



Australian Government

Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare

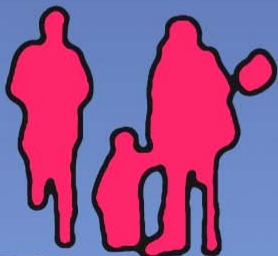
Australia's welfare



Carers and informal care: An overview

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AIHW



In 2003:

- 2.5 million carers aged 15 years or over
- 474,600 (19%) are primary carers
- Most carers are women (71% of primary carers)
- Over half are aged 35-59 years (54%)
- Most primary carers are co-resident (78%)



Critical role of carers

- Of the 1.1 million people with a severe or profound disability:
 - 61% received help from formal services
 - 95% received help from informal carers
- Value of services provided by carers exceeds \$27 billion



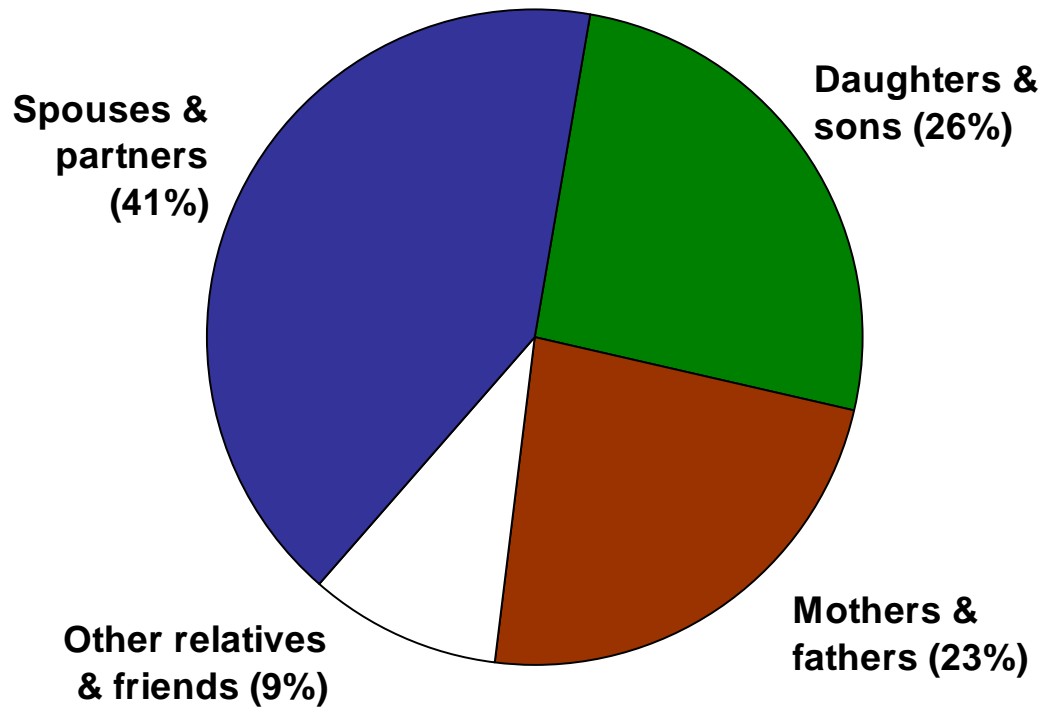
The 'costs' of caring

Carers:

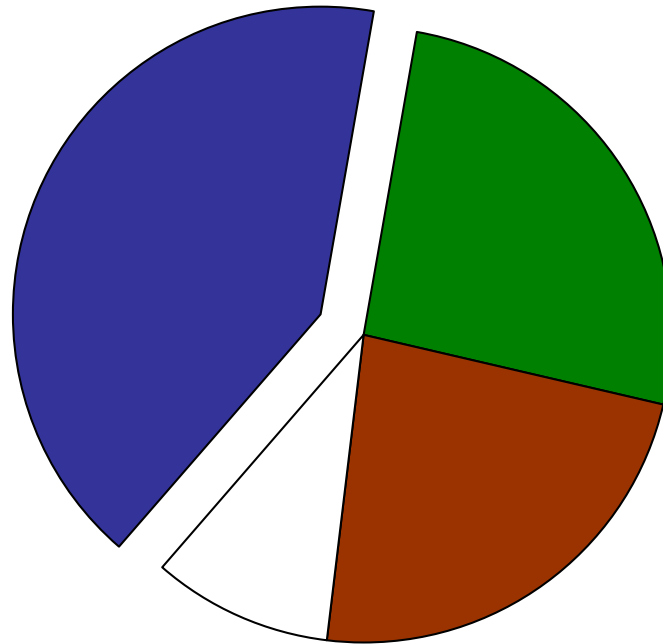
- are less likely to be employed
- face increased costs and are more likely to experience financial stress
- have poorer health/wellbeing
- have fewer social contacts



Who cares?



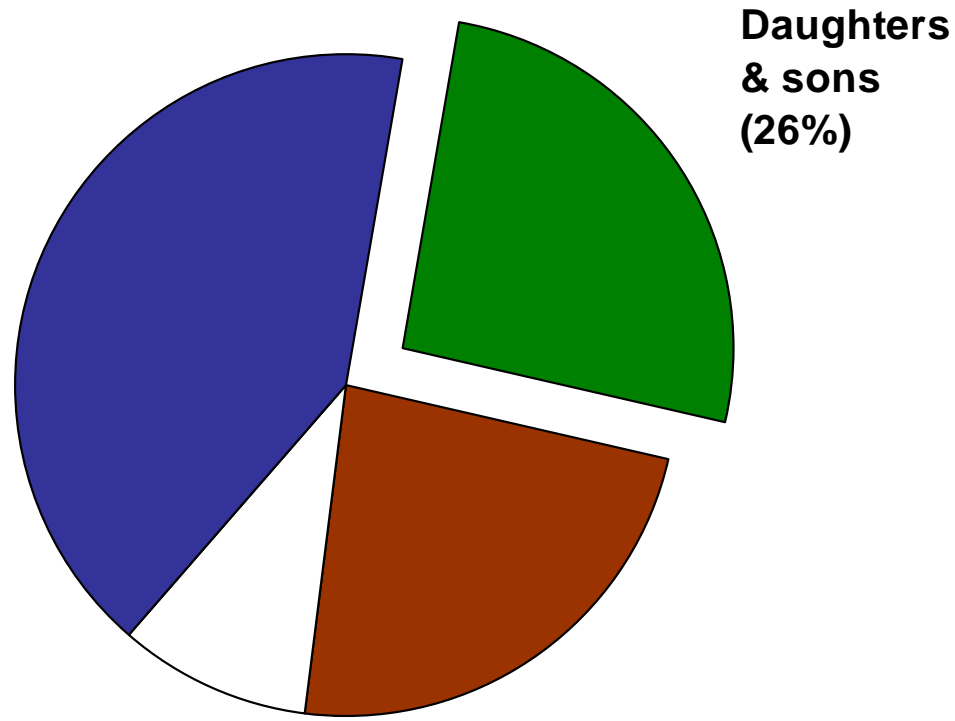
Spouses &
partners
(41%)



Wives, husbands & partners:

- 59% wives, 41% husbands
- Around half are aged 65 years or over
- Around 40% had been caring for <5 years
- Around 40% spent 40+ hours p.w. providing care
- Are least likely to be in the labour force
- Are most likely to be living in a low income household

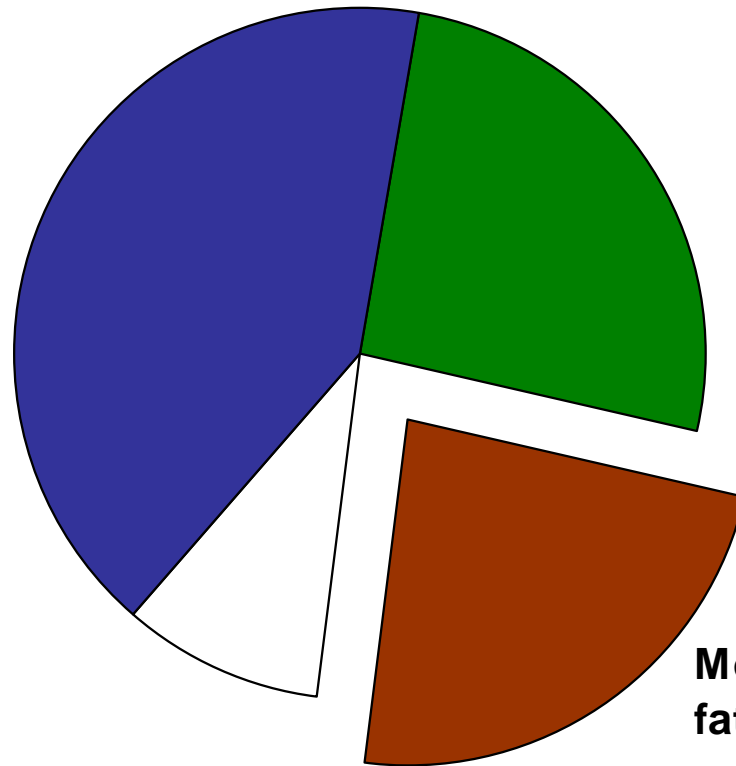




Daughters & sons:

- 71% are daughters, 29% sons
- Over half are aged 45-64 years
- Most likely to have provided care for <5 years
- Around half are co-resident
- Most spend <20 hours p.w. providing care
- Are most likely to be employed
- Are most likely to report wanting more assistance





Mothers & fathers 23%)



Mothers & fathers:

- 91% are mothers
- 87% are co-resident
- Are younger than other carers
- Are most likely to have provided long-term care
- Are most likely to spend 40+ hours p.w. providing care
- Are most likely to report that income has been affected (and most likely to report increased expenses)
- Are least likely to report feeling satisfied due to the caring role



Whose needs?

- All groups show some evidence of disadvantage and/or stress
- Most want more financial assistance
- Mothers/fathers & daughters/sons also wanted more respite
- Many can also be supported in other ways (e.g. supportive workplaces)



In conclusion...

- The needs and circumstances of each carer are unique, but it can be helpful to look at carers' needs by relationship
- It will be important to continue to investigate how well services meet the needs of all carers

