

The use and costs of paid and unpaid care for people with dementia

The population of Britain is growing older. More people are now living with dementia. Family and friends provide a lot of help to people with dementia. They are not paid for doing this but it costs them their time. People with dementia often need help from health and social services and these services cost money.

We wanted to understand:

- what it costs to care for people living with dementia in Britain;
- how these costs change as time goes on; and
- whether costs are higher for some groups of people than for others.

We asked about this as part of the IDEAL study, which looks at the experiences of people living with dementia and their carers. We visited people at home at the beginning of the study and then one year and two years later. We asked people with dementia what services they used and what help they received from family and friends. We worked out the average cost of the health and social services people received: services for people with dementia cost £71 a week at the beginning of the study and increased to £115 a week after two years. We also worked out how much it cost family and friends to provide care: the average weekly cost of carers' time was £255 at the beginning of the study, rising to £383 after two years.

We found that the costs of services were higher for people with dementia who lived alone than for those who lived with others. Also, it cost more to care for men than for women. The costs of services for people with Parkinsonian dementias were three-to-four times higher than for people with Alzheimer's over the study period.

The NHS and local councils can use this information when planning services for people with dementia.

This is a summary of a [research article](#) which appeared in the **Journal of Alzheimer's Disease** in December 2021.