

# “Why call it care when nobody cares?”

September 2018

Our social care system is failing those it is supposed to support – with devastating consequences. Too many struggle with even the basics, such as getting in and out of bed, getting dressed or going to the toilet – because they lack vital care and support. Families are stretched to breaking point.

We asked over 2,500 people over the age of 65 with care needs and those providing unpaid care just how this impacted on their lives in our Big Social Care Survey<sup>1</sup>. The picture that emerged from our survey is shocking.

## Christine’s story

**“I care for my 102 year old father since my mother died 4 years ago. He is fiercely independent but was failing to cope – none of the care packages put in place worked out because dad hated having so many different people in and out of his home.”**

**We’ve found that over 1.4 million people over 65 don’t receive all the care and support they need with essential daily living activities.**

<p><b>What did the survey tell us?</b></p>	<p><b>55%</b> of people aged 65+ who are cared for at home reported they had to rely more and more on family and friends</p>	<p><b>42%</b> of older carers feel lonely or isolated</p>
<p><b>1 in 5</b> older people have missed meals because of a failing care system</p>	<p><b>32%</b> of unpaid carers who are themselves over 65 said they were unable to take a break from caring</p>	<p><b>1 in 4</b> had to get hospital treatment because of a failing care system</p>
<p><b>40%</b> of older carers told us their own health had deteriorated as a result of their caring responsibilities</p>		

<sup>1</sup> Figures taken from the Care and Support Alliance Big Social Care Survey, April 2018



### Rasila's story

Rasila, aged 67, has been an informal carer for 40 years. After many years of caring for her mother and father, she is now caring for her younger sister who has advanced stage Alzheimer's – it's a 24/7 responsibility and emotionally and physically difficult. After a long fight, she has been able to secure a care package for her sister of three visits a day, but while this goes some way towards providing for her sister's physical care, the responsibility of caring still rests on the family. She has had financial difficulties too as she had to retire early to look after her sister.

**“The caring role falls on you automatically. My sister and I were very close. She has a husband but he was really struggling. There was no-one else. I just had to do it. When you're a carer you forget yourself. You forget to eat or drink; you're always rushing. I've forgotten to smile. I'm not the same Rasila now. I've lost my identity”.**

### Janet's story

**“Chris had a stroke in 2007. He's wheelchair-bound and can't do anything without help. I've broken a couple of ribs trying to care for my husband at home, but I have no choice – we've been through a multitude of care agencies but since 2014 I've been caring for him myself, 24/7.”**



**The Government needs to step up and ensure that we have a properly-funded care system so that everyone can get the care and support they need.**

## About Age UK

Age UK is the country's largest charity dedicated to helping everyone make the most of later life. Our vision is to make the UK a great place to grow older. Our ambition is that all 11.8 million older people across the UK can:

- Have enough money to live without the fear of poverty in later life
- Enjoy life and feel well
- Receive high quality health and care
- Be comfortable and secure at home
- Feel valued and able to participate

## Contact us

For more information, to meet with us or take one of our actions please contact our External Affairs team:

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- or call **020 3033 1226**
- or visit [ageuk.org.uk/carecrisis](http://ageuk.org.uk/carecrisis)

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