

INFORMATION
ANALYSIS
DIRECTORATE



Quarterly Carers' Statistics for Northern Ireland

(January - March 2021)



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Health

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Mánnystrie O Poustie

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Statistics and research for the **Department of Health** is provided by the Information and Analysis Directorate (IAD). IAD is responsible for compiling, processing, analysing, interpreting and disseminating a wide range of statistics covering health and social care.



The statisticians within IAD are outposted from the Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA) and the statistics are produced in accordance with the principles and protocols set out in the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#).

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IAD comprises four statistical sections: Hospital Information, Community Information, Public Health Information & Research and Project Support Analysis.

This publication is produced by Community Information Branch.

Our Vision and Values

- *Provide up-to-date, quality information on children and adult social services and community health;*
- *to disseminate findings widely with a view to stimulating debate, promoting effective decision-making and improvement in service provision; and*
- *be an expert voice on social care information.*

About Community Information Branch

The purpose of Community Information Branch (CIB) is to promote effective decision making in children and adult social services by providing quality information and analysis.

We collect, analyse, and publish a wide range of community information that is used to help monitor the delivery of personal social services policy. Information collected by CIB is used to assess HSC Trust performance, for corporate monitoring, policy evaluation, and to respond to parliamentary/assembly questions.

Information is widely disseminated through a number of regular key statistical publications and ad hoc reports, details of which are available online.

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1. Key Findings

“Quarterly Carers’ Statistics for Northern Ireland” presents figures regionally and by Health and Social Care Trust in respect of carers’ assessments and reassessments that are offered, accepted / completed and declined; and are available by the client group of the person being cared for.

Quarter ending 31 March 2021:

Carers Assessments

- A carers' assessment was offered to 4,227 carers in Northern Ireland during the quarter ending 31 March 2021. This represented a 13% increase on the number of assessments offered in the previous quarter, and an increase of 4% when compared to the same quarter in 2020.



- Of the 4,227 carers’ assessments offered, 60% (2,518) were accepted / completed and 40% (1,709) were declined.
- Those carers caring for someone in the Family and Childcare / Children with Disabilities client groups were the most likely to accept an offer of an assessment, whereas those caring for someone in the Older People client group were most likely to decline an offer of an assessment.

Carers Reassessments

- A carers' reassessment was offered to 1,166 carers in Northern Ireland during the quarter ending 31 March 2021. This was similar to the number of carers’ reassessments offered in the previous quarter but was an increase of 18% when compared to the same quarter in 2020.



- Of the 1,166 carers’ reassessments offered, 74% (868) were accepted / completed and 26% (298) were declined.

2. Introduction

Carers are people who, without payment, provide help and support to a family member or a friend who may not be able to manage without this help because of frailty, illness or disability. Carers can be adults caring for other adults, parents caring for ill or disabled children or young people who care for another family member and are a vital part of the DoH's vision of providing support for people to live more independent lives and helping people remain in their own homes and live independently for longer.

In recognition of the need to support carers in their caring role and their need to have access to a social life, educational, training and employment opportunities, a carers' strategy, "[Caring for Carers](#)", was developed. The strategy, published in January 2006, was inter-departmental and inter-agency, dealing with health and personal social services, employment, training, education, availability of information and support services.

Carers may need support to allow them to continue in their caring role and to ensure their own health and well-being does not suffer as a result. They have a right to a life outside caring. All carers are individuals and, as such, present varying needs. Proper **assessment** is the first step to accessing services and it is vitally important that carers are offered the opportunity to discuss their own needs and be considered for services in their own right.

The [Carers and Direct Payments Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2002](#) imposed a statutory duty on Health and Social Care Trusts to inform carers of their right to an assessment and to be considered for services to meet their own needs. The Carers' Assessment looks at each carer as an individual with their own personal circumstances, and will identify any particular needs they may have as a result. It is important that the needs of individual carers are properly understood and that service providers are prepared to respond with flexibility, offering carers real choice as to how their needs will be met. The "Carers Support and Needs Assessment" component of the [Northern Ireland Single Assessment Tool \(NISAT\)](#) is used for assessing the needs of adult carers, thus ensuring a standardised approach to assessment regardless of the location of the carer in Northern Ireland. However, children with caring responsibilities, or in some circumstances adults caring for children with disabilities, will be assessed under the Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland (UNOCINI) assessment framework.

This bulletin presents, for the **quarter ending 31 March 2021**, statistics relating to the numbers of carers' assessments offered, completed and declined, the main reasons why carers declined offers to be assessed as well as carers' reassessments offered, completed and declined. Analyses are presented both regionally and across Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland.

Detailed definitions are available in [Appendix B](#) of this report.

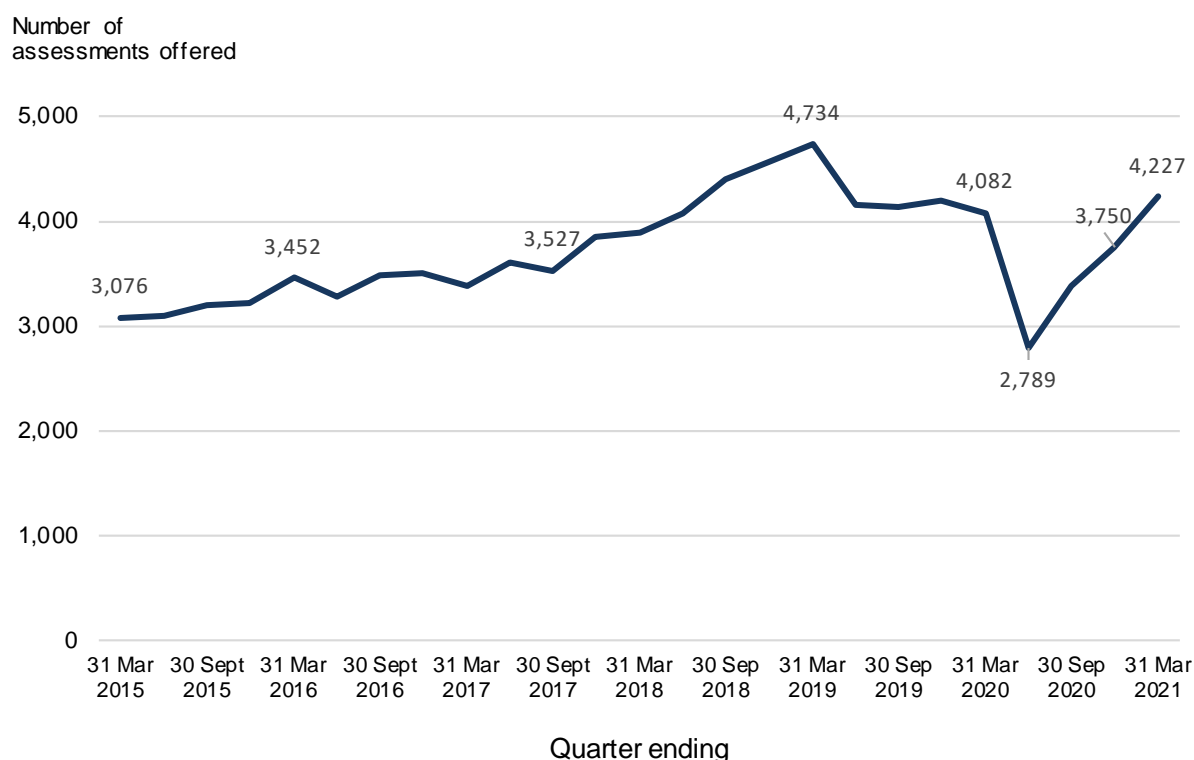
3. Carers Assessments

A **Carers Assessment** is carried out to determine the support needs of the person in commencing or sustaining their caring role; or in addressing the risks to the sustainability of that caring role; or the risks to the carers' own health and wellbeing.

Carers Assessments during Quarter ending 31 March 2021

A carers' assessment was offered to 4,227 carers in Northern Ireland during the quarter ending 31 March 2021. This represented a 13% (477) increase on the number of assessments offered in the previous quarter (3,750), and an increase of 4% (145) when compared to the same quarter in 2020 (4,082). (Figure 1) ¹.

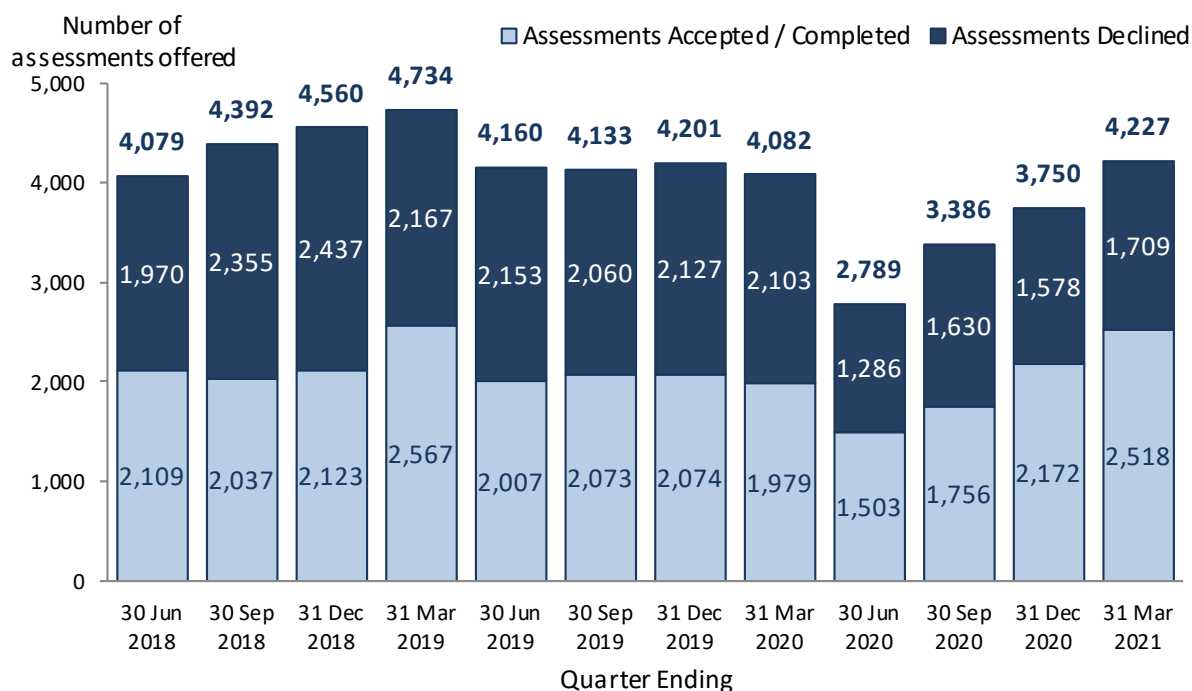
Figure 1 Carers Assessments Offered (quarter ending 31 March 2015 - 31 March 2021)²



¹ All figures presented can be found in table format in [Appendix C](#) of this report and/or in excel and CSV format on the Department of Health website [Department of Health \(Carers' assessments and reassessments\)](#)

² Decreases reported in quarter ending June 2020 were contributed to restrictions on the Carer's assessment service due to COVID-19. Please see June publication for an overview of COVID-19 impact on Carers Assessments: [Quarterly Carers' Statistics for Northern Ireland \(June 2020\)](#)

Figure 2 Carers Assessments Offered, Accepted / Completed and Declined (quarters ending 30 June 2018 - 31 March 2021)³



Of the 4,227 carers' assessments offered, 60% (2,518) were accepted / completed and 40% (1,709) were declined.⁴

The 2,518 carers' assessments which were accepted / completed represented a 16% increase (346) from the previous quarter (2,172), and a 27% increase (539) from the same quarter in 2020 (1,979).

The 1,709 carers' assessments which were declined represented an 8% increase (131) from the previous quarter (1,578), but a 19% decrease (394) from the same quarter in 2020 (2,103). (Figure 2) [\(Table 1\)](#)

³ Decreases reported in quarter ending June 2020 were contributed to restrictions on the Carer's assessment service due to COVID-19. Please see June publication for an overview of COVID-19 impact on Carers Assessments: [Quarterly Carers' Statistics for Northern Ireland \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/quarterly-carers-statistics-for-northern-ireland)

⁴ All figures presented can be found in table format in [Appendix C](#) of this report and in excel format on the Department of Health website [Carers' assessments and reassessments | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/carers-assessments-and-reassessments)

Carers Assessments by HSC Trust

The number of carers' assessments offered varies across Trusts. The Western HSC Trust had the lowest proportion of all assessments offered (351, 8%) whereas the Northern HSC Trust had the highest proportion (1,489, 35%) ([Table 2](#)). Taking into account the population structure of the HSC Trusts, the Western HSC Trust had the lowest rate of assessments offered (116 offers per 100,000 population), compared to 311 assessments per 100,000 of the population in the Northern HSC Trust.⁵

HSC Trust figures can vary considerably between quarters. During quarter ending 31 March 2021, all HSC Trusts increased the number of carers' assessments offered when compared to the previous quarter, except the Southern Trust. The increases ranged from 55% in the Belfast HSC Trust, to 9% in the South Eastern Trust. The Western and Northern HSC Trusts increased the number of carers' assessments offered when compared to the previous quarter by 14% and 10% respectively. The Southern HSC Trusts decreased the number of carers' assessments offered when compared to the previous quarter by 21%

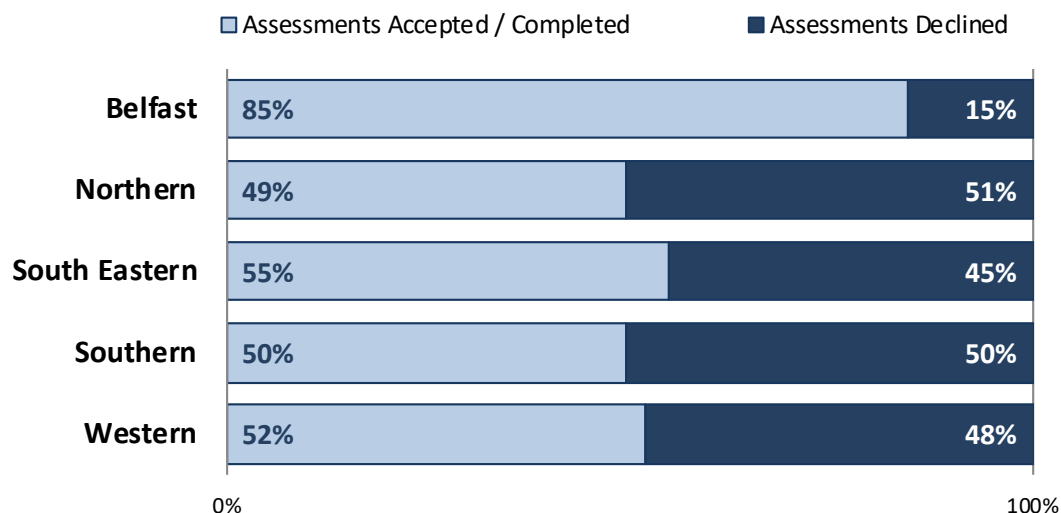
Figure 3 Number of Carers Assessments Offered by HSC Trust (quarter ending 31 March 2021)

Number of Carers Assessments Offered by HSC Trust				
Belfast	Northern	South Eastern	Southern	Western
1,078	1,489	771	538	351

During quarter ending 31 March 2021, 85% of the carers' assessments offered in the Belfast HSC Trust were accepted/completed. For all other Trusts the proportion of carers' assessments accepted/completed ranged between 55% and 49% ([Figure 4](#)) ([Table 2](#) and [Table 3](#)).

⁵ 2019 Mid-Year Population Estimates, NISRA 2020

Figure 4 Proportion of Carers Assessments Accepted / Completed and Declined by HSC Trust (quarter ending 31 March 2021)

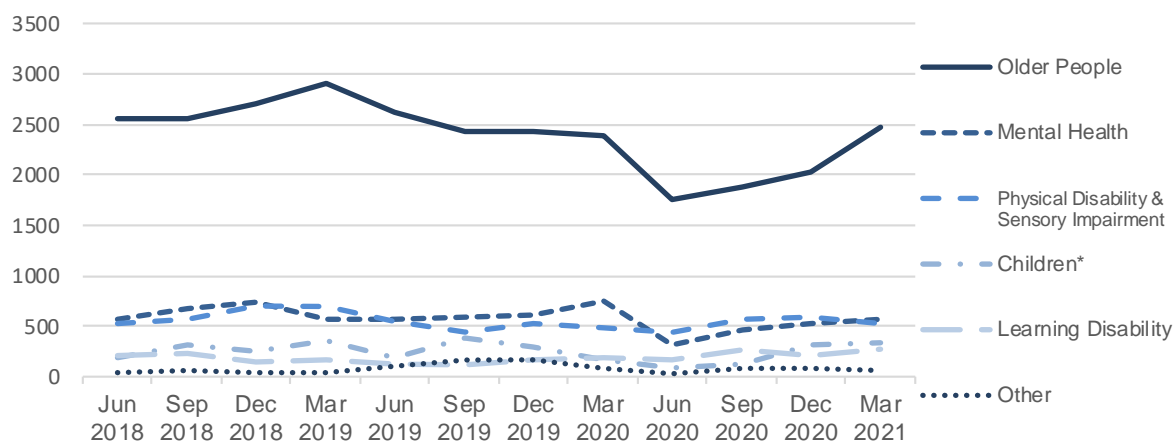


Client Group

Regionally across Northern Ireland, the majority of all carers' assessments have consistently been offered to carers of people in the Older People client group⁶ (Figure 5). This client group has seen a slight increase of 3% (72 offers) in the number of offers from the same quarter last year. There were increases in the number of carers assessments offered for all client groups except the client group "Physical Disability & Sensory Impairment" when compared to the previous quarter.⁷

Figure 5 Number of Carers Assessments Offered by Client Group (of cared for person) (quarters ending 30 June 2018 - 31 March 2021)

Note: 'Children' cover 'Children with Disabilities' and 'Family and Child Care'.

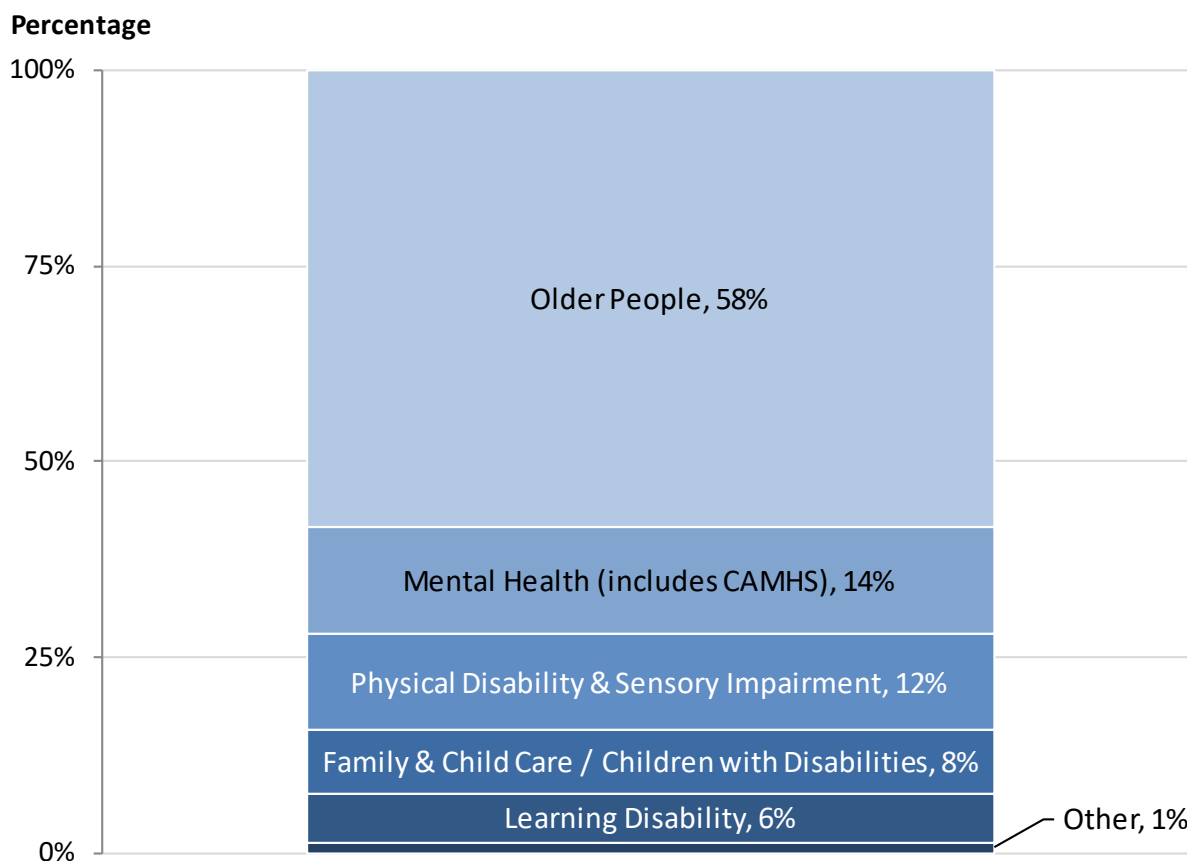


⁶ A list of client groups and associated definitions can be found in [Appendix B](#) of this report.

⁷ Decreases reported in quarter ending June 2020 were contributed to restrictions on the Carer's assessment service due to COVID-19.

During the quarter ending 31 March 2021, over a half (58%) of carers who had been offered an assessment were caring for someone in the Older People client group. Carers caring for someone in the Mental Health and the Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment client groups accounted for 14% and 12% respectively. The proportions of the remaining client groups can be found in Figure 6 ([Table 2](#)).

Figure 6 Proportion of Carers Assessments Offered by Client Group (of cared for person) (quarter ending 31 March 2021)

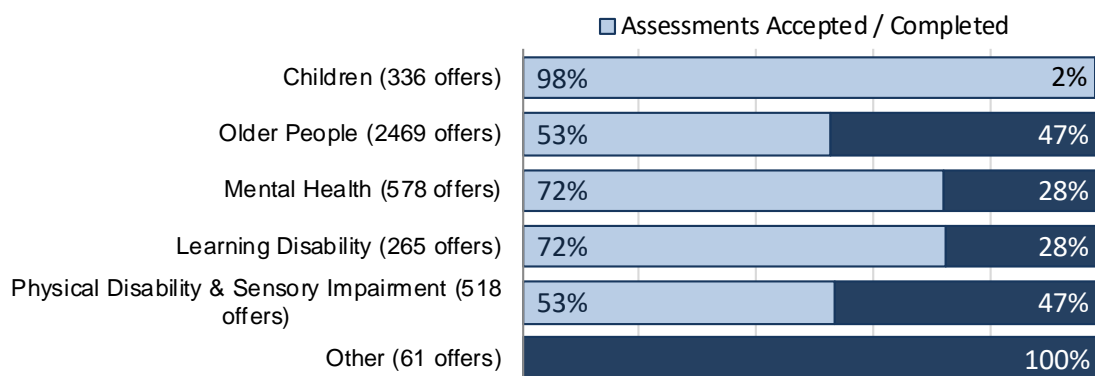


Across Northern Ireland, carers in all client groups (except the unspecified client group), were more likely to accept / complete an offer of an assessment than decline (Figure 7 below).

Family & Child Care and Children with Disabilities were the most likely to accept an offer of assessment, with 98% of the offers being accepted or completed (Figure 7) ([Table 3 and Table 4](#)).

Figure 7 Proportion of Carers Assessments Accepted / Completed and Declined by Client group (quarter ending 31 March 2021)

Note: Mental Health includes CAMHS. 'Children' covers 'Children with Disabilities' and 'Family and Child Care'.



Reasons for Declining a Carers Assessment

Many carers will be caring for someone who is already in receipt of community care services and are supported by existing care packages that are in place. An offer of a carers' assessment is to help identify those carers who require more support and to recognise carers as an individual with needs in their own right.

38%
*Of carers who declined an offer of an assessment felt that they **Do not need any support or additional support.***

During the quarter ending 31 March 2021, figures show that the most frequent reason for declining an offer of a carers' assessment was that the carer felt that they did not need any support or additional support. This was the reason stated by over a third of carers (38%, 653).

Nearly a quarter of carers (24%, 417) who declined an offer of an assessment felt that the time / place / environment offered was unsuitable but would like the opportunity to consider an assessment at a later date.

15% (254) of people who declined the assessment did not give a reason or no reason was recorded for why they declined an offer of a carers' assessment.

Carers declining an offer of assessment for the reason that they felt that an assessment would be too complicated or time consuming accounted for 1% (21) of all those that were declined. Less than 1% of those who declined an offer of assessment did so as they were concerned about the impact on their benefits / income (Figure 8) ([Table 5](#)).

Figure 8 Reasons given for declining a Carers Assessment (quarter ending 31 March 2021)

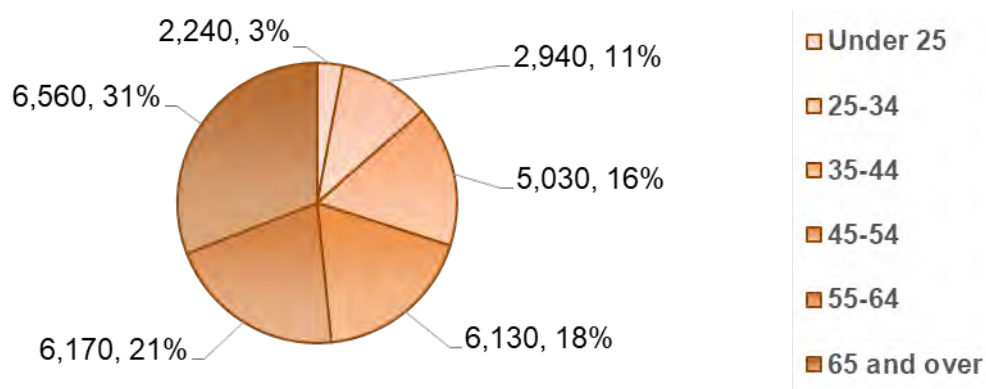
Reason Given	%
<i>The carer feels that they do not need any support/ additional support</i>	38%
<i>The carer felt that time / place / environment offered was unsuitable but would like the opportunity to consider an assessment at a later date</i>	24%
<i>The carer would not give a reason / No reason recorded</i>	15%
<i>The carer does not see themselves as a carer and therefore does not see assessment as relevant</i>	10%
<i>The carer feels that an assessment would not result in additional support / service</i>	6%
<i>The carer sees their caring duties as a private matter which they prefer not to discuss</i>	5%
<i>The carer feels that assessment would be too complicated or time consuming</i>	1%
<i>The carer was concerned about the impact on their benefits / income</i>	<1%

Carers statistics from other sources

Carer's Allowance

In February 2021, there were 75,210 claimants of Carer's Allowance (CA) in Northern Ireland. Some half of these (51%) were aged 55 and over, with almost a third aged 65 and over (31%). Please note that not all carers claim CA and furthermore, not all carers are eligible to claim CA.

Figure 9 Age of Carer's Allowance Claimants

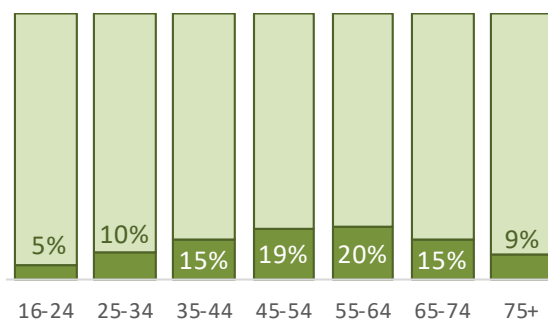


Department for Communities publish quarterly information on Carer's Allowance and other benefits. [Benefits Statistics Summary Publication \(National Statistics\) - February 2021 | Department for Communities](#)

NI Health Survey - Carers

The NI Health Survey 2018/19 found that 14% of the people surveyed had caring responsibilities for someone sick, disabled or elderly. More females (17%) than males (10%) had caring responsibilities. Of all those aged 75 or older in the survey, 9% had caring responsibilities. [Department of Health \(Health survey Northern Ireland: first results 2019/20\)](#)

Figure 10 Proportion of carers for each age group



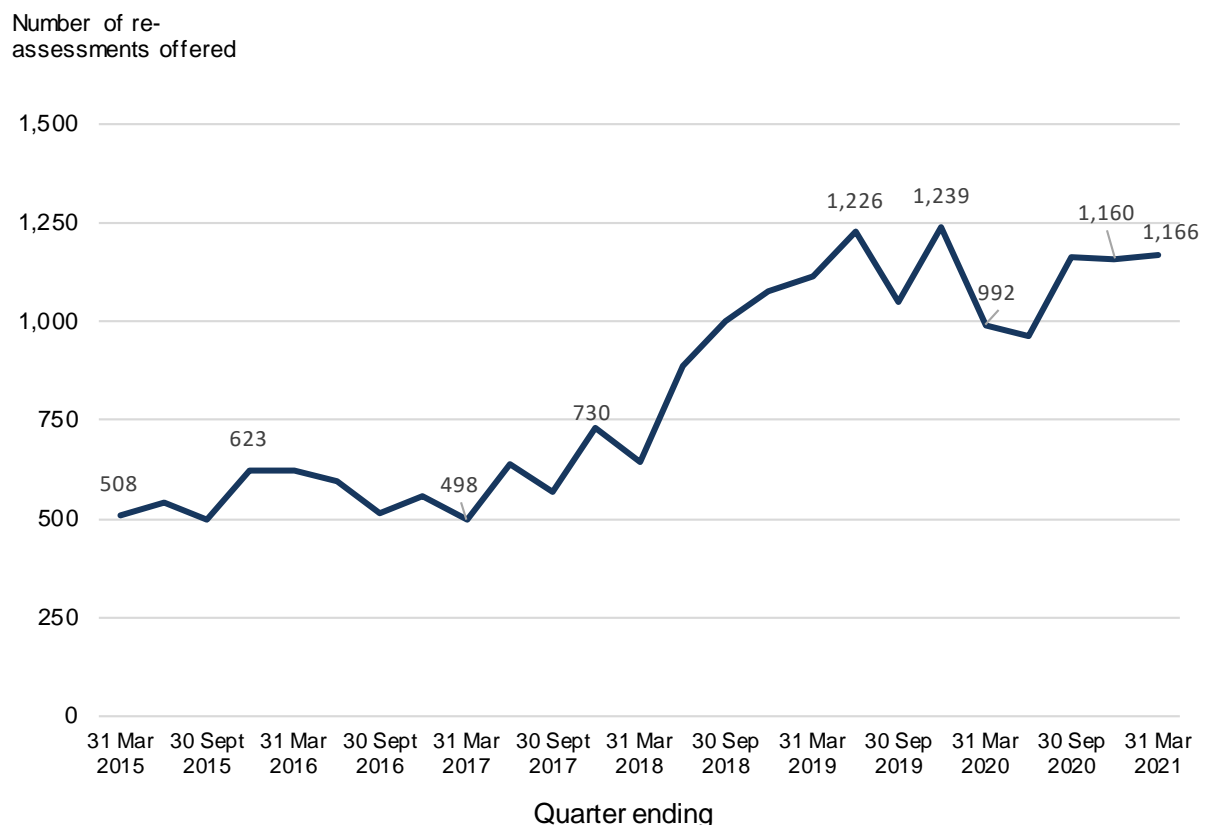
Department for Health publish the NI Health Survey annually at [Department of Health \(Health survey Northern Ireland\)](#).

4. Carers Reassessments

*A **Carers Reassessment** is required when a carers' circumstances change resulting in a change in their level of need. For example, this could be additional family commitments, changes in their work pattern, or varying physical or mental health. The Reassessment can be either a complete rework of the original Carers Assessment or an amendment to aspects of it.*

A carers' reassessment was offered to 1,166 carers in Northern Ireland during the quarter ending 31 March 2021. This represented a small increase of 1% (6) on the number of assessments offered in the previous quarter (1,160), and an increase of 18% (174) when compared to the same quarter in 2020 (992)⁸ (Figure 11).

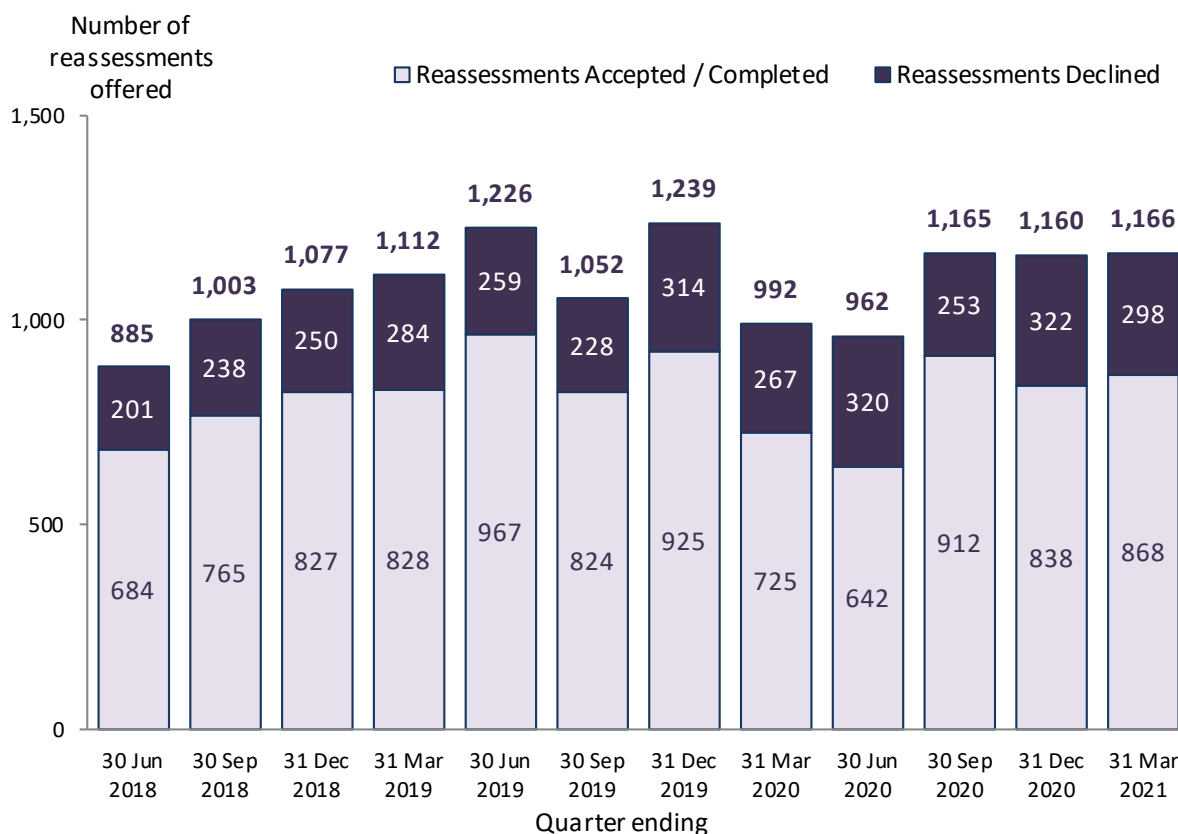
Figure 11 Carers Reassessments Offered (quarters ending 31 March 2015 - 31 March 2021)⁹



⁸ All figures presented can be found in table format in [Appendix C](#) of this report or in excel and CSV format on the Department of Health Northern Ireland website Department of Health (Carers' assessments and reassessments).

⁹ Decreases reported in quarter ending June 2020 were contributed to restrictions on the Carer's assessment service due to COVID-19. Please see June publication for an overview of COVID-19 impact on Carers Assessments at [Quarterly Carers' Statistics for Northern Ireland](#)

Figure 12 Carers Reassessments Offered, Accepted / Completed and Declined (quarters ending 30 June 2018 - 31 March 2021)¹⁰



Of the 1,166 carers' reassessments offered, 74% (868) were accepted / completed and 26% (298) were declined (Figure 12) ([Table 6](#))

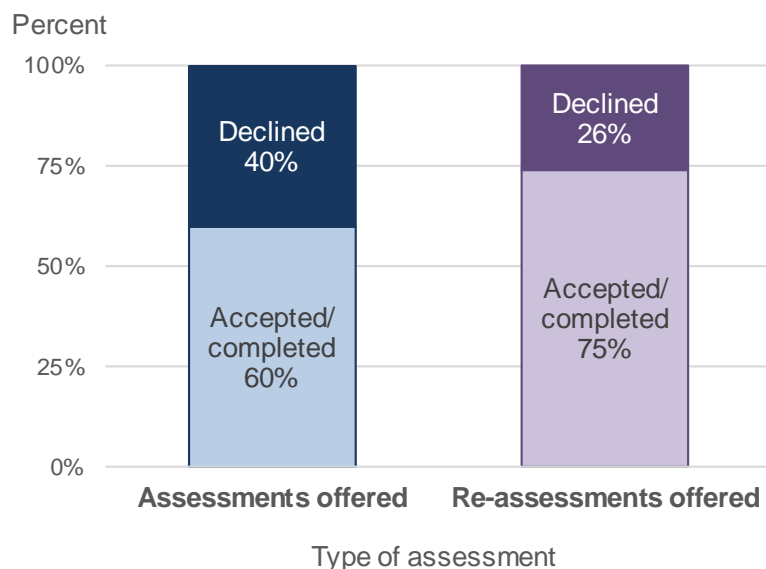
The 868 carers' assessments which were accepted / completed represented a 4% increase (30) from the previous quarter (838), and a 20% increase (143) from the same quarter in 2020 (725).

The 298 carers' assessments which were declined represented a 7% decrease (24) from the previous quarter (322), but a 12% increase (31) from the same quarter in 2020 (267).

¹⁰ Decreases reported in quarter ending June 2020 were contributed to restrictions on the Carer's assessment service due to COVID-19. Please see June publication for an overview of COVID-19 impact on Carers Assessments: [Quarterly Carers' Statistics for Northern Ireland \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/quarterly-carers-statistics-for-northern-ireland)

A comparison between initial carers' assessments and carers' reassessments shows that a higher proportion of initial carers' assessments offered were declined (40%) compared to the carers' reassessments that were declined (26%).

Figure 13 Proportion of Carers Assessments and Carers Reassessments Accepted / Completed and Declined (quarter ending 31 March 2021)



Carers Reassessments by HSC Trust

Of all carers' reassessments offered in Northern Ireland, the Northern HSC Trust offered the most at 436 (37% of the total number), closely followed by the Southern HSC Trust (410; 35%); while the Belfast HSC Trust offered the least at 23 (2% of the total number) (Figure 14) ([Table 7](#)).

Figure 14 Number of Carers Reassessments Offered by HSC Trust (quarter ending 31 March 2021)

Number of Carers Reassessments Offered by HSC Trust				
Belfast	Northern	South Eastern	Southern	Western
23	436	114	410	183

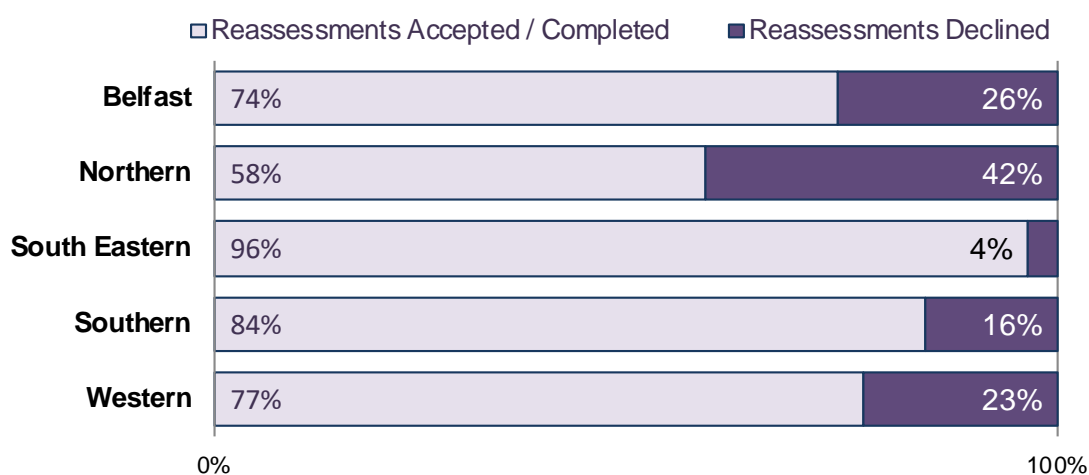
During quarter ending 31 March 2021, both the South Eastern and the Northern HSC Trust increased the number of carers' reassessments offered when compared to the previous quarter by 39% and 2% respectively.

The Belfast, Western and the Southern HSC Trusts decreased the number of carers' reassessments offered by 48%, 4% and 2% respectively on the previous quarter.

It is worth noting however that carers' reassessment figures may be relatively small and quarter on quarter comparisons can be somewhat volatile.

During quarter ending 31 March 2021, all HSC Trusts had a higher proportion of reassessments accepted / completed compared with those that were declined. This ranged from 96% accepted / completed in the South Eastern HSC Trust to 58% accepted / completed in the Northern HSC Trust. (Figure 15) ([Table 7](#)).

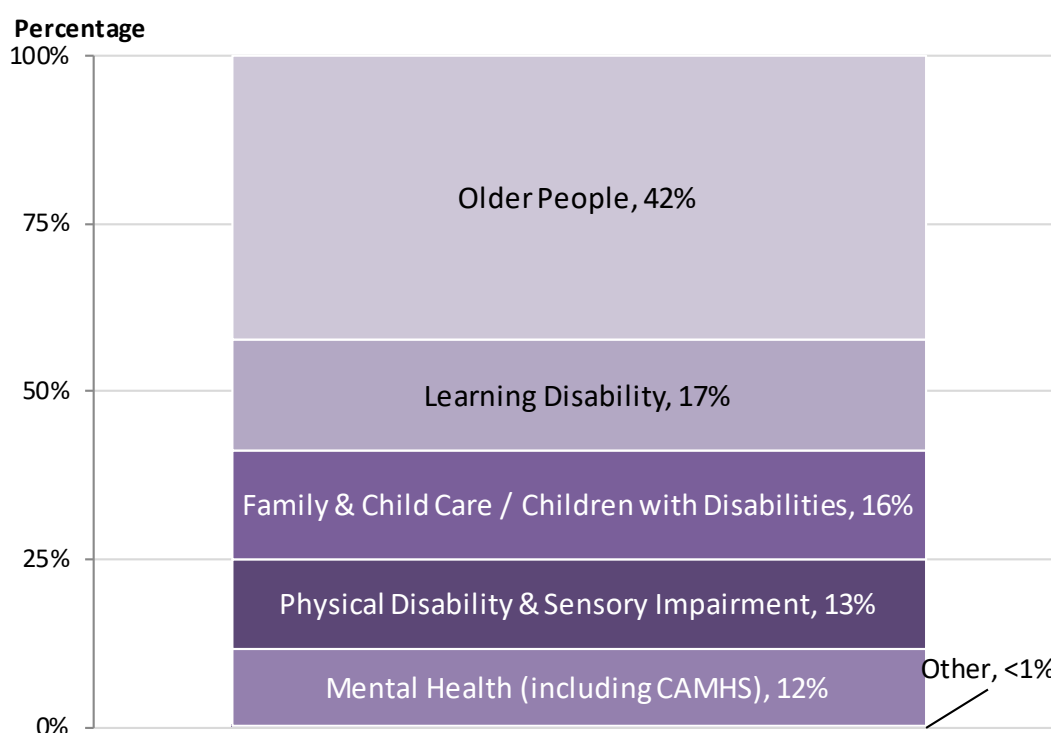
Figure 15 Proportion of Carers Reassessments Completed and Declined by HSC Trust (quarter ending 31 March 2021)



Client Group

Across Northern Ireland, figures show that during the quarter ending 31 March 2021, over two fifths (42%) of carers who were offered a carers' reassessment were caring for someone in the Older People client group.

Figure 16 Proportion of Carers Reassessments Offered by Client Group (of cared for person) (quarter ending 31 March 2021)

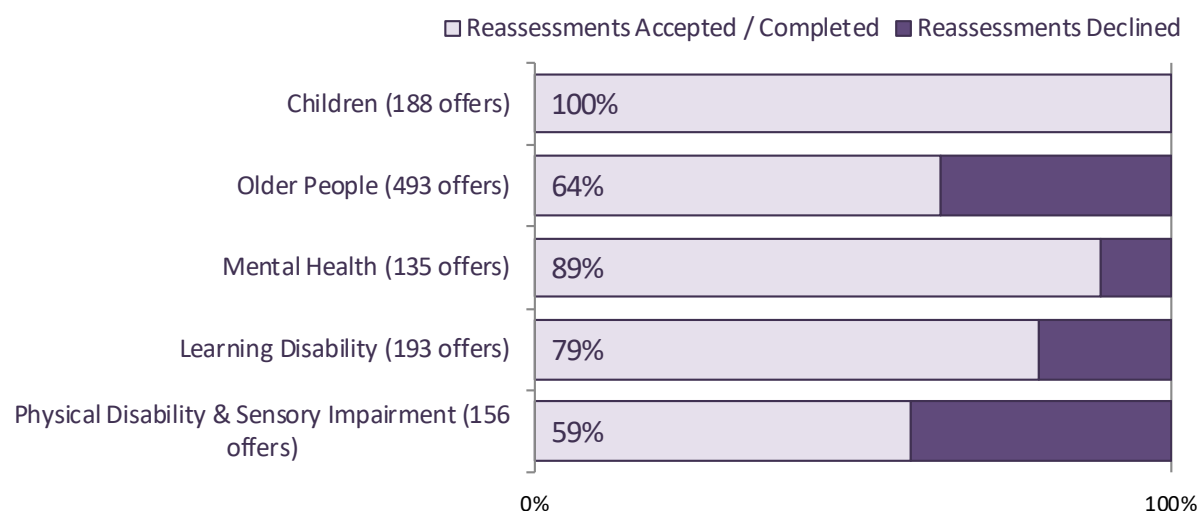


Reassessment offers to carers caring for someone in the Learning Disability client group accounted for 17% of the total carers' reassessment offered. The Family and Child Care / Children with Disabilities and the Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment client groups accounted for 16% and 13% respectively of the carers' reassessments offered. 12% of carers who were offered a carers' reassessment were caring for someone in the Mental Health client group (Figure 16).

Across Northern Ireland, carers in all client groups were more likely to accept / complete an offer of a reassessment than decline (Figure 17) ([Table 8](#)). All of the Family & Child Care and Children with Disabilities client group accepted an offer of reassessment (100%).

Figure 17 Proportion of Carers Reassessments Accepted / Completed and Declined by Client Group (quarter ending 31 March 2021)¹¹

Note: Mental Health includes CAMHS. Children’ cover ‘Children with Disabilities’ and ‘Family and Child Care’.



Reasons for Declining a Carers Reassessment

During the quarter ending 31 March 2021, the largest proportion of carers who declined an offer of a carers’ reassessment felt that they did not need any additional support (39%, 115) (Figure 18).

Just over a fifth, (21%, 63) of people who declined the reassessment felt that the time / place / environment offered was unsuitable but would like the opportunity to consider a reassessment at a later date.

15% (44) of people who declined the assessment did not give a reason or no reason was recorded for why they declined an offer of a carers’ reassessment.

Carers declining an offer of a reassessment for the reason that they did not feel previous assessments / reassessments had been beneficial accounted for 6% (18) of all those that were declined. A small number of people (2) declined an offer of reassessment did so as they found previous assessments / reassessments too time consuming (Figure 18) ([Table 9](#)).

¹¹ Please note there was 1 offer of a carers’ reassessment declined by persons in an unspecified client group.

Figure 18 Reasons Given for Declining a Carers Reassessment (Quarter ending 31 March 2021)

Reason Given	%
<i>The carer feels that they do not need any additional support</i>	39%
<i>The carer felt that time / place / environment offered was unsuitable but would like the opportunity to consider a reassessment at a later date</i>	21%
<i>The carer would not give a reason / No reason recorded</i>	15%
<i>The carer feels that the reassessment would not result in additional support</i>	10%
<i>The carer sees their caring duties as a private matter which they prefer not to discuss</i>	8%
<i>The carer did not feel previous assessments / reassessments had been beneficial</i>	6%
<i>The carer found previous assessments / reassessments too time consuming</i>	<1%

Appendix A: Technical Notes

Carers assessment publication

This statistical bulletin was first published 10 February 2012 under the name “Carers’ Statistics for Northern Ireland (quarter ending 30 June 2011)”. The name of the bulletin has since changed to “Quarterly Carers’ Statistics for Northern Ireland”.

Data Collection

A new adult Carers Assessment return has been introduced in quarter ending June 2019 to combine and streamline two separate data collections. This new return replaces the Carers return that was introduced in the quarter ending 31st March 2015, after the CA1 and CA1b community information returns covering data on carers’ assessments were discontinued.

The new Adult Carers Assessment return template is detailed in Appendix D and is also available on the [DoH website](#). Previous return templates are available on request.

The changes to the data collection following the change of source of data quarter ending June 2019 are set out below:

Figures on referrals are no longer collected.

The number of adult carers receiving a service is collected at year end.

The Older People client group figures are now separated out into ‘Older People’ and ‘Older People Mental Health’.

The age group of the carer is collected by age bands 16-17, 18-64 and 65+.

All information referring to quarter ending 30th June 2019 and subsequent quarters use the new carers return as source.

Data Quality

The Adult Carers Assessment returns are validated and quality assured by HSC Trusts senior management before being submitted to the HSCB. Further validations and consistency checks are carried out by the HSCB before being shared with statisticians in DoH. Statisticians will use historical and/or other independent data to monitor emerging trends and variations within and between Trusts in order to query any discrepancies.

Statement of Administrative Sources

A detailed ‘Statement of Administrative Sources’ is available on the [DoH website](#).

Rounding Conventions

Percentages have been rounded to whole numbers and as a consequence some percentages may not sum to 100.

Disclosure Conventions

The information presented in this publication has been assessed for the risk of disclosure. To prevent disclosure of the identity of individual carers, it may be necessary to suppress the values of cells with low counts and those which could otherwise be derived by means of simple arithmetic.

In some instances low counts will not be suppressed as the risk of sensitive personal data being disclosed is considered low against the benefit of such figures being available. Further detail can be found in the Government Statistical Service's (GSS) guidance on [disclosure control](#) for tables produced from administrative sources and the [Anonymisation Standard for Publishing Health and Social Care Data](#).

Our policy statement on confidentiality and security is contained within the DoH Statistics Charter and is available on [DoH website](#).

Revisions Policy

These data are revised by exception. If revisions are required, background circumstances are reported and revision dates are noted in subsequent publications of these series of statistics.

Our policy statement on revisions and errors is contained within the DoH Statistics Charter and is available on our website.

Related Publications

This publication can be downloaded from the DoH website at:

[Department of Health \(Carers' assessments and reassessments\)](#)

Other statistical information relating to social care can be found at:

[Department of Health \(Social care statistics\)](#)

Health Survey Northern Ireland:

[Department of Health \(Health survey Northern Ireland\)](#)

Data for the UK

The statistics detailed in this report relate to Northern Ireland only. Similar information for England, Scotland and Wales may be found as detailed below.

England

Survey of Carers' in Households – 2009/10 England

[NHS Digital \(Survey of Carers in Households - England, 2009-10\)](#)

Personal Social Services Survey of Adult Carers' in England – 2018/19

[NHS Digital \(Personal Social Services Survey of Adult Carers in England 2018-19\)](#)

Community Care Statistics: Social Services Activity, England 2015-16

[Community Care Statistics: Social Services Activity, England - 2015 to 2016 Report](#)

Wales

Welsh Health Survey: Health of Carers

[National Survey for Wales](#)

Scotland

Information about Carers' Statistics in Scotland can be found at the following link:

[Scotland's carers update](#)

Official Statistics

These are 'Official Statistics' as defined in Section 6 of the [Statistics and Registration Services Act 2007](#). They were produced by Community Information Branch (CIB) within the DoH.

User Feedback

Any comments you have regarding this or any other publication produced by CIB are welcome. Your views help us to improve the service we provide to users of this information and to the wider public.

Future Statistical Release

Upcoming releases for all social care statistics produced by CIB can be found on the IAD Publications Calendar at:

[Department of Health \(Statistical releases calendar\)](#)

Appendix B: Definitions

Carers and Direct Payments (Northern Ireland) Act 2002

The [Carers and Direct Payments Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2002](#) came into effect on 2 May 2002. This Act gives carers the right to a separate assessment of their needs and places an obligation on HSC Trusts to identify and provide information to carers. All carers providing or intending to provide care on a regular and substantial basis therefore have a legal right to have their needs assessed. The results of a carers' assessment should be recorded separately from that of the person cared for.

A Carer

A carer is someone who provides or intends to provide a **substantial** amount of care on a regular basis. The term 'carer' includes a person who may or may not be a relative and who may or may not be living with the person for whom they are caring. A carer provides help and support to someone, such as a family member, friend or neighbour, who may not be able to manage at home without this help because of frailty, illness or disability. A carer can be an adult caring for another adult, parents caring for ill or disabled children or young people of 16 or 17 years of age who care for someone.

It does not include someone who is providing care by virtue of a contract of employment, a volunteer working on behalf of a voluntary organisation, a foster carer or anyone who is providing personal assistance for payment either in cash or kind.

Substantial Care

The term 'substantial' is not defined in the [Carers and Direct Payments Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2002](#) but is left to professional judgement. It should not be based simply on the number of hours spent caring, but also take into consideration the impact of the caring role on the carers own health and well-being, key factors relating to the sustainability of the role and the extent of risk to the sustainability of the role.

Carers Assessment

Carers have a right to an assessment of their needs even when the person cared for has refused an assessment for community care services, or the provision of services, provided the person cared for would be eligible for community based services.

A carers' assessment is the process of gathering data for the purpose of determining a carers' needs and eligibility for services to sustain their caring role. All services offered to a carer should be the outcome of an assessment of need. The assessment must be formally documented, placed on file and a copy given to the carer. The "Carers Support and Needs Assessment" component of the [Northern Ireland Single Assessment Tool \(NISAT\)](#) for assessing the health and social care needs of older people is the "tool of choice" for use in assessing the needs of carers in all programmes

of care, thus ensuring a standardised approach to assessment regardless of where they live in Northern Ireland. This component was issued to Trusts in June 2009 along with associated guidance.

The assessment focuses on the needs of the carer and the purpose of the assessment is to:

- give the carer an opportunity to talk about their caring role;
- determine the support needs of the carer;
- determine whether the carer is eligible for support;
- determine if the needs identified can be met by the Trust or other services and to make an appropriate referral.

The focus of the assessment is on the carers' ability to care and the support they need to continue in their caring role. The assessment takes account of the carers' circumstances, age, views and preferences, available support, family and other commitments. The assessment is not a test for the carer but is about recognising, valuing and supporting the carer. The process can be important in itself even where service provision does not flow from the assessment. The decision about services to be provided should be informed by the assessments of both the carer and the person being cared for.

Carers Reassessment

A reassessment is required when/if the carers' circumstances change and hence the level of support required to enable the carer to continue caring. Changed circumstances could become known to the professional:

- through a planned event such as a review of existing support plan;
- unplanned changes in carers' personal circumstances e.g. physical or mental health, additional other family commitments, changes in work pattern etc;
- a crisis which impacts on the health or wellbeing of the person cared for.

Carers Assessments / Reassessments Offered

The number of carers' assessments / reassessments offered is the total of those accepted / completed plus those declined (see definitions below).

Carers Assessments Accepted / Completed

This refers to all assessments completed during the quarter, which were focused on a carers' need for support to sustain their caring role, whether they took place on the

same day as the assessment of the person cared for or were conducted on a separate date.

Carers Reassessments Accepted / Completed

This refers to all reassessments completed during the quarter in response to the changing need of the carer.

Carers Declining a Carers Assessment / Reassessment

This refers to all assessments / reassessments that were offered to carers by HSC Trust staff, and the offer was declined during the quarter, for whatever reason. If a carer declined an assessment / reassessment more than once during the quarter, they should only be counted once.

Client Group

Client group refers to that of the cared for person.

Family and Child Care

This group is mainly concerned with activity and resources relating to the provision of social services support for families and/or children.

Children with Disabilities

This group is mainly concerned with children and young people who have a physical, sensory or learning disability or prolonged illness or condition which, in interaction with various barriers, and without the provision of adequate support services, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others and hinder their optimal potential for personal development and social inclusion.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

This group is mainly concerned with children and young people where the primary reason for contact was due to mental health.

Older People (including Older People Mental Health)

This programme includes all community contacts with those aged 65 or over except where the reason for contact was mental illness or learning disability. All community contacts where the reason for the contact was dementia are included regardless of age, as well as all work relating to homes for the elderly, including those for the Elderly Mentally Infirm

Adult Mental Health

This programme includes all community contact where the primary reason for contact was due to mental health.

Adult Learning Disability

This programme includes all community contacts where the primary reason for contact was due to learning disability. All community contacts with Down's Syndrome patients who develop dementia, for any dementia related care or treatment are included as are all contacts in learning disability homes and units.

Adult Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment

This programme includes all community contacts by any health professional where the primary reason for the contact is physical and/or sensory disability. All patients and clients aged 65 and over are excluded and allocated to the Elderly Care Programme.

Other

Any carer caring for someone who does not fall under one of the outlined client groups should be included in this group.

Adult Carers Assessment return

This return records the number of carers for whom a carers' assessment or reassessment has been accepted / completed, the number of carers declining a carers' assessment or reassessment and the main reason given by the carer for declining a carers' assessment or reassessment during the quarter. These figures are available by the client group of the person for whom the carer is caring for.

Reasons for declining an offer of a Carers Assessment

A1 - The carer sees their caring duties as a private matter which they prefer not to discuss.

A2 - The carer does not see themselves as a carer and therefore does not see assessment as relevant.

A3 - The carer felt that time/ place/ environment offered was unsuitable but would like the opportunity to consider an assessment at a later date.

A4 - The carer feels that they do not need any support/ additional support.

A5 - The carer feels that an assessment would not result in additional support/ service.

A6 - The carer was concerned about the impact on their benefits/ income.

A7 - The carer feels that assessment would be too complicated or time consuming.

A8 - The carer would not give a reason/ No reason recorded.

Reasons for declining an offer of a Carers Reassessment

R1 - The carer sees their caring duties as a private matter which they prefer not to discuss.

R2 - The carer did not feel previous assessments/ re-assessments had been beneficial.

R3 - The carer felt that time/ place/ environment offered was unsuitable but would like the opportunity to consider a re-assessment at a later date.

R4 - The carer feels that they do not need any additional support.

R5 - The carer feels that the re-assessment would not result in additional support.

R6 - The carer found previous assessments/ re-assessments too time consuming.

R7 - The carer would not give a reason/ No reason recorded.

The Adult Carers Assessment return template is detailed in Appendix D

Appendix C: Tables

Please note that all tables can be found in excel format at: [Carers' assessments and reassessments | Department of Health](#)

Table 1: Carers Assessments Offered, Accepted / Completed and Declined (quarters ending 30 June 2018 - 31 March 2021)

Quarter	30 Jun 2018	30 Sep 2018	31 Dec 2018	31 Mar 2019	30 Jun 2019	30 Sep 2019	31 Dec 2019	31 Mar 2020	30 Jun 2020	30 Sep 2020	31 Dec 2020	31 Mar 2021
Assessments Offered	4,079	4,392	4,560	4,734	4,160	4,133	4,201	4,082	2,789	3,386	3,750	4,227
Assessments Accepted / Completed	2,109	2,037	2,123	2,567	2,007	2,073	2,074	1,979	1,503	1,756	2,172	2,518
Assessments Declined	1,970	2,355	2,437	2,167	2,153	2,060	2,127	2,103	1,286	1,630	1,578	1,709

Table 2: Carers Assessments Offered by Client Group and HSC Trust (quarter ending 31 March 2021)

	Family & Child Care / Children with Disabilities	Older People	Mental Health	Learning Disability	Physical Disability & Sensory Impairment	Other	Total Assessments Offered
HSC Trust							
Belfast	215	493	230	80	60	0	1,078
Northern	26	1,053	134	31	196	49	1,489
South Eastern	62	527	90	44	48	0	771
Southern	27	254	98	26	121	12	538
Western	6	142	26	84	93	0	351
Northern Ireland	336	2,469	578	265	518	61	4,227

Note: In some instances low counts will not be suppressed as the risk of sensitive personal data being disclosed is considered low.

Note: Mental Health includes CAMHS.

Table 3: Carers Assessments Accepted / Completed by Client Group and HSC Trust (quarter ending 31 March 2021)¹²

HSC Trust	Family & Child Care / Children with Disabilities	Older People	Mental Health	Learning Disability	Physical Disability & Sensory Impairment	Other	Total Assessments Accepted / Completed
Belfast	215	376	183	77	60	0	911
Northern	[Sup]	510	94	[Sup]	88	0	736
South Eastern	56	219	90	29	28	0	422
Southern	[Sup]	143	29	[Sup]	45	0	267
Western	6	56	20	44	56	0	182
Northern Ireland	329	1,304	416	192	277	0	2,518

Table 4: Carers Assessments Declined by Client Group and HSC Trust (quarter ending 31 March 2021)¹²

HSC Trust	Family & Child Care / Children with Disabilities	Older People	Mental Health	Learning Disability	Physical Disability & Sensory Impairment	Other	Total Assessments Declined
Belfast	0	117	47	3	0	0	167
Northern	[Sup]	543	40	[Sup]	108	49	753
South Eastern	6	308	0	15	20	0	349
Southern	[Sup]	111	69	[Sup]	76	12	271
Western	0	86	6	40	37	0	169
Northern Ireland	7	1,165	162	73	241	61	1,709

Note: In some instances low counts will not be suppressed as the risk of sensitive personal data being disclosed is considered low.

Note: Mental Health includes CAMHS.

¹² [Sup] represents a cell count less than 4 that has been suppressed in order to avoid personal disclosure. In addition, where a suppressed cell may be deduced from the totals, appropriate cells have also been suppressed.

Table 5: Reasons Given for Declining a Carers Assessment (quarter ending 31 March 2021)

Main Reason a Carer Declined a Carers Assessment	Northern Ireland
The carer sees their caring duties as a private matter which they prefer not to discuss	87
The carer does not see themselves as a carer and therefore does not see assessment as relevant	169
The carer felt that time / place / environment offered was unsuitable but would like the opportunity to consider an assessment at a later date	417
The carer feels that they do not need any support / additional support	653
The carer feels that an assessment would not result in additional support / service	99
The carer was concerned about the impact on their benefits / income	13
The carer feels that assessment would be too complicated or time consuming	17
The carer would not give a reason / No reason recorded	254
Total	1,709

Note: In some instances low counts will not be suppressed as the risk of sensitive personal data being disclosed is considered low.

Table 6: Carers Reassessments Offered, Accepted / Completed and Declined (quarters ending 30 June 2018 - 31 March 2021)

Quarter	30 Jun 2018	30 Sep 2018	31 Dec 2018	31 Mar 2019	30 Jun 2019	30 Sep 2019	31 Dec 2019	31 Mar 2020	30 Jun 2020	30 Sep 2020	31 Dec 2020	31 Mar 2021
Reassessments Offered	885	1,003	1,077	1,112	1,226	1,052	1,239	992	962	1,165	1,160	1,166
Reassessments Accepted / Completed	684	765	827	828	967	824	925	725	642	912	838	868
Reassessments Declined	201	238	250	284	259	228	314	267	320	253	322	298

Table 7: Carers Reassessments by HSC Trust (quarter ending 31 March 2021)

HSC Trust	Belfast	Northern	South Eastern	Southern	Western	Northern Ireland
Total Reassessments Offered	23	436	114	410	183	1,166
Total Reassessments Accepted / Completed	17	254	110	346	141	868
Total Reassessments Declined	6	182	4	64	42	298

Note: In some instances low counts will not be suppressed as the risk of sensitive personal data being disclosed is considered low.

Note: Mental Health includes CAMHS.

Table 8: Carers Reassessments by Client Group (quarter ending 31 March 2021)

Client group	Family & Child Care / Children with Disabilities	Older People	Mental Health	Learning Disability	Physical Disability & Sensory Impairment	Other	Total
Total reassessments offered	188	493	135	193	156	1	1,166
Total reassessments accepted / completed	188	315	120	153	92	0	868
Total reassessments declined	0	178	15	40	64	1	298

Note: Mental Health includes CAMHS.

Table 9: Reasons Given for Declining a Carers Reassessment (quarter ending 31 March 2021)

Main Reason a Carer Declined a Carers Assessment	Northern Ireland
The carer sees their caring duties as a private matter which they prefer not to discuss	25
The carer did not feel previous assessments / reassessments had been beneficial	18
The carer felt that time / place / environment offered was unsuitable but would like the opportunity to consider a reassessment at a later date	63
The carer feels that they do not need any additional support	115
The carer feels that the reassessment would not result in additional support	31
The carer found previous assessments / reassessments too time consuming	2
The carer would not give a reason / No reason recorded	44
Total	298

Note: In some instances low counts will not be suppressed as the risk of sensitive personal data being disclosed is considered low.

Appendix D: Adult Carers Assessment Return

A copy of these returns can be made available upon request from Community Information Branch. [Contact Us](#)

Client Group		Number of Adult Carers Offered Individual Carer's Assessments:				Number of Adult Individual Carer's Assessments Completed:				Number of Adult Individual Carers Assessments Declined:				Main Reason Adult Carer Declined Carer's Assessment								Control Column	
Age Range of Carer		16-17	18-64	65+	Total	16-17	18-64	65+	Total	16-17	18-64	65+	Total	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	Control Column	
Children	Family & Child Care				0				0				0										
	Children with Disabilities				0				0				0										
	CAMHS				0				0				0										
Older People					0				0				0										
Older People Mental Health					0				0				0										
Adult Mental Health					0				0				0										
Adult Learning Disability					0				0				0										
Adult Physical Disability & Sensory Impairment					0				0				0										
Other (please specify by inserting a comments box)					0				0				0										
Total					0				0				0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

TABLE 2: NUMBER OF ADULT CARERS RECEIVING A SERVICE AT 31st MARCH

Client Group		Number of Adult Carers Receiving a Service as at 31st March			
Age Range of Carer		16-17	18-64	65+	Total
Children	Family & Child Care				0
	Children with Disabilities				0
	CAMHS				0
Older People					0
Older People Mental Health					0
Adult Mental Health					0
Adult Learning Disability					0
Adult Physical Disability & Sensory Impairment					0
Other (please specify by inserting a comments box)					0
Total		0	0	0	0

TABLE 3: RE-ASSESSMENTS

Client Group		Number of Adult Carers Offered Individual Carer's Re-Assessments:				Number of Adult Individual Carers Re-Assessment Completed:				Number of Adult Individual Carers Re-Assessments Declined:				Main Reason Adult Carer Declined Carer's Re-Assessment							Control Column		
Age Range of Carer		16-17	18-64	65+	Total	16-17	18-64	65+	Total	16-17	18-64	65+	Total	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	Control Column		
Children	Family & Child Care				0				0				0										
	Children with Disabilities				0				0				0										
	CAMHS				0				0				0										
Older People					0				0				0										
Older People Mental Health					0				0				0										
Adult Mental Health					0				0				0										
Adult Learning Disability					0				0				0										
Adult Physical Disability & Sensory Impairment					0				0				0										
Other (please specify by inserting a comments box)					0				0				0										
Total					0				0				0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

NOTES:
 Completed Return should be submitted to: HSCBInformation@hscni.net
 Please return no later than 4 weeks after the end of each quarter, see timetable for submission tab.
 A Guidance sheet has also been included for reference.

This and other statistical bulletins published by Community Information Branch are available to download on the DoH website at:

[Department of Health \(Social care statistics\)](#).

This publication can be requested in large print or other formats.