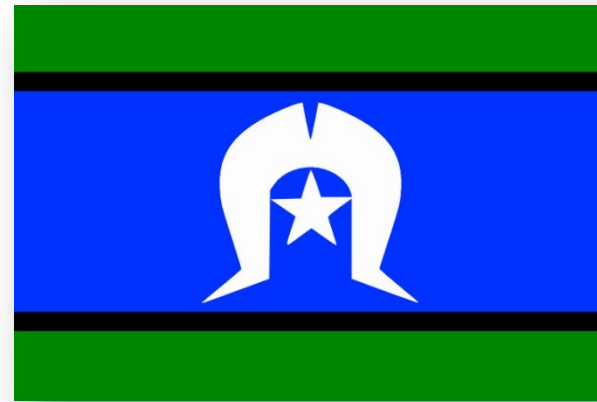


Acknowledgment of Country



I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this Land. I would also like to pay respect to the Elders both past and present and extend that respect to other Aboriginal people here today.

About Carers NSW



Carers NSW is the peak non-government organisation for carers in New South Wales (NSW). Our goals are to:

- Be a leading carer organisation in which carers have confidence
- Actively promote carer recognition and support
- Actively support carers to navigate a changing service landscape that will be characterised by ongoing policy reform
- Promote connected community experiences and opportunities for carers that are inclusive of diverse carer groups
- Lead and advocate for carer-specific and carer-inclusive policy making, research and service delivery
- Continue to be a quality-driven, responsive and carer-focused organisation.

About Carers

Who are carers?

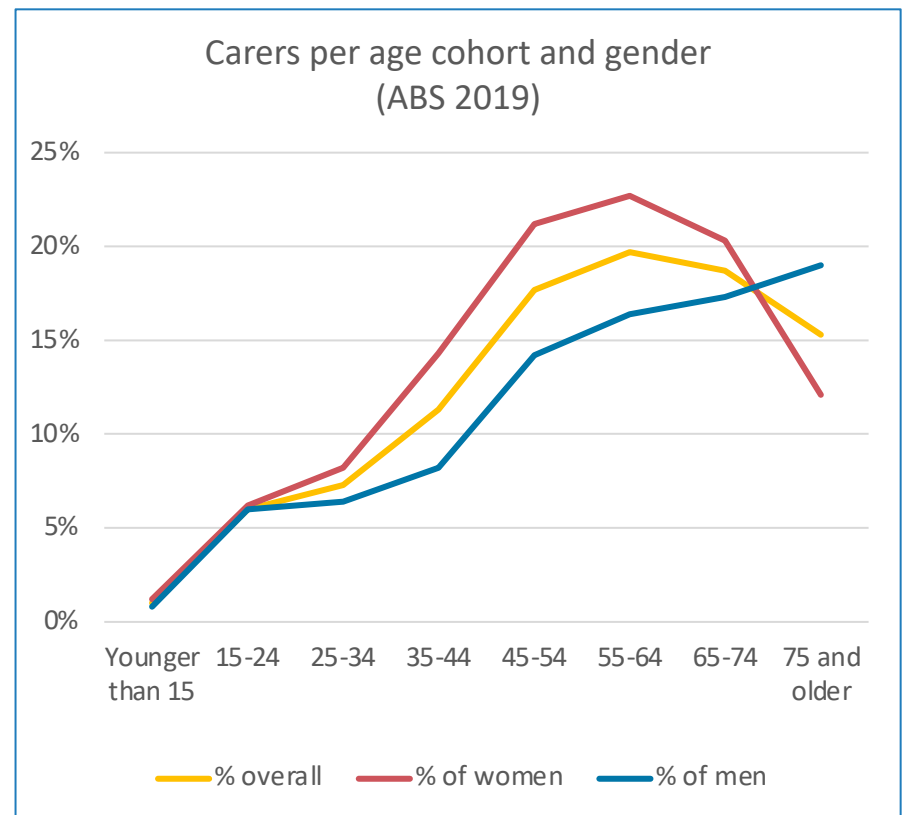
- Provide care and support to a family member or friend who has a disability, mental illness, drug and/or alcohol dependency, chronic condition, terminal illness or who is frail.
- This definition does **not** include:
 - paid care workers
 - formal volunteers
 - parents / foster carers / kinship carers
- **2.65 million carers** in Australia, including approximately **861,600 primary carers** (ABS 2019)



Demographics

Carers in Australia

- **57.3%** of all carers and **70.3%** of all primary carers **are women**
- Average age for carers is **51 years**
- **9.3%** speak a language other than English at home
- **32.1%** of carers are living with a disability, compared to 15.3% of non-carers
- **36.6%** of primary carers care for their partner, **27.1%** for their son or daughter, **27.5%** for their parent
- Primary carers' mean duration of care provision: **9 years**



(ABS 2019)

Carers NSW biennial Carer Survey

- Survey of family and friend carers in NSW (aged 16+ years), developed in consultation with expert reference committee
- Conducted nationally for the first time in 2020 with the support of the State and Territory Carer Associations
- Range of topics to inform research and advocacy:
 - The caring relationship
 - Services and support
 - Experiences of paid work
 - Health and wellbeing
- Survey distributed in online and hard copy form
- Conducted May to June 2020, during first wave of COVID-19

Background – Carer finances



Barriers to financial security for carers

Lower income

- Reduced employment
 - Intensity of caring role
 - Limited workplace flexibility
- More likely to receive a government payment as main source of income

Additional costs

- Monetary costs associated with caring
- Reduced health and wellbeing, heightened distress

Financial supports that do not adequately meet carer needs

A number of compounding factors impact a carer's ability to achieve financial security, not just a lack of financial literacy

Economic Characteristics



Labour force participation

Age 15-64:

- Primary carer: 58.4% (m), 58.9% (f)
- Non-carer: 85.4% (m), 75.9% (f)

Age 65+:

- Primary carer: 17.0% (m), 11.8% (f)
- Non-carer: 21.8% (m), 11.1% (f)

Main source of income in working age:

- Government pension or allowance:
24.1% of carers, 9.2% of non-carers.

Value of provided care for the economy: \$77.9 bn (2020)

(ABS 2019, Deloitte Access Economics 2020)

Economic Characteristics

Median weekly personal income (2019 estimates)

Age 15-64:

- Primary carer: \$ 599 (m), \$ 620 (f)
- Non-carer: \$ 1,151 (m), \$ 825 (f)

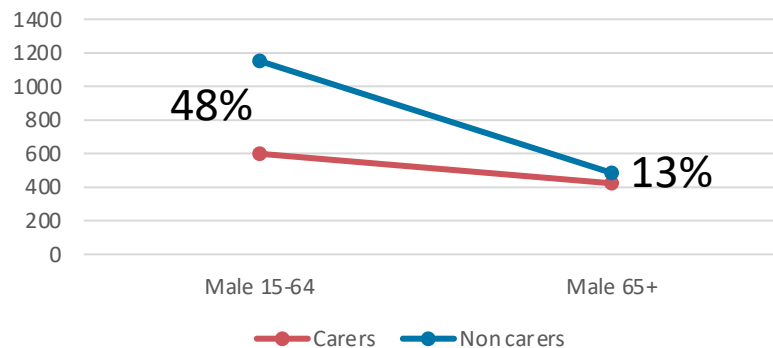
Age 65+:

- Primary carer: \$ 423 (m), \$ 400 (f)
- Non-carer: \$ 485 (m), \$ 451 (f)

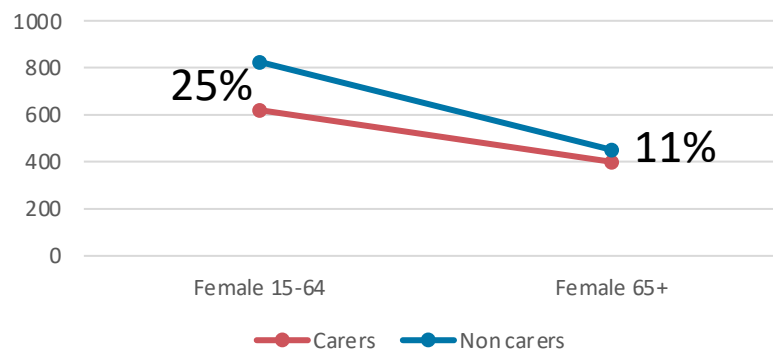
Income gap:

- Working age men: **48%**
- Working age women: **25%**

Income gap, median weekly income, men



Income gap, median weekly income, women



(ABS 2019)

Consequences for retirement

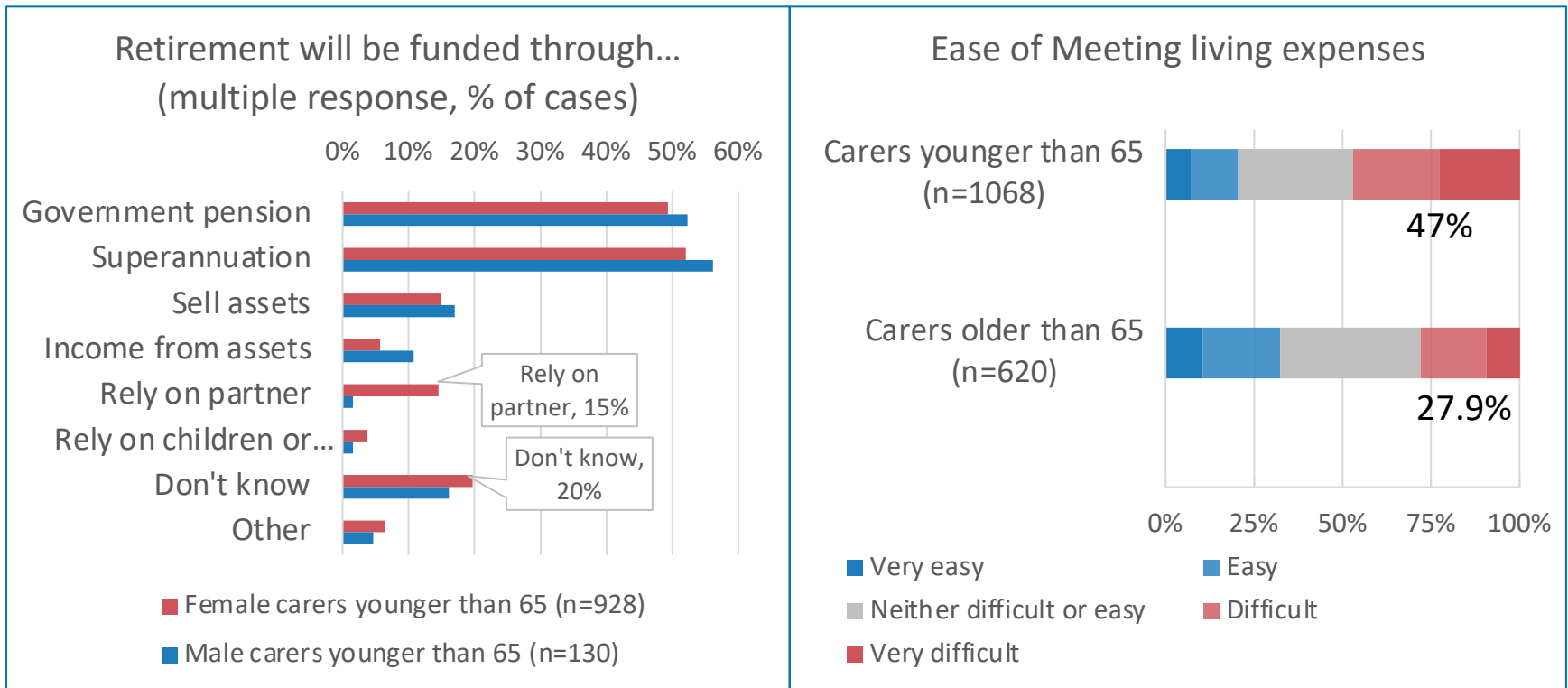


Superannuation

- Average superannuation balances at the time of retirement (assumed to be age 60 to 64) in 2015-16 were **\$270,710 for men** and **\$157,050 for women**
- Median balances at retirement age are **\$110,000 for men** and **\$36,000 for women.**
- Retirement-age Household median: **\$154,950**
- **45% of women** aged 65 to 69 have **no balance**
- Recommended sustainable balance at retirement: \$500,000 - \$1 Mio.
(Clare 2017)
- Balances further negatively impacted by early access to superannuation during Covid-19

Financial outlook & wellbeing

Financial situation (Carers NSW 2018 Carer Survey)



(Carers NSW 2018)

Financial outlook & wellbeing

2020 National Carer Survey: Caring and work

In your work, have you as a consequence of your caring role...	%, multiple response
I have reduced my working hours	50.9%
I feel less prepared to meet the demands of my job	29.4%
I have worked in a job that is lower than my skill set	23.3%
I have turned down a new job or promotion	22.3%
I have changed industry or occupation	20.4%
My skills and qualifications have become out of date due to time out of the workforce	13.7%
I quit working or looking for work to be able to care	11.8%
Other experiences	11.8%
I have lacked the knowledge and confidence to apply for jobs	10.5%
<i>No work impacts</i>	23.3 %

N=2102 carers in employment

Financial outlook & wellbeing



2020 National Carer Survey: Financial stress experiences

In the last 12 months...	%, multiple response
Unable to raise \$2,000 in a week for something important	33.6%
Spend more money than you received in a month	26.4%
Could not pay gas, electricity, water, or telephone bill on time	15.0%
Sought financial help from friends or family	13.8%
Could not pay registration or insurance on time	11.8%
Pawned or sold something	10.1%
Sought assistance from welfare/community organisations	8.3%
Went without meals	7.6%
Unable to heat or cool home	7.1%
Could not pay rent or mortgage payments on time	6.6%
<i>None of the above</i>	49.3%

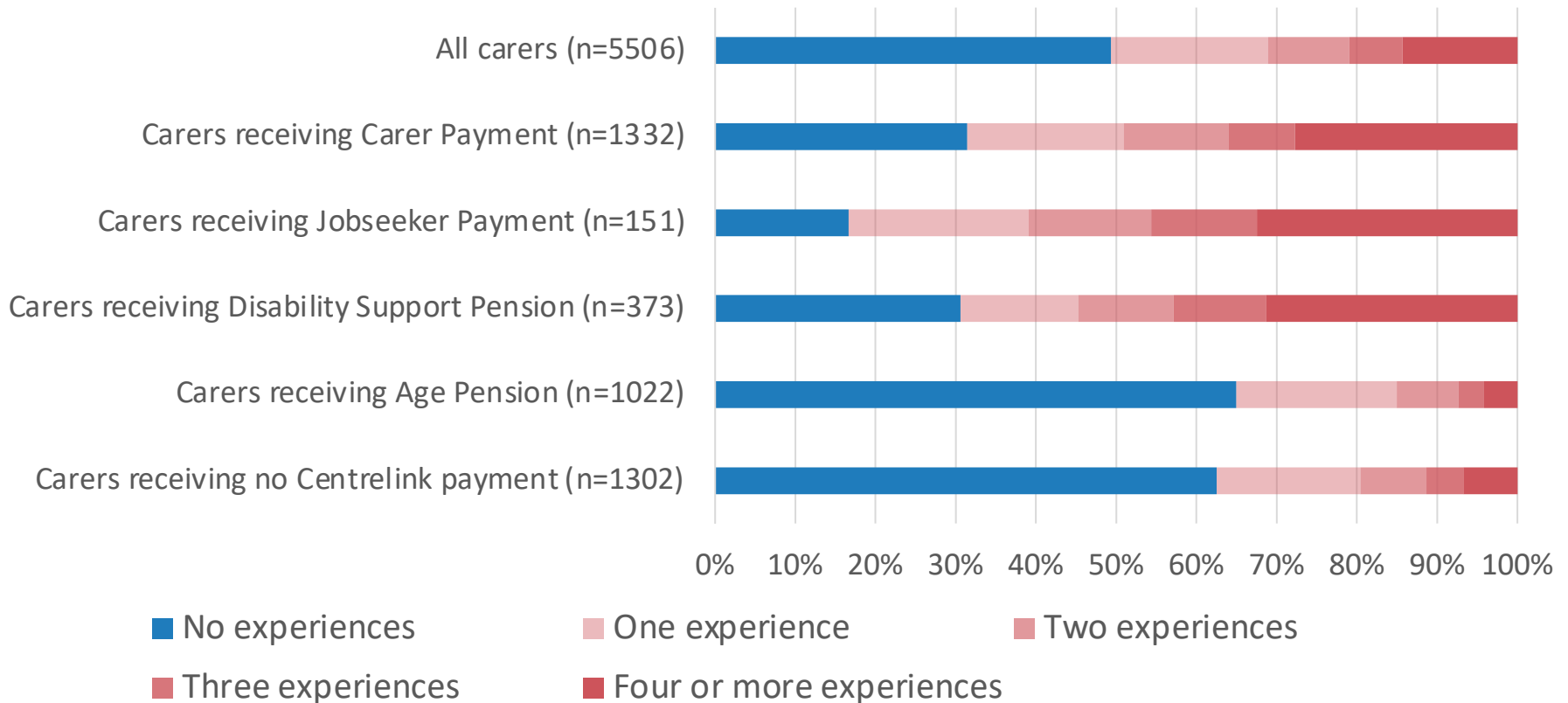
N=5506

Financial outlook & wellbeing



2020 National Carer Survey:

Income source and experiences of financial stress

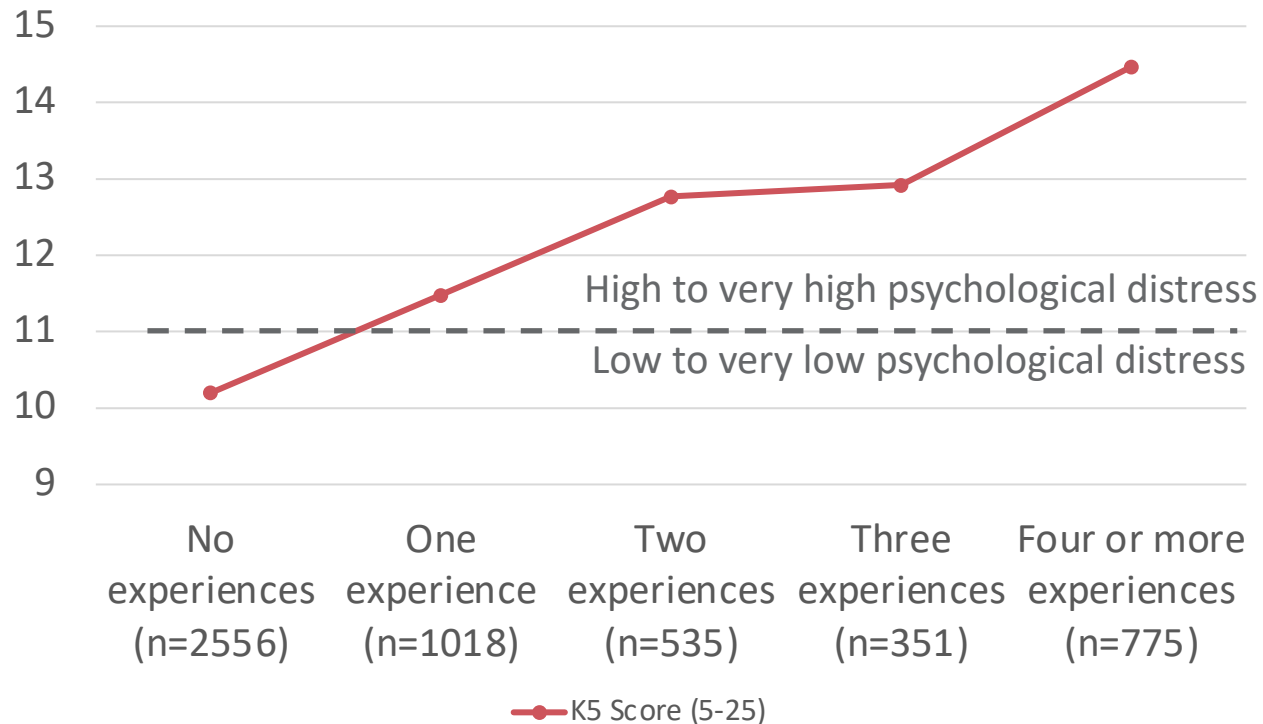


Financial outlook & wellbeing

2020 National Carer Survey:

Financial stress and psychological distress

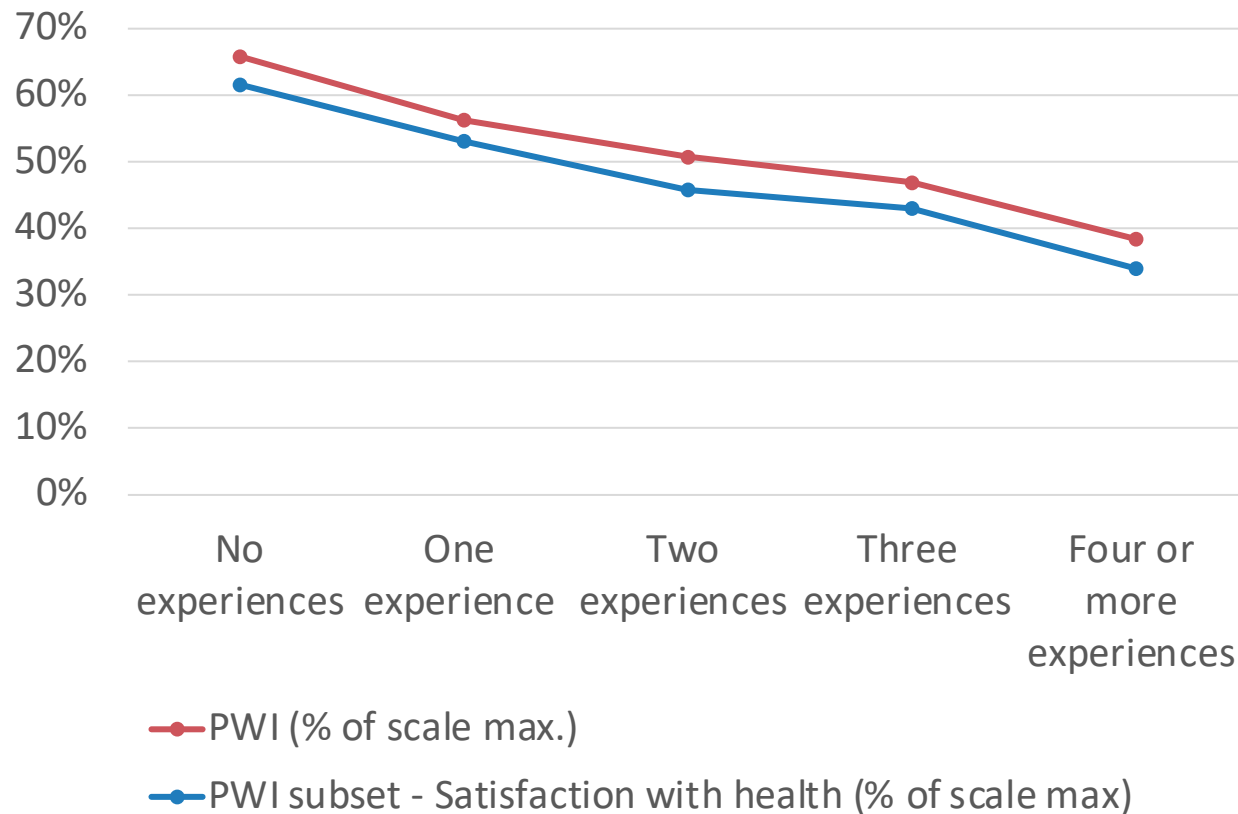
K5 Score (5-25)



Financial outlook & wellbeing

2020 National Carer Survey:

Impact of financial stress on wellbeing



COVID-19 Consultation Report



Carers NSW COVID-19 Consultation report

- 5 consultations facilitated by Carers NSW held with targeted groups of stakeholders including
 - Carers NSW working group members (non-government organisation and government agency representatives)
 - Carer-focused researchers, and
 - Carer Representatives
- Consultations conducted as videoconferences over Zoom in early April 2020 during first wave of COVID-19
- Over 50 case studies also collected online by Carers NSW Policy Team through Policy Advice Forms (PAFs)

COVID-19 Consultation Report



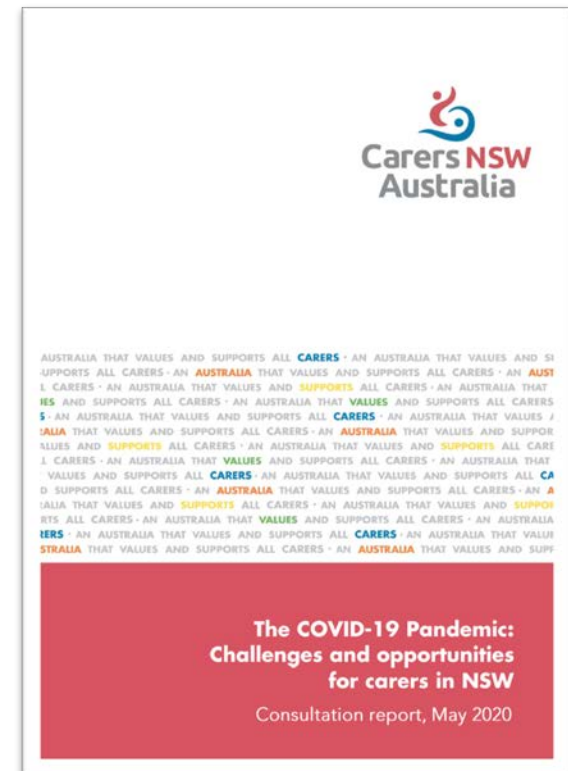
Carers NSW COVID-19 Consultation report

Consultation date and time	Stream	Number of participants
Monday 6 April 2020, 2-3pm	Carer Representatives	6 participants (1 apology)
Tuesday 7 April 2020, 12-1pm	Working group members (non-government organisation and government agency representatives)	1 participant (1 apology)
Thursday 9 April 2020, 9-10am	Carer-focused researchers	8 participants (2 apologies)
Thursday 9 April 2020, 11am-12pm	Working group members (non-government organisation and government agency representatives)	7 participants (2 apologies)
Thursday 9 April 2020, 2-3pm	Working group members (non-government organisation and government agency representatives)	8 participants (1 apology)
Total number of participants		30 participants (7 apologies)

COVID-19 Consultation Report

Key themes

- Mental health
- Financial impacts
- Increased caring responsibilities
- Employment impacts
- Access to essentials
- Separation from care recipient
- Reduced access to services and supports
- Physical health and wellbeing
- Digital access and literacy
- Information and messaging



COVID-19 Consultation Report

Financial impacts

Many stakeholders reported heightened carer psychological distress during COVID-19 due to:

- **Increased costs**
 - Essentials (inc. grocery delivery)
 - Transport
 - PPE and hygiene products (RATs)
- **Reduced income**
 - Loss or reduction of employment as a direct or in-direct result of COVID-19
 - Increased care responsibilities due to unavailable services
- **Issues with available financial supports**
 - Social Security payments
 - Early access to superannuation

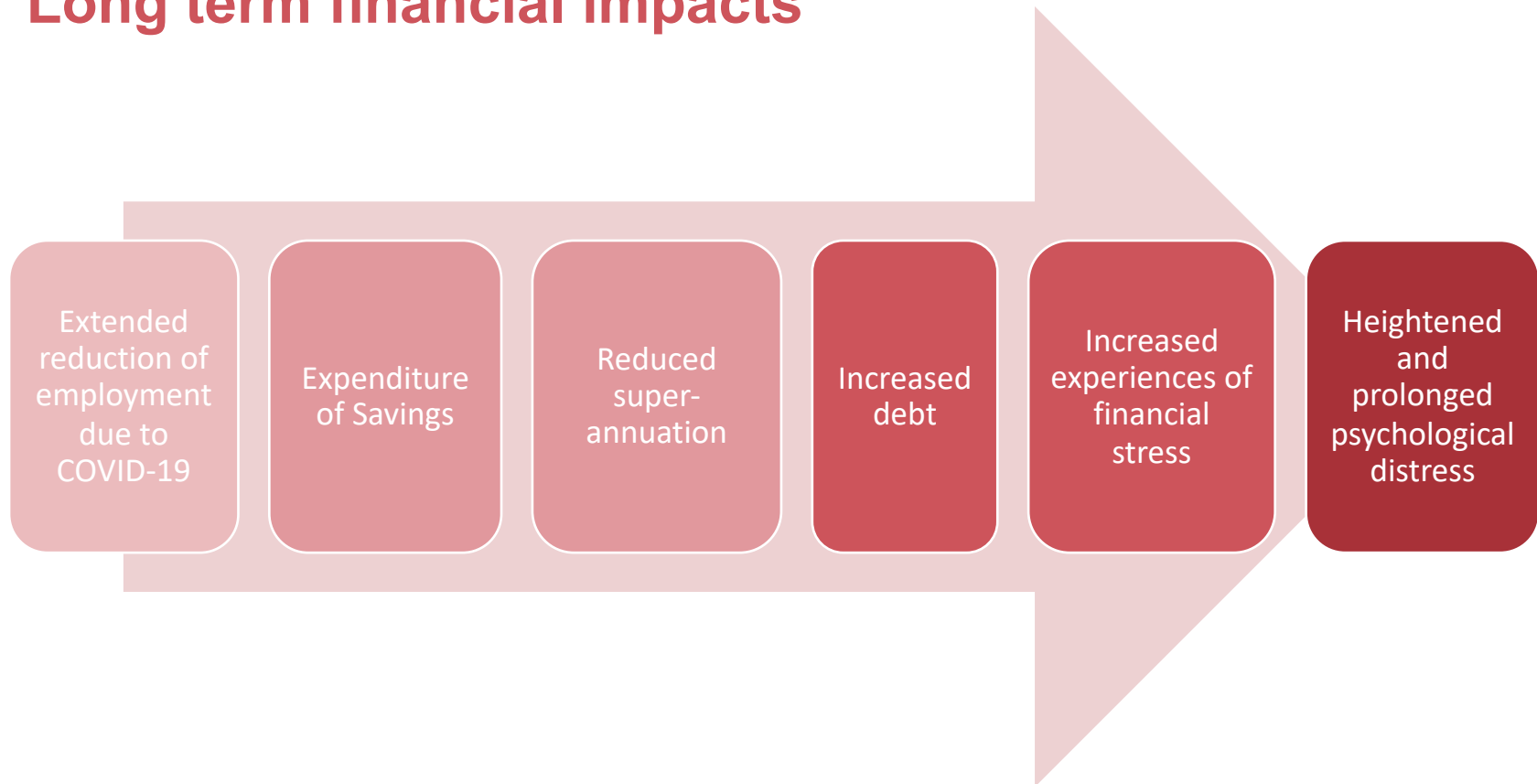


COVID-19 Policy response

- **Additional short-term financial support**
 - Coronavirus Supplement
 - Economic Support Payments
 - Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment
 - JobKeeper Payment
 - Early access to Superannuation
- **Improved access to financial supports**
- **Temporary increased support for NDIS participants**
 - Funding for PPE
 - Access to free delivery
- **Encouraged use of flexible work provisions**

COVID-19 and carers

Long term financial impacts



Recommendations



Recommendations

- Strengthen **Carer Recognition** legislation
- Invest in **targeted financial supports for carers**
- Continue to **review, identify and address service gaps and hidden costs of caring** met by carers
- Review **income replacement payments** accessed by carers to **ensure adequacy**
- Improve **workplace protections and provisions** for carers
- Explore **alternatives to superannuation** for carers who are unable to work due to their caring role
- Invest in **schemes and rebates that assist carers** to meet costs of living

References

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), (2019). *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, 2018. TableBuilder dataset*. Australian Government, Canberra.
- Carers NSW, (2020a). *2020 National Carer Survey, unpublished data*.
- Carers NSW, (2020b). *The COVID-19 Pandemic: Challenges and opportunities for carers in NSW, Consultation report*. Carers NSW, Sydney.
- Deloitte Access Economics, (2020). *The Economic Value of Informal Care in Australia in 2020*. Report for Carers Australia, Canberra.



Dr Lukas Hofstätter, Research and Development Officer
Sarah Judd-Lam, Executive Manager Policy, Research and Projects

research@carersnsw.org.au

www.carersnsw.org.au