



Social care in England: statistics

Standard Note: SN/SG/3077

Last updated: 23 October 2009

Author: Rachael Harker

Social and General Statistics

The term 'social care' covers a wide range of services which are provided by local authorities and the independent sector. Social care comes in many forms, such as care at home, in day centres or by way of residential or nursing homes. The term also covers services such as providing meals-on-wheels to the elderly, home help for people with disabilities and fostering services. In England, the responsibility to provide social care services rests principally with local councils.

Social services are a wide range of support and care services. They are provided by local councils and by voluntary, not for profit and private agencies. Councils with social services responsibilities (CSSRs) have a statutory responsibility to ensure that the social care needs of people are met.

Social Services work closely with the NHS, the Strategic Health Authorities, NHS Trusts, Care Trusts and both voluntary and private sector social care organisations. Social Services also have working links with the education service, probation service, police and many other agencies across Government.

This Note outlines some of the headline figures associated with social care in England. Statistics relating to children are provided in another Standard Note: [Children in Care in England: Statistics](#).¹

¹ SN/SG/4470:

http://pims.parliament.uk:81/PIMS/Static%20Files/Extended%20File%20Scan%20Files/LIBRARY_OTHER_PAPERS/STANDARD_NOTE/snsg-04470.pdf

This information is provided to Members of Parliament in support of their parliamentary duties and is not intended to address the specific circumstances of any particular individual. It should not be relied upon as being up to date; the law or policies may have changed since it was last updated; and it should not be relied upon as legal or professional advice or as a substitute for it. A suitably qualified professional should be consulted if specific advice or information is required.

This information is provided subject to [our general terms and conditions](#) which are available online or may be provided on request in hard copy. Authors are available to discuss the content of this briefing with Members and their staff, but not with the general public.

Contents

A.	Adults	3
1.	Referrals	3
Table 1:	Estimated number of contacts from new clients during the period by source of referral: England 2003/04 to 2007/08	3
Table 2:	Estimated number of contacts from new clients made to CSSRs by type of local authority: England 2007/08	3
2.	Assessments and reviews	4
Table 3:	Estimated number of clients with completed assessments and reviews by age group: England 2003/04 to 2007/08	4
Table 4:	Estimated number of clients with completed assessments/reviews by primary client type: England 2007/08	5
Table 5:	Estimated length of time from first contact to completed assessment for new clients whose assessments were completed during the period: England 2007/08	5
3.	Packages of care	6
Table 6:	Estimated number of clients receiving services during the year by service type and age: England 2005/06 to 2007/08	6
Table 7:	Estimated number of clients receiving services during the period by primary client type: England 2007/08	7
Table 8:	Estimated length of time from completed assessment to receipt of all services for new clients aged 65 and over for whom services were put in place during the period: England 2003/04 to 2007/08	7
4.	Supported residents	7
Table 9:	Council supported residents at 31 March by type of accommodation and client group: England 1999-2008	8
B.	Workforce	8
Table 10:	All Social Services staff as at 30 September: England 1997-2008	8
Table 11:	All Social Services staff as at 30 September by gender and ethnic origin: England 2008	9
C.	Expenditure	9
Table 12:	Gross and Personal Social Service expenditure: England 1992-93 to 2006-07	9
Table 13:	Gross Personal Social Services expenditure by type of provision: England 2007/08	10

A. Adults

1. Referrals

An estimated 2.1 million contacts from new clients were made to Councils with Social Services Responsibilities (CSSRs) in England in 2007/08, an increase of 29,000 (1.4%) from 2006/07. Table 1 shows that, of the 2.1 million referrals:

- 0.6 million (29%) were self-referrals;
- 0.5 million (23%) were referred from Secondary Health sources (eg hospital wards);
- 0.3 million (14%) were referred by family, friends or neighbours; and
- 0.3 million (13%) were referred from Primary/Community Health sources.

Table 2 provides further detail in relation to the 2.1 million contacts from new clients in 2007/08, and shows that around half resulted in further assessment of need or the commissioning of ongoing service. The other half were attended to solely at or near the point of initial contact.

Table 1: Estimated number of contacts from new clients during the period by source of referral: England 2003/04 to 2007/08

	(000s)	Number of contacts					Distribution of referrals
		2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2007/08
All contacts		1,996	1,960	2,041	2,040	2,070	100
Primary Health/Community Health		243	260	264	274	263	13
Secondary Health		486	492	495	487	475	23
Self Referral		554	536	592	586	591	29
Family/Friend/Neighbour		280	265	281	277	287	14
Internal (i.e. own SSD)		140	133	134	135	138	7
LA Housing Department or Housing Association		31	32	34	37	38	2
Other departments of own LA or other LA		40	45	47	40	42	2
Legal Agency		32	30	30	34	48	2
Other		113	116	117	117	121	6
Not Known		77	49	46	52	66	3

Source: NHS Information Centre, *Data on Community Care Statistics: Referrals, Assessments and Packages of Care, England - National Summary*, 2007/08 (and previous years)

Table 2: Estimated number of contacts from new clients made to CSSRs by type of local authority: England 2007/08

	Contacts for new clients that resulted in further assessment of need or commissioning of ongoing service (000s)	Number of contacts per 1,000 population ¹	Contacts for new clients concerning services from the CSSR whose needs were attended to solely at or near the point of contact (000s)	Number of contacts per 1,000 population ¹
England	1,052	2.6	1,018	2.5
All Shire Counties	499	2.6	411	2.2
All Unitary Authorities	183	2.7	150	2.2
All Metropolitan Districts	245	2.8	284	3.3
All London Boroughs	125	2.1	173	2.9

Notes: NB. Figures may not add up because of rounding.

¹ Contact rates have been derived using population estimates for adults aged 18 or over for 2007/08 based on 2001 census data new basis.

Source: NHS Information Centre, *Data on Community Care Statistics: Referrals, Assessments and Packages of Care, England - National Summary*, 2007/08

2. Assessments and reviews

New clients are subject to an “assessment”. Subsequent assessments, including reassessments, are termed “reviews”. Table 3 shows that an estimated 0.7 million new clients had their first assessment completed, and an estimated 1.3 million reviews for existing clients were carried out, during 2007/08.

Table 4 details completed assessments/reviews by primary care type. The majority of the 0.7 million new clients assessed in 2007/08 were classified as primary client type *physical disability, frailty and sensory impairment* (0.5 million, 79%). The remaining clients were classified as *mental health* (103,000, 16%), *vulnerable people* (19,000, 3%), *substance misuse* (10,000, 2%) and *learning disability* (9,000, 1%). The 1.3 million existing client reviews were similarly primarily associated with *physical disability, frailty and sensory impairment* (1.0 million, 72%).

Table 5 details waiting times for those new clients with completed assessments in 2007/08 for whom the time from first contact to completed assessment was known. Of the 0.7 million such cases, 34% had their assessments completed within two days of first contact. A further 29% were assessed between two days and two weeks. For older clients (65 and over), 65% were assessed within two weeks, compared with a ministerial target of 70%. The December 2004 target of 100% of older clients being assessed within four weeks was also missed in 2007/08, with just 82% of new clients aged 65 and over being assessed within this timeframe.

Table 3: Estimated number of clients with completed assessments and reviews by age group: England 2003/04 to 2007/08

	All ages	18 - 64	65 - 74	75 and over
<i>Number of new clients for whom the first assessment was completed during the year</i>				
2003/04	656	169	107	380
2004/05	649	175	104	371
2005/06	651	177	103	372
2006/07	650	190	98	362
2007/08	661	188	101	371
<i>Number of existing clients for whom a review was completed during the year</i>				
2003/04	1,021	263	134	625
2004/05	1,086	292	141	652
2005/06	1,162	325	149	687
2006/07	1,257	373	156	727
2007/08	1,343	404	172	766

Source: NHS Information Centre, *Data on Community Care Statistics: Referrals, Assessments and Packages of Care, England - National Summary*, 2007/08 (and previous years)

Table 4: Estimated number of clients with completed assessments/reviews by primary client type: England 2007/08^{1 2}

	(000s)	All ages	18 - 64	65 - 74	75 and over
New client assessments					
All Primary client types		661	188	101	371
Physical disability, frailty and sensory impairment		521	96	89	335
<i>physical disability, frailty and/or temporary illness</i>		436	79	76	281
<i>hearing impairment</i>		15	3	2	10
<i>visual impairment</i>		20	4	2	14
<i>dual sensory loss</i>		3	0	0	2
Learning Disability		9	8	1	1
Mental Health		103	69	8	26
<i>dementia</i>		18	2	3	14
Substance Misuse		10	9	0	0
Vulnerable people		19	6	3	10
Existing client reviews					
All Primary client types		1,343	404	172	766
Physical disability, frailty and sensory impairment		963	159	138	666
<i>physical disability, frailty and/or temporary illness</i>		813	129	119	565
<i>hearing impairment</i>		22	4	3	14
<i>visual impairment</i>		32	5	3	24
<i>dual sensory loss</i>		5	1	0	4
Learning Disability		103	93	6	4
Mental Health		237	137	23	77
<i>dementia</i>		52	3	6	43
Substance Misuse		9	9	0	0
Vulnerable people		30	7	4	19

Notes: Figures may not add up because of rounding.

¹ A client can only appear in one primary client type but may be recorded in more than one subset within the primary client type.

² A number of CSSRs included clients in the overall total for whom an age group or a primary client type was not known. These clients appear in the "All ages" totals only.

Source: NHS Information Centre, Data on Community Care Statistics: Referrals, Assessments and Packages of Care, England - National Summary, 2007/08

Table 5: Estimated length of time from first contact to completed assessment for new clients whose assessments were completed during the period: England 2007/08

	All ages		18-64		65 and over	
	000s	%	000s	%	000s	%
All new clients ¹	653	100%	186	100%	467	100%
Less than or equal to 2 days	221	34%	63	34%	159	34%
More than 2 days and less than or equal to 2 weeks	188	29%	43	23%	145	31%
More than 2 weeks and less than or equal to 4 weeks	110	17%	28	15%	82	18%
More than 4 weeks and less than or equal to 3 months	91	14%	33	18%	59	13%
More than 3 months	42	6%	19	10%	23	5%

Notes: Figures may not add up because of rounding.

¹ These figures exclude new clients with completed assessments reported on proforma A1 for whom the time from first contact to completion of assessment was not known.

Source: NHS Information Centre, Data on Community Care Statistics: Referrals, Assessments and Packages of Care, England - National Summary, 2007/08

3. Packages of care

Table 6 details the estimated number of adults receiving services provided, purchased or supported by CSSRs following a community care assessment during 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2007/08. The figures include new services that have started during the period and those carried forward from the previous period. As a client may receive more than one component of service during the year, the figures do not relate to distinct individuals.

In 2007/08, an estimated 1.8 million clients were in receipt of services. The majority of these (1.5 million) were community-based services. The most frequently provided services included *home care* (0.6 million clients), *professional support* (0.5 million) and *equipment and adaptations* (0.5 million). Year-on-year, the largest increase in services provided related to *direct payments*: there were 67,000 in 2007/08, compared with 48,000 in 2006/07. *Independent sector residential care* services were provided to an estimated 0.25 million clients.

Table 7 splits the 1.8 million clients receiving services in 2007/08 by primary client type. Of the total, 56% were classified as suffering *physical disability, frailty and/or temporary illness*, making up part of the 71% classed as *physical disability, frailty and sensory impairment* client type. A further 18% were part of the *mental health* group, 8% were primary client type *learning disability*, 2% were classified as *vulnerable people* and 1% were recorded as *substance misuse*.

Table 8 shows that around 81% of new older clients (65 and over) had received all services specified in their care plan within two weeks of their completed assessment in 2007/08. This compares to a ministerial target of 70%. A cumulative total of 91% of older clients received all services specified within four weeks, compared with a target of 100% by December 2004.

Table 6: Estimated number of clients receiving services during the year by service type and age: England 2005/06 to 2007/08

	2005/06			2006/07			2007/08		
	All Ages (000s)	18-64	65 and over	All Ages	18-64	65 and over	All Ages	18-64	65 and over
Total	1,748	518	1,231	1,774	543	1,231	1,774	553	1,231
Community-based services ²	1,494	472	1,022	1,522	497	1,025	1,535	510	1,025
Day Care	244	108	136	238	107	131	227	103	124
Meals	165	10	155	150	10	139	136	9	126
Home Care ³	596	105	491	586	106	480	577	106	480
Short term residential - not respite	64	12	51	62	13	49	77	16	61
Direct payments	37	25	13	48	31	17	67	40	27
Professional Support	444	216	228	503	249	254	507	255	251
Equipment and adaptations	499	112	387	491	109	381	519	119	400
Other	120	46	74	126	51	75	129	54	75
Residential Care									
Independent sector residential care	207	50	157	203	49	154	199	47	152
LA staffed residential care	32	4	27	28	3	24	25	3	22
Nursing care	108	11	97	105	10	94	102	10	92

Notes: ¹ Since movement between services is possible, a client may have received more than one type of service during the year and thus there may be some double counting across service categories.

² The figures for the number of clients receiving each different component of service do not necessarily sum to the total of clients receiving community-based services as a client may receive more than one component of service during the year.

³ Covers both "home help/ home care" and "overnight respite - clients home".

Source: NHS Information Centre, Data on Community Care Statistics: Referrals, Assessments and Packages of Care, England - National Summary, 2007/08 (and previous years)

Table 7: Estimated number of clients receiving services during the period by primary client type: England 2007/08

	Total number of clients receiving services ¹ (000s)	Community-based services	LA Residential Care	Independent Sector Residential Care	Nursing Care
All Primary client types	1,774	1,535	25	199	102
Physical disability, frailty and sensory impairment	1,266	1,114	17	116	75
<i>physical disability, frailty and/or temporary illness</i>	1,001	878	15	91	59
<i>hearing impairment</i>	30	29	0	2	1
<i>visual impairment</i>	44	40	1	4	2
<i>dual sensory loss</i>	7	6	0	1	0
Learning Disability	140	111	3	36	3
Mental Health	317	266	5	42	21
<i>dementia</i>	70	44	3	19	12
Substance Misuse	12	11	0	1	0
Vulnerable people	38	7	1	4	2

Note: ¹ Number of clients receiving one or more services at some point during the year, excluding double counting. Data includes clients formerly in receipt of preserved rights.

Source: NHS Information Centre, Data on Community Care Statistics: Referrals, Assessments and Packages of Care, England - National Summary, 2007/08

Table 8: Estimated length of time from completed assessment to receipt of all services for new clients aged 65 and over for whom services were put in place during the period: England 2003/04 to 2007/08

	2003/04		2004/05		2005/06		2006/07		2007/08	
	000s	%	000s	%	000s	%	000s	%	000s	%
All new clients aged 65 and over	302	100%	298	100%	299	100%	302	100%	315	100%
Less than or equal to 2 weeks	211	70%	219	74%	228	76%	238	79%	255	81%
More than 2 weeks and less than or equal to 4 weeks	35	11%	31	10%	33	11%	31	10%	31	10%
More than 4 weeks and less than or equal to 6 weeks	18	6%	15	5%	13	4%	11	4%	11	4%
More than 6 weeks	38	13%	33	11%	25	8%	21	7%	18	6%

Source: NNHS Information Centre, Data on Community Care Statistics: Referrals, Assessments and Packages of Care, England - National Summary, 2007/08 (and previous years)

4. Supported residents

Table 9 details council supported residents as at 31 March in each of the years from 1999-2008, split by type of accommodation and client group. As at 31 March 2008, there were a total of 239,000 council supported residents, 62% of whom were in *independent residential* care homes and 27% of whom were in *independent nursing* homes. The proportion of residents in *independent residential* care homes has increased from 50% to 62% over the period, while the proportion of residents in *council staffed* homes has correspondingly fallen from 19% to 9%.

Table 9: Council supported residents* at 31 March by type of accommodation and client group: England 1999-2008

<i>000s</i>	Total of all supported residents	Registered care homes ⁵			Unstaffed and other ⁴
		Council staffed	Independent residential ¹	Independent nursing ²	
1999	261	50	131	73	6
2000	265	47	139	74	6
2001	262	42	142	72	6
2002	265	37	149	73	6
2003 ⁶	284	34	166	78	5
2004 ⁶	278	32	165	76	6
2005 ⁶	266	28	161	74	4
2006 ⁶	259	25	157	74	3
2007 ⁶	250	24	152	70	4
2008 ⁶	239	22	149	65	3

Notes: * aged 18 and over.

¹ Voluntary and private residential care homes.

² General and mental nursing homes only.

³ Includes supported residents in homes with less than four residential places.

⁴ Unstaffed homes are included in the all ages total only as a breakdown is not available by age.

⁵ Data includes clients formerly in receipt of preserved rights.

⁶ Data includes Boyd loophole residents.

⁷ Figures may not add up due to rounding.

Sources: NHS Information Centre, *Community Care Statistics: Supported Residents (Adults) England 2008 (and previous years)*

B. Workforce

Table 10 shows that, in September 2008, CSSRs in England employed 202,200 staff (whole time equivalents). The number of staff fell between 1997 and 2002, but subsequently increased in 2003, 2004 and 2005. Numbers began to fall again from 2006 onwards. Table 11 provides a breakdown of staff by gender and ethnic origin. At 30 September 2008, four out of every five social services staff members were women.

Further detail, including figures at the individual council level, is provided in the Information Centre's annual release.²

Table 10: All Social Services staff as at 30 September: England 1997-2008

All Social Services staff as at 30 September: England 1997-2008

<i>Whole time equivalent (000s)</i>	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Area office/field work staff	114.9	111.8	110.9	109.2	108.5	108.9	110.0	113.4	116.6	117.1	115.8	111.7
Residential care staff	65.4	62.1	59.2	56.6	53.8	51.5	51.4	49.0	47.7	46.4	45.0	43.0
Day care staff	30.8	30.3	30.8	30.8	29.5	29.5	28.8	28.6	27.9	27.3	25.7	25.4
Central/strategic/HQ staff	16.4	17.3	18.5	19.4	18.8	18.2	19.4	20.4	21.7	20.6	20.0	19.9
Other staff	1.9	1.9	2.3	1.5	1.4	1.6	2.0	1.9	2.5	2.2	2.0	2.2
Total	229.4	223.5	221.7	217.5	212.0	209.7	211.6	213.3	216.5	213.6	208.6	202.2

Note: Due to rounding there may be a slight discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the totals shown.

Source: NHS Information Centre, *Personal Social Services Staff of Social Services Departments at 30 September, England, 2008 (and previous years)*

² <http://www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics-and-data-collections/social-care/adult-social-care-information/personal-social-services-staff-of-social-services-departments-at-30-september-2008-england>

Table 11: All Social Services staff as at 30 September by gender and ethnic origin: England 2008

percentages based on whole time equivalent	Gender		Ethnic origin		
	Female	Male	Ethnic origin unknown	White	Black & minority ethnic
Area office/field work staff	83%	17%	4%	83%	13%
Residential care staff	82%	18%	4%	84%	12%
Day care staff	76%	24%	4%	86%	11%
Central/strategic/HQ staff	73%	27%	3%	86%	11%
Other staff	65%	35%	4%	78%	18%
Total	80%	20%	4%	84%	12%

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding

Source: NHS Information Centre, Personal Social Services Staff of Social Services Departments at 30 September, England, 2008

C. Expenditure

Table 12 shows the trend in gross and net Personal Social Services (PSS) expenditure. Gross expenditure in England in 2007/08 amounted to £20.7 billion. Spending rose in real terms in every year between 1992/93 AND 2006/07 while in 2007/08 it remained at the 2006/07 level. Table 13 details gross PSS expenditure in 2007/08 by type of provision. Facilities for *older people* accounted for 42% of total expenditure, *children's and families services* accounted for 26% and the *learning disabled adults* category accounted for a further 17%. Further detail is provided in the Information Centre's annual release.³

Table 12: Gross and Personal Social Service expenditure: England 1992/93 to 2007/08

£billion	Gross		Net	
	Cash terms	2007/08 prices	Cash terms	2007/08 prices
1992/93	5.5	8.0	5.0	7.3
1993/94	6.3	8.9	5.7	8.0
1994/95	7.5	10.4	6.6	9.2
1995/96	8.4	11.3	7.3	9.9
1996/97	9.3	12.1	7.9	10.3
1997/98	10.0	12.7	8.5	10.7
1998/99	10.9	13.5	9.1	11.3
1999/00	12.1	14.7	10.1	12.3
2000/01 ¹	12.9	15.5	10.7	12.9
2001/02	13.6	16.0	11.4	13.4
2002/03	15.2	17.3	12.9	14.7
2003/04 ²	16.8	18.7	14.8	16.4
2004/05 ²	18.2	19.7	16.2	17.5
2005/06 ²	19.3	20.5	17.3	18.3
2006/07 ²	20.1	20.7	18.0	18.5
2007/08 ²	20.7	20.7	18.5	18.5

Notes: ¹ Data post 1999-00 are on resource accounting basis and not comparable with previous years.

² Includes expenditure from the Supporting People grant that councils have classified as Social Services expenditure rather than housing expenditure.

Source: NHS Information Centre, *Personal Social Services Expenditure and Unit Costs, England 2007/08* (and previous years)

³ <http://www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics-and-data-collections/social-care/adult-social-care-information/personal-social-services-expenditure-and-unit-costs:-england-2007-08>

Table 13: Gross Personal Social Services expenditure by type of provision: England 2007/08¹

<i>£million</i>	Assessment and Care Management	Residential Provision	Day and Domiciliary Provision	Total
Service strategy	90	:	:	90
Children's and Families Services	1,440	1,090	2,890	5,420
Older people ¹	970	4,740	3,060	8,770
Physically disabled adults ²	260	390	830	1,480
Learning disabled adults ³	200	1,860	1,390	3,450
Mentally ill adults ⁴	320	400	400	1,120
Asylum seekers	10	:	10	20
Other adult services	40	:	310	340
Total PSS	3,310	8,480	8,900	20,700

Notes: ¹ Including expenditure funded from the Supporting People grant that councils have classified as Social Services expenditure rather than housing expenditure. ² Aged 65 or over including mentally ill. ³ Adults aged under 65 with a physical disability or sensory impairment. ⁴ Adults aged under 65 with learning disabilities. ⁵ Adults aged under 65 with mental health needs.

Source: NHS Information Centre, Personal Social Services Expenditure and Unit Costs, England 2007/08