

# Work Package 2

## Dyadic Impact of Social Care for Older Carers and the People they Support (DYADS)

Stacey Rand<sup>1</sup>, Wenjing Zhang<sup>2</sup>, Grace Collins<sup>1</sup>, Barbora Silarova<sup>1</sup>,  
Alisoun Milne<sup>3</sup>, Helen Ramsbottom<sub>§</sub>, Della Ogunleye<sub>§</sub>, Christina Reading<sub>§</sub>

<sup>1</sup> Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU), University of Kent

<sup>2</sup> Centre for Health Services Research (CHSS), University of Kent

<sup>3</sup> School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research (SSPSSR), University of Kent

<sub>§</sub> Research Advisors, University of Kent

# Aims and Objectives

1. How do services improve the QoL of older carers (*individually*) and with the people they support (*as a 'dyad'*)?
2. **What are the benefits and challenges of applying a 'dyadic' lens?**
3. Key learning that may be applied in policy-making, commissioning, service planning, and care practice

# Methods

- WP 1. Scoping literature review
- **WP 2. Qualitative interviews with social care professionals**
- WP 3. Qualitative interviews with older carers, aged 65 or over, & the people they support

## WP2. Interviews with social care professionals

- Qualitative study of social care professionals in England ( $n=25$ )
- Semi-structured interviews
  - **Using outcomes data\* in practice**, e.g. service design, assessment
  - Benefits, challenges and barriers to applying a '**dyadic outcomes approach**'

\* In particular, quality of life (QoL) and wellbeing

# Using outcomes in practice

\* **Outcomes** = quality of life, for people with support needs *and* family carers



Keeps the focus on **quality of life**  
– *how do services enable people to live as they wish to?*

# Using outcomes in practice

- How are outcomes used?
  - Needs assessment and care planning
  - Service delivery, planning and local/in-house evaluation
  - Contract management and commissioning
- How are outcomes captured and recorded?
  - Validated questionnaires
    - Standardized format
    - Provide an 'overview' for a larger number of people
  - Guided conversations or 'case studies'
    - In-depth detail for a smaller number of people
    - Captures context, narrative & complexity





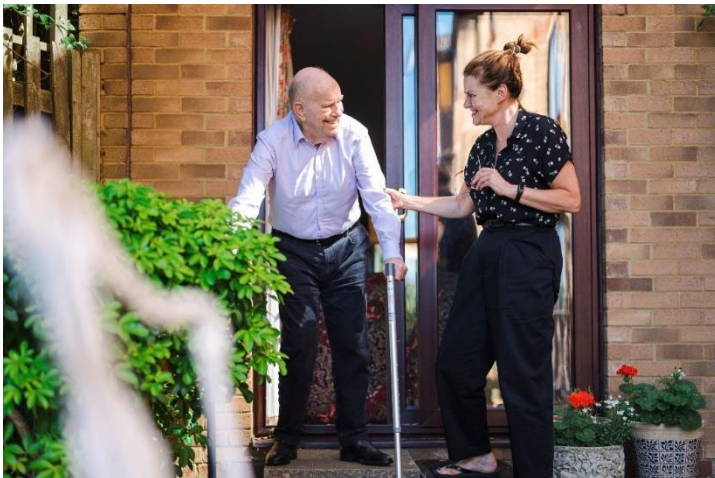
# Using outcomes in practice – Benefits

- Understanding of the effect of services on people's lives  
***To support people to live well, as they wish to***

Used to guide service planning, delivery and funding...

*“[A] focus on outcomes really brings to life the impact the services are having on people's lives, and helps to... bring that story of why there's an ongoing need for services, particularly in the time we still live in, in a time of austerity.”*

(Commissioner)



# Using outcomes in practice – Challenges and Barriers

- Are we asking the right questions, in the right way?

*“The questions aren’t relevant. They don’t capture the work we’re doing with that person.”*

(Care provider)

*“[The questions] can be sometimes seen as quite invasive for people... sometimes people just want more of a focused conversation. The ‘outcomes’ can be seen as a barrier... There’s something around the skill of the person using those outcome tools... it’s knowing the appropriate time to approach these conversations.”*

(Care provider)





# Using outcomes in practice – Challenges and Barriers

- Capturing contextual influences on outcomes

*“What they’re not seeing [with quantitative outcomes data], is that, when you’re working with carers, their scores might go down because their caring role’s changed...”*

(Care provider)

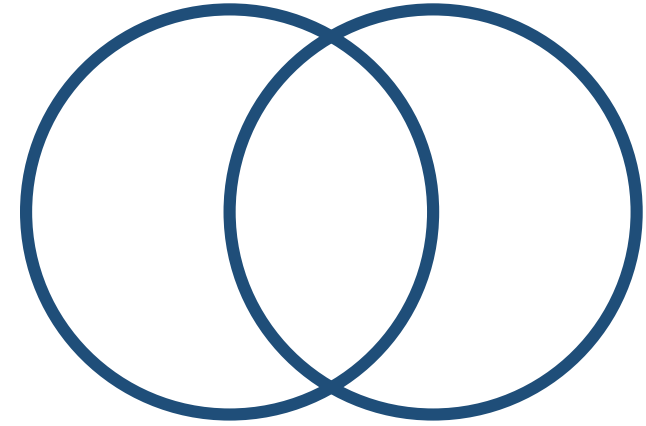
- Volume of data collection, sharing and application

*“[The sector has]... evolved to have all these outcome data coming in, but I don’t think there’s enough investment in the sector around intelligently using that data, or using it in a more collaborative or collective way to achieve change..”*

(Carers organisation)

# Applying a dyadic outcomes approach – Benefits

- Holistic view of needs and outcomes
  - Needs assessment & care planning
  - Impact and evaluation of services
  - Service delivery and planning
- Building trust between professionals and families
- Places carers on an equal footing



# Applying a dyadic outcomes approach – challenges & barriers

- Ensuring that carers are not overlooked

*“There is a clear separation of funding - you know, the purpose of it and the outcomes. Whereas if you’re putting it into one plan, I don’t know whether either one of the parties, needs could be somehow overlooked.”*

(Social worker)

- Workforce and resourcing – requires skill, experience & time

*“In terms of resources and time..., focusing on that wider network – it’d be a struggle if I’m honest.”*

(Social worker)

# Applying a dyadic outcomes approach – challenges & barriers

- Data protection and confidentiality

*“When we’re talking to carers, you have to make sure that GDPR has been adhered to – if they’re talking about somebody else in a lot more depth, you have to find out about, does this person give you permission to talk about the whole situation.”*

(Carers organisation)

- Funding and strategic leadership

*“... commissioning drives, doesn’t it, how services operate for sure. So that is I think could be the number one challenge that services are just not set up to work like that ...”*

(Carers organisation)

# Applying a dyadic outcomes approach – summary & reflections

Adopting a *dyadic QoL outcomes lens* is perceived to be **beneficial**, but also **challenges** and **barriers** to its implementation.

- How to understand carers?
  - Adopting a wider view of ‘supporting people’ (vs. carers or service user, patient or client)?
- Reframing of ‘needs’ & ‘outcomes’, beyond individuals (but complexity?)
- Difficult to operationalize in task-focused systems, with limited resource?

There are also questions about the collection and use of outcomes, individually – not least, around **why** and **how** data are collected and used.

# Conclusions & recommendations

- Using and applying outcomes
  - Who decides what is collected, how it is collected and applied?
    - Co-production with people who use services, service providers and commissioners & funders
    - Explore ways of capturing the contextual influences on outcomes
      - Intelligent use of existing data, data sharing & collaboration
      - Combined *quantitative* and *qualitative* data
        - An overview of all/large % of service users
        - Smaller number, but more in-depth
      - Taking a longitudinal view (i.e. change over time) – e.g. case studies, quantitative methods
- Using and applying ‘dyadic outcomes’
  - To understand wider benefit (or unintentional negative impacts?) of social care services
    - Acknowledging the need for investment, for sustainable care

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The images in this presentation are from the Centre for Better Ageing's [library of age-positive images](#).

The full report of findings are available at:

Rand S, Zhang W, Collins G, Silarova B, Milne A (2022) Applying a dyadic outcomes approach to supporting older carers and care-recipients: A qualitative study of social care professionals in England. *Health and Social Care in the Community*. <http://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.13914>.



# Any questions?

Email: [s.e.rand@kent.ac.uk](mailto:s.e.rand@kent.ac.uk)

[www.pssru.ac.uk/dyadproject/homepage](http://www.pssru.ac.uk/dyadproject/homepage)