



Are Social Workers Successfully Engaging with Family Carers?

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Junior 
ENTREPRENEUR
PROGRAMME

Ireland's 360,000 Family Carers

Someone who provides regular, unpaid personal help for a friend or family member with a long-term illness, health problem or disability (Census 2016)

- ▶ **Kinship** 86% are Family Members
- ▶ **Intensity of Care** Average of 44.6 hours care provided per week
- ▶ **Gender Ratio**; 61% women/39% men -
- ▶ Provide care out of love or duty or maybe both.

(Sources - Irish Health Survey, 2015, Central Statistics Office, 2016, TILDA, 2012)

Can Family Carers Combine Working and Caring?

A third of Family Carers work full-time (CSO, 2012)



Are there More Older Carers?

The number of older carers has increased by over

50%

since 2006 (CSO, 2017)



What Is the Financial Contribution of Family Carers?

€10bn per year (FCL, 2017)



Are Carers Stressed?

27% of carers scored seven or higher on the Caregiver Strain Index. (CSO, 2010)



Is the Role Challenging?

50% of carers have had the experience of being mentally and physically 'drained' by their caring role (CAI/ICP, 2009)



What Are Sandwich Carers?

Usually caring for young children and parents at the **same time**. The highest concentration of Caring in our population is in the 40–55 age group (CSO, 2012)



Social Workers and Family Carers

- ▶ *Is it always clear who your primary client is?*
- ▶ How many Family Carers in your community have had meaningful engagement with Social Workers over an extended time frame?
- ▶ What possibilities are there for Social Work to work more intensively with Family Carers?

Social Workers as Advocates

▶ **Micro Level**

- ▶ Negotiating Sufficient Home Care Supports, Respite Care, Signposting to other supports.
- ▶ Mediators - encouraging sharing the care, managing expectations,
- ▶ Social workers as leaders of primary care teams (Ireland) - we have the skill set

▶ **Mezzo Level**

- ▶ Internal champions (within state health and social care organisations)

▶ **Macro Level**

- ▶ Not-for-profit Leadership - Lobbying - via
 - ▶ Research, Position Papers, Submissions, Awareness Events (eg National Carers Week)
- ▶ Representative Groups (IASW, IFSW)



A hand-drawn graphic on a light blue background. The main text is written in a stylized, blue, outlined font. The top line reads "RELENTLESS INCREMENTALISM" and the bottom line reads "& BIG VISION". Three blue arrows point from left to right, connecting the words "RELENTLESS", "INCREMENTALISM", and "& BIG VISION". To the left of the main text, there is a small orange circle with a black crosshair and the word "way" written vertically. To the right, there is a light blue circle with the word "civilized" written inside. Above the main text, the word "changing" is written in a cursive script. The background is decorated with various colored lines and shapes, including a yellow and orange striped area at the top left.

RELENTLESS INCREMENTALISM
& BIG VISION

way
civilized
changing

Social Workers as Assessors of (Carers) Needs

- ▶ Part of Single Assessment Tool (SAT) - InterRAI

“Allow Family Carers to identify their needs, be given information and advice, explore difficulties they may experience and make contingency plans if they are ill or are unable to continue to provide care.”

“Can build carer morale and capacity and are central to care planning. They can provide timely feedback to health and social care professionals and can inform policy and service provision.”



Example of (Draft) Question in CNA

Which of the following tasks or activities are challenging for you? (Code: 0 No 1 Yes)

Challenging Activities	Code
a. Continence Care	
b. Other Personal Care (e.g. help with bathing or grooming)	
c. Managing dementia	
d. Complex care tasks (e.g. stomas care, PEG feeding, tracheostomy care, Dialysis)	
e. Medication Management	
f. Legal aspects (e.g. power of attorney, advanced care directives)	
g. Mental health (e.g. depression, anxiety)	
h. Family conflict	

Example of (Draft) Question in CNA

Self-Report Quality of Life

ASK: “I will read you a variety of statements. Please respond with how often each statement is true for you”.

Code: 0 Never 1 Rarely 2 Sometimes 3 Most of the time 4 Always 5
Don't know

Challenging Activities	Code
a. I am hopeful about my future	
b. I feel good about myself	
c. My relationships with family and friends are good	
d. Caring for _____ gives me a sense of pride	
e. Caring for _____ makes me feel needed, useful, loved	
f. Caring for _____ has improved our relationship	

Introductory Paragraph in Carer Need Assessment

The Family Carer Needs Assessment is designed to identify your needs as a Family Carer. It looks at your role as a Family Carer, how it affects you, and how much care you can realistically provide (while still allowing you to be involved in other activities). The assessment should also help identify what types of help or support you may need. The assessment is an opportunity for you to:

- ▶ Share your experience of caring and to recognise your role as a Family Carer
- ▶ Discuss and reflect on your own needs as a Family Carer
- ▶ Be given information and advice
- ▶ Identify and discuss any difficulties you may have
- ▶ Make contingency plans if you are ill or unable continue in your caring role.

CNA Outcomes

For Health and Social Care Professionals

- ▶ Promotion of integrated model of planning
- ▶ Deeper engagement and understanding of Statutory and NGO perspectives and remits.

For Family Carers

- ▶ Recognise carers as partners in care
- ▶ Cathartic conversations? just being valued
- ▶ More equitable access to supports
- ▶ Identification of carers needs and appropriate referral to supports.

CNA will better measure and identify the health and social care needs of carers.

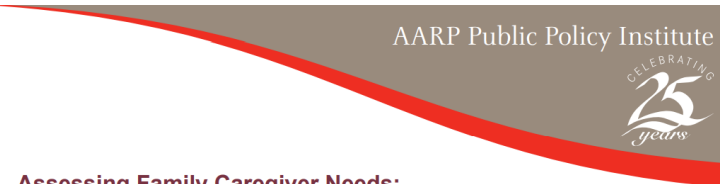
Carer Assessment Champions?

- ▶ Internal Health Agency Leaders Leads (through championing the new SAT)
 - ▶ Individual Public Health Nurses,
 - ▶ Hospital Discharge Teams
- ▶ Primary Care Teams?
- ▶ Others? (NGO's, Representative Bodies)
- ▶ Social Workers - ??

Contacts/Further Details

- ▶ Information on InterRAI- <http://www.interrai.org/>
- ▶ Arguments for Carers Assessments -
 - ▶ bit.ly/1MX44tx (AARP)
 - ▶ bit.ly/1LEX03d

Fact Sheet



**Assessing Family Caregiver Needs:
Policy and Practice Considerations**

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Caregiver assessment is a systematic process of gathering information about a caregiving situation to identify the specific problems, needs, strengths, and resources of the family caregiver, as well as the ability of the caregiver to contribute to the needs of the care recipient. Effectively assessing and addressing caregiver needs can maintain the health and well-being of caregivers, sustain their ability to provide care, prevent or postpone nursing home placement, and produce better outcomes for the care recipient.

Family caregivers are the backbone of the long-term care system and contribute to the needs of the care recipient.

Don't Lose that Spark !



Thank-You

- ▶ Full Slide set available to download at www.carealliance.ie