet care needs
- **'for'** – taking responsibility, to ensure needs are met
- **'caregiving'** – doing the actual work of caregiving
- **'receiving'** – observing and reacting to the recipient's response
- **'with'** – when groups (family, state, etc) are able to rely on an ongoing cycle of care, through which trust and solidarity are produced.



# *Some implications: future positive?*

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## Care Systems

- **Costs and contributions** – who pays?, who provides? Towards a fairer, gender equitable, distribution of costs and contributions
- **Beyond integration** (of health & social care); focus on ALL ‘pieces of the jigsaw’, and how they fit together:
  - **Families and friends**
  - **Neighbourhoods and communities**
  - **Employers and employees**
  - **States, markets, innovators and entrepreneurs**

## The Work and Relationships of Care

- **Wellbeing for** – beyond ‘avoidance of harm’
- **Gender equitable distribution** (and resolution of other inequalities)
- **Interdependence** in families, communities and interpersonal relations
- **Individuality** - respect for individual autonomy
- **Quality jobs** as the foundation of quality services

*“A caring and sustainable economy is based on mutual support and respect for rights. It is oriented to the broad and inclusive aim of improving our well-being in ways that reduce inequalities, not only today, but also for future generations. **It prioritises care for people and for the planet.**”*

*Women’s Budget Group (UK) 2016*

# Further information

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Principal Investigator:

**Sustainable Care: connecting people and systems**

*Supported by funding awarded by:*

*Worldwide Universities Network (2016-2017)*

*UK Economic & Social Research Council (2017-2021)*

**International Journal of Care and Caring**

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