Care Workforce Wellbeing: Influences and Support

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Why Care Workers’ Wellbeing is Important

- Recruitment & retention
- Attracting talents
- Productivity
- Quality of care & users’ satisfaction

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Developing a scale to measure care workers’ wellbeing at work


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Care Workers’ Wellbeing at Work

- Have several dimensions
  - For example: emotional, physical and financial
- Affected by work-related factors that are similar to other work
  - For example, pay and working conditions
- Affected by a unique set of features related to care work
  - The relational nature of care work
  - How care work is organised and rewarded
  - How the society perceive the importance of such work
Societal recognition of care work

Care Organisation Characteristics
- Professional identity
- Valued
- Staffing
- Management & Supervision
- Environment
- Training & Development
- Pay & Benefits
- Time
- Relations
- Tasks
- Clients’ needs

Nature of Care Work

Wellbeing in life beyond care work

Spill over

Emotional Wellbeing
Financial Wellbeing
Physical Wellbeing
Environmental Wellbeing
Social Wellbeing

Source: Hussein et al. (2022)
### Domains, Subdomains & Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Subdomains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Wellbeing</strong></td>
<td>2 sub-domains: 1 - Job security; 2 - Having enough money to meet needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mental Wellbeing</strong></td>
<td>3 sub-domains (6 items): 1 - Burnout/exhaustion (3 items); 2 - Satisfaction/motivations (2 items); 3 - Impact of clients’ loss (1 item)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Wellbeing</strong></td>
<td>4 sub-domains: Physical injuries; Adequate equipment to do work; Physical health (aches &amp; pains); Impact on health behaviour (sleep, diet)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Organisational Features</strong></td>
<td>5 sub-domains (11 items): 1 - Sufficient staffing (1 item); 2 - Management &amp; supervision (3 items); 3 - Working environment (2 items); 4 - Training &amp; Development (4 items); 5 – Pay &amp; Benefits (1 item)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nature of care work</strong></td>
<td>4 sub-domains (16 items): 1 - Time (4 items); 2 - Relations (5 items); 3 - Tasks &amp; Responsibilities (5 items); 4 - Care client’s needs (2 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recognition of Care Work</strong></td>
<td>2 sub-domains (5 items): 1 - Feeling valued and respected by (4 items); 2 - Professional identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work-life spill-over</strong></td>
<td>3 sub-domains: 1 - Work limits out of work activities; 2 - Positive mood from work improves personal life; 3 - Negative work-related thoughts stays out of work</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Impact on care workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental/emotional wellbeing</th>
<th>Physical wellbeing</th>
<th>Financial wellbeing</th>
<th>Spillover from work to home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I occasionally just kind of get compassion fatigue, and a kind of, not overwhelmed, but I get kind of like burnt out from they ask a lot from us emotionally (CW, community support, male)</td>
<td>There are periods when it is all consuming and it's all I can think about and I don't sleep, I don't eat properly, I stop exercising (Care manager, community support, male)</td>
<td>Low pay – inability to have financially secure life[...] Better pay so I do not have to pick up so much overtime to have enough money to provide my needs. (CW, care home, female)</td>
<td>I can’t remember having a holiday, or it’s been a long time since I have actually had a holiday where I haven’t been interrupted whilst being away ….because you’re kind of waiting for that phone call to come through (FG, manager, care home, female)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Order of importance:
1. Financial wellbeing
2. Mental wellbeing*
3. Features of the organisation/employer
4. What care workers do in their jobs
5. Impact of work on home-life*
6. Professional identity as a care worker
7. Physical wellbeing

*Factors identified as most impacted by COVID-19
Primary Interventions
- Are transformative in nature
- Address the root cause of the issue

Secondary Interventions
- To cope with and manage workplace stressors.
- Focus on strengthening the personal resources of individuals within organisations

Tertiary Interventions
- Remedial in nature
- Supporting care workers and managers after their wellbeing has been affected
None of our participants indicated any primary interventions.

Most interventions mentioned were tertiary in nature.

Managers or national stakeholders mention secondary interventions but not care workers:
  - Resilience and coping strategies
  - Placing the onus/responsibility on the individual

Most tertiary interventions are not bespoke to care work, e.g.:
  - Staff surveys, consultative committees
  - Confidential helplines
  - Financial assistance
  - Discount schemes, cycle to work schemes
Some managers go ‘over and beyond’

Flexible shifts

Treats during shifts

Regular ‘chick in’ calls

What care workers wanted in the short term

- Mental health first aiders
- Better holiday allowances
- Predictable shift patterns
- Social and team-building activities, especially for lone workers

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### Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Respect</th>
<th>Relationships</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pay</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>Relational-centred practice</td>
<td>Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>National qualifications</td>
<td>Team structure</td>
<td>Compassionate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>Career trajectory</td>
<td>Inclusive multi-disciplinary teams</td>
<td>No blame culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staffing level</td>
<td>Decision autonomy when providing care</td>
<td></td>
<td>Communications</td>
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Thank you for listening
Happy to respond to questions

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