

1 The Older Population

This information sheet gathers together statistics about the older population, covering issues such as demography, income, housing and health.

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This information sheet reflects the diversity of lifestyles within the older population. Some pensioners, particularly ‘younger’ pensioners, enjoy comfortable incomes, live in good housing and keep good health. Others, particularly those in the older age group, can be socially isolated, living in poor standard housing on low incomes with their activities limited by disability and ill health.

The information given on the health of older people may result in a rather negative view of later life. Statistics do tend to show how many older people **cannot** manage a particular task, but it is worth considering how many **can** manage and how many more **could** remain independent and experience a good quality of life with a little help and given an appropriately designed environment.

Help the Aged seeks to combat negative stereotypes of older people and promotes the inclusion of older people within society. If large sections of the older population continue to struggle to live on low incomes and in poor housing they will be excluded from the quality of life enjoyed by others.

The retired population

In 2002, there were 9.5 million people aged 65 and over in the UK. The number of older people in our population has increased over the past few decades, and is projected to continue to grow in the future. During the fifty years 1971 to 2021, the number of people in the UK aged 65 and over is expected to have increased nearly 70 per cent, from 7.3 million to 12.2 million.

Table 1: UK population (millions)

	1971	1981	1991	2001	2002	2011	2021
65-74	4.8	5.1	4.9	5.0	5	5.4	6.6
75+	2.5	3.4	4.0	4.5	4.5	4.9	5.6
Total 65+	7.3	8.5	8.9	9.5	9.5	10.3	12.2
Total pop	55.9	56.4	57.4	59.1	59.2	60.5	62.4(1)

Source: *Social Trends 34*, Office for National Statistics, 2004, tables 1.1 and 1.2.

(1) *Populations Trends 116*, summer 2004, gives a higher projection for the 2021 population at 63.2 million

The ageing population

Despite the increase in the total number of older people, the overall percentage of people aged 65 and over has increased at a much slower rate than it did in the middle decades of the twentieth century or than it is currently increasing in other European countries (Sara Arber and Jay Ginn, 'Ageing and Gender', in *Social Trends 34*, 2004).

The section of the older population which has increased most rapidly, both in actual size and in relation to the total population, is that of people over 75. The proportion of people in this age-group is projected to increase from 4.5 per cent in 1971 to 9 per cent in 2021.

Table 2: UK population (percentages of total UK population)

	1971	1981	1991	2001	2002	2011	2021
65-74	8.5	9	8.5	8.5	8.5	9	10.5
75+	4.5	6	7	7.5	7.5	8	9(1)
Total 65+	13	15	15.5	16	16	17	19.5

Source: *Social Trends 34*, 2004, tables 1.1 and 1.2.

(1) *Populations Trends 116*, summer 2004, gives a higher projection of 9.7 per cent

A growing section of our older population is very elderly. For example, the proportion of people in the UK aged 85 and over increased from 0.7 per cent in 1961 to 1.9 per cent in 2002 (*Focus on Older People*, Department for Work and Pensions, 2004). The number of people aged 90 and over in Great Britain has tripled since 1971; in 2002 there were 380,000 people in this age group, representing 4 per cent of the population aged 65 and over. By 2021 there are expected to be 601,000 people aged 90 and over. (*Social Trends 34*, 2004)

State pension age

In 2002, there were 10.9 million people at or above state pension age in the UK (*Population Trends 116*, Office for National Statistics, summer 2004). This represents 18.5 per cent of the total UK population. State pension age is currently 60 for women and 65 for men. The Government intends to equalise the state pension age at 65 for both men and women, although this change will not start to be phased in until 2010.

Life expectancy

Life expectancy increased dramatically in the UK during the twentieth century. In 1901, life expectancy at birth was only around 45 years for men and 49 years for women; in 1971, 69 and 75 years respectively. In 2001, life expectancy at birth had risen to 75.7 years for men and 80.4 years for women. Projections for the year 2021 suggest a further increase in life expectancy by nearly 3 years for men and 2.5 years for women. (*Social Trends 34*, 2004)

Our life expectancy increases with age: in 2001, a man aged 60 could expect to live to nearly 80 and a woman aged 60 to just over 83. (*Population Trends 116*, summer 2004)

Gender structure

Women's higher life expectancy is demonstrated clearly in the gender structure of the older population. In 2002, men formed 49 per cent of the population of the UK as a whole, but only 36 per cent of those aged over 75 and only 23 per cent of those aged 90 and over.

Table 3: Gender structure by age group, 2002 (percentages)

	65-74	75+	90+	all ages
Men	46	39	23	49
Women	54	61	77	51

Source: *Social Trends 34*, 2004, tables 1.2 and 1.4

However, the gap is narrowing and by 2021 men are projected to make up 46 per cent of the population aged 65 to 74; 43 per cent of the population aged 75 and over; and 35 per cent of the population aged 90 and over (*Social Trends 34*, 2004).

Ethnic structure

Around 8 per cent of the population of Great Britain is made up of people from non-White ethnic groups (*Social Trends 34*, 2004). However ethnic minority groups have a very young age structure; this

means that only 1 per cent of people aged 50 and over are from a non-White ethnic minority group (*Focus on Older People*, 2004).

People of Black Caribbean ethnic origin have the oldest age structure of non-White ethnic minority groups, with 11 per cent aged 65 and over. Only 5 per cent of the total non-White minority ethnic population are in this age group. By comparison 17 per cent of the White group are 65 and over. (*Focus on Older People*, 2004)

Over 99 per cent of the population of Northern Ireland are White (2001 census, Northern Ireland Statistics website: www.nisra.gov.uk).

Geographical distribution

The 2001 census found that districts in Wales, Cornwall and along the coastal areas had high proportions of people above state pension age (more than 20 per cent). Northern Ireland and London had relatively low proportions of older people. (*Focus on Older People*, 2004). This distribution of the older population is thought to be partly due to older people leaving urban areas to move to rural and coastal areas, while urban areas attract younger people (*Focus on Older People*, 2004).

The average age of people living in the countryside (50 years old) is higher than that of people living in urban areas (42 years old). 18 per cent of the population of rural areas is aged 65 and over, compared with 15 per cent of the urban population. But 40 per cent of older people living in rural areas say access to services is difficult. (*Older people in rural England*, The Countryside Agency, April 2003)

Retired households

Approximately 14 per cent of all households in Great Britain consist of one person over state pension age living alone (*Social Trends 34*, 2004, table 2.2). Older people in Britain are increasingly likely to live on their own as they age; and older women become more and more likely to live on their own than men of the same age. In 2001, 71 per cent of women aged 85 and over lived alone, compared with 42 per cent of men in the same age group. Nearly half of women aged 65 and over, and 80 per cent of women aged 85 and over, are widowed. (*Focus on Older People*, 2004)

Living arrangements

Most older people live independent lives in the community. In 2001, most people aged 65 and over either lived alone (34.5 per cent) or with their partner (52 per cent). Nine per cent lived with other people such as a son, daughter or siblings, and only 4.5 per cent lived in communal housing (this figure includes some sheltered housing schemes; less than four per cent lived in care homes and hospitals - see page 12 for more information). (*Social Trends 34*, 2004, Table A.5)

Income

The retired population is anything but homogeneous. The term 'retired population' spans an age range of four, possibly five, decades. The income and lifestyles of many younger pensioners (55-64 age group) are far removed from the circumstances of the older pensioner (75+, usually lone female), many of whom live on very limited means and find it difficult to afford basics such as heating, and house repairs.

But despite this disparity, an overview of the retired population as a whole still gives the overall impression that a large proportion of our older population is living on very limited means.

For example:

- In 2001/2, 26 per cent of pensioners had disposable incomes which placed them in the bottom fifth of the population (*Social Trends 34*, 2004, Table 5.15; figures given before deducting housing costs; after housing costs, 20 per cent of pensioner couples and 18 per cent of single pensioners were in the lowest quintile).
- 28 per cent of single pensioners have no savings; and a further 19 percent have less than £1,500 savings (*Social Trends 34*, 2004, Table 5.27). £1,500 is widely accepted as the amount sufficient to cover a funeral.

Sources of pensioners' incomes

Pensioners' incomes derive from four main sources:

- **welfare benefits**, including the State Retirement Pension, means-tested benefits such as Pension Credit and Housing Benefit, and sickness and disability benefits
- **occupational and personal pensions**
- **savings and investments**
- **employment earnings**

Of these, state benefits are the largest source of income, as shown in the table below. The figures show the relative importance of each source of income, and are based on the average incomes of pensioner units (pensioner couples and single pensioners).

Table 4: Pensioner income sources (percentages)

	1994	1999/00	2002/03
Benefit income	53	51	51
Occupational pensions	25	26	27
Personal pensions	1	3	3
Investment	12	10	9
Earnings	8	9	9
Other	1	1	1

Source: *Pensioners' Incomes Series 2002/03*, Office for National Statistics, 2004, Table 1

In 2002/3, 69 per cent of pensioner units received more than 50 per cent of their income from state benefits; 14 per cent had no income other than state benefits (*Pensioners' Incomes Series 2002/03*, 2004, Tables 7 and 8).

Occupational pensions have increased in importance as a source of income. This is particularly true of 'recently retired' pensioner couples: while 61 per cent of all pensioner units had an occupational pension

in 2002/3, 71 per cent of pensioners couples had one compared to only 54 per cent of single pensioners (*Pensioners' Incomes Series 2003/03*, 2004, Table 13). The number of households with an occupational

pension increased from 40 per cent in 1979 to 60 per cent in 1999/00 (*Work and Pensions Statistics 2002*, DWP, 2002, table 2).

Pensioner couples were also much more likely to have income from a personal pension: 16 per cent compared to only 5 per cent of single pensioners (*Pensioners' Incomes Series 2002/03*, 2004, Table 14).

72 per cent of pensioner units had income from investments and 66 per cent had income from a private pension. Only 10 per cent had income from earnings. But amongst recently retired pensioner units this increases to 24 per cent. (*Pensioners' Incomes Series 2002/03*, 2004, Tables 12, 15, 16).

Welfare benefits

State Retirement Pension

The amount of State Retirement Pension people receive when they retire depends on the amount of National Insurance (NI) contributions they pay during their working life, and on whether they made any extra contributions, for example through the state earnings-related pension scheme (SERPS). The full basic State Retirement Pension in 2004/5 is £79.60 per week.

In 2002/3, 98 per cent of pensioners received State Retirement Pension (or another National Insurance funded benefit). The average pension was £110 per week (£88 for single people; £143 for couples). (*Pensioners' Incomes Series 2002/3*, 2004)

Income related benefits

Income related benefits include Pension Credit, Working Tax Credit, Housing Benefit and Social Fund Grants.

Over the past decade, the proportion of pensioner units receiving income related benefits has gradually decreased from 38 per cent in 1994/5 to 32 per cent in 2002/3. The average amount of income related benefits they received has increased from £38 per week to £56 per week. (*Pensioners' Incomes Series 2002/3*, 2004, Table 10)

Pension Credit

In October 2003 the Government introduced a new benefit for older people called 'Pension Credit' which replaced Minimum Income

Guarantee. Pension Credit is paid in two parts: guarantee credit (tops up the income of people aged 60 or over to an amount set by the Government); and savings credit (extra money for people aged 65 or over who have modest savings or extra income).

In February 2004, 2.26 million people were claiming Pension Credit. Of these, 52 per cent were receiving guarantee credit and savings credit; 32.5 per cent only guarantee credit; and 15.5 per cent savings credit only. The average amount of Pension Credit being claimed was £42.71 per week. People who were receiving only guarantee credit were getting an average of £69.20 per week. (*Pension Credit Quarterly Statistical Enquiry: February 2004*, DWP, 2004)

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit

People who receive the guarantee credit part of Pension Credit are automatically entitled to help with their Council Tax bills and rent through Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit. But many older people who are not eligible for guarantee credit still have low enough incomes to be entitled to some Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.

During the financial year 2001/2002, more than 2.3 million pensioner households received Council Tax Benefit, and over 1.6 million pensioner households received Housing Benefit. (*Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-up in 2001/2002*, DWP, 2004). This is a significantly higher figure than the 1.5 million pensioner households receiving Minimum Income Guarantee during the same period (the income support benefit that was replaced by Pension Credit in October 2003).

Disability benefits

Disability benefits include Attendance Allowance, Carers Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, War Disablement Pension, Industrial Injuries Disablement Pension and Severe Disablement Allowance.

The proportion of pensioner units with income from disability benefits increased from 14 per cent to 22 per cent between 1994/5 and 2002/3. The average amount (mean) of disability benefit received has risen a modest amount from £52 to £56 during this period (the median has risen from £38 to £54). (*Pensioners' Incomes Series 2002/3*, 2004, Table 11)

Housing

Housing is a very important factor in assessing the quality of life of the older population. Good housing can mean comfort, security, and affordable heat, even on a less than generous income; appropriate housing can preserve independence and mobility, perhaps in spite of increasing physical disabilities.

The majority of people in the UK are owner-occupiers (71 per cent). In Britain, the proportion of households containing people aged 65 and over that are owner-occupied has risen from 47 per cent in 1980 to 67 per cent in 2001. The proportion of older households renting from local councils or housing associations has fallen from 41 per cent in 1980 to 28 per cent in 2001. In 2001, 5 per cent of older households were rented privately. (*People Aged 65 and Over*, supplementary report to *Living in Britain 2001*, Office for National Statistics, 2003)

Older people in private housing

- **Housing tenure**

The proportion of the older population living in private housing who are owner-occupiers decreases with age; and the proportion living in rented housing increases. 72 per cent of people in Great Britain aged 65 to 84 who live in private housing are owner-occupiers, compared to only 61 per cent of people aged 85 and over. Older people living alone are less likely to be owner-occupiers than older people who live with their partner. (*Focus on Older People*, 2004 and *People Aged 65 and Over*, 2003)

- **Housing condition**

It is very important to the vast majority of older people to be able to remain independent and stay in their own home for as long as possible, so their quality of life can suffer considerably if they live in poor housing conditions. 10 per cent of people aged 50 and over in England have reported problems with damp, insects, mice and rats, or with the house being too dark. 12 per cent said their house was too cold in winter. (*Focus on Older People*, 2004)

- **Heating**

In 2001, 9 per cent of households containing people aged 65 and over had no central heating, compared with 7 per cent of other

households (*People Aged 65 and Over*, 2003). The proportion of people who live in households with central heating decreases with age: 93 per cent of people aged 50 to 64 had central heating, but only 86 per cent of people aged 85 and over had central heating (Figure from April 2001, in *Focus on Older People*, 2004). People aged 75 and over in the lowest income bracket spend a higher proportion, 15 per cent, of their income on housing, fuel and power, than any other age group; people aged 30 to 65 spend only 8 per cent (*Family Spending 2002/3*, Office for National Statistics, 2004, Table 2.1).

Sheltered Housing

In 2001, 5 per cent of people aged 65 and over lived in sheltered accommodation with a resident warden, while 3 per cent lived in sheltered accommodation without a resident warden. The proportion of older people living in sheltered accommodation increases with age. For example, 19 per cent of people aged 85 and over lived in sheltered accommodation compared with only 2 per cent of people aged 65-69. Older people who live alone are most likely to live in sheltered accommodation. Nearly a quarter (24 per cent) of people aged 85 and over who lived alone were living in sheltered accommodation. (*People Aged 65 and Over*, 2003)

Care homes

According to the 2001 census, there were 355,000 people over the state pension age living in care homes or hospitals in Britain (*Social Trends 34*, 2004, Table 8.1; this only includes those people who had been living, or intended to live, in the establishment for six months or more). Although this figure may sound high, it represents less than four per cent of the 9.5 million people aged 65 and above living in Britain in 2001. As with sheltered housing, the proportion of people living in care homes increases with age. For example, in England in 2000, the average age of men aged 65 and over living in a care home was 83.2, compared with an average age of 73.6 for men living in private housing; the equivalent average ages for women aged 65 and over were 85.6 compared to 74.8 ('Care homes and their residents' in *Health Survey for England 2000*, DH, 2002).

In Northern Ireland, 9,262 people aged 65 and over were receiving nursing home and residential home care packages in 2002/03 (statutory, voluntary and private sector), representing about four per cent of the 2003 population. (*Community Care Statistics 1 April 2002 – 31 March 2003*, DHSSPS, October 2003 and *Northern Ireland Home Population by sex and single year of age, 2003*, www.nisra.gov.uk)

Carers

The increased emphasis on care in the community makes the role of unpaid carers, such as family and friends, particularly important. According to the 2001 census there are 5.9 million carers in the UK, representing 10 per cent of the population (*Social Trends 34*, 2004). Other sources, for example Carers UK, estimate that the number of carers is even higher. Over half of carers are caring for somebody aged 75 or over (*Informal Carers*, ONS, 1998 and Mahler, Joanne and Green, Hazel, *Carers 2000*, ONS, 2002).

Older people themselves carry a significant share of the burden of caring. About 18 per cent of carers are aged 65 or over; and of these one third are aged 75 and over (*Social Trends 34*, 2004). A study carried out by Help the Aged *Caring in Later Life – Reviewing the role of older carers* (2001), found that carers aged 75 and over are more likely to be intensive carers than those aged 65-74. One in two carers aged 85 and over spent 50 hours or more a week caring, compared to one fifth of all carers (*Social Trends 34*, 2004). The General Household Survey 2000/01 found that 40 per cent of carers who cared for more than 50 hours a week had a general feeling of strain, 47 per cent experienced disturbed sleep and 34 per cent felt depressed (Table 8.11). This indicates that caring responsibilities may well be putting older carers at considerable physical and psychological risk.

Many older carers are not able to take a break from their caring. According to *Caring in Later Life*, 33 per cent of older carers who had been caring for between 5 and 14 years had not had a break of longer than two days since they started caring. (*Caring in Later Life – Reviewing the role of older carers*, Help the Aged, 2001).

Health

The vast majority of older people remain fit and healthy enough to run their own lives. This is highlighted by the small proportion of older people living in care homes and the high proportion living alone. The majority of older people consider themselves to be in good or fairly good health.

Table 5: Self reported health in England and Wales, 2001 (percentages)

	Good	Fairly good	Poor
Men			
65-74	42	39	19
74+	31	43	26
Women			
65-74	39	42	19
75+	28	44	29

Source: *Social Trends 34*, 2004, Table 7.3

But many older people have special health needs which need to be taken into account in the provision of community care services. The following information illustrates the special health concerns of older people.

Use of health services

Older people can be described as relatively heavy consumers of health services. Those aged 75 and over, particularly, are more likely to visit their GP or have an outpatient visit than younger adults. Over half of people aged 65 and over visited a GP during the first three months of 2002. As might be expected, the proportion visited at home by a GP increases markedly with age, rising from only 3 per cent of people aged 65 to 69, to a quarter of people aged 85 and over. (*People Aged 65 and Over*, 2003)

Older people are also heavier consumers of prescription items than the rest of the population. In 2003, people aged 60 and over accounted for

57 per cent of prescription items dispensed by community pharmacists and appliance contractors and 63 per cent of items dispensed by dispensing doctors. (*Prescriptions Dispensed in the Community - Statistics for 1993 to 2003: England*, Department of Health, June 2004).

Home help

Between 1991 and 2001, there was a significant decrease in the proportion of older people receiving home help from their local authority in Great Britain (from 9 per cent down to 4 per cent); and an increase in the proportion receiving private home help (from 4 per cent to 10 per cent). The proportion of older people getting home help increases with age, with a much higher proportion of people aged 85 and over receiving home help than any other age group. (*People Aged 65 and Over*, 2003)

Table 6. Older people receiving home help in Great Britain by age group, 2001 (percentages)

	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85 and over	All 65 and over
Local authority home help	1	2	3	7	18	4
Private home help	5	6	10	17	28	10

Source: *People Aged 65 and Over*, supplementary report to *Living in Britain 2001*, Office for National Statistics, 2003

Illness and disability

The measurement of 'healthy life expectancy' takes into account quality as well as length of life. Although increased longevity suggests that the health of the older population has improved, our healthy life expectancy has not risen as much as overall life expectancy (*Social Trends 34*, 2004). This means that people are living longer in poor health.

In 2001, 60 per cent of older people reported that they had a longstanding illness and 41 per cent said this limited their activities in some way. This proportion has varied little since 1980. On average older people had to restrict their activities one day in every six because of illness. The most common conditions by far were complaints relating to the heart and

circulatory system and the musculoskeletal system. (*People Aged 65 and Over*, 2003)

The proportion of older people with a longstanding illness, the average number of days of restricted activity, and the prevalence of the most common conditions all increase with age.

The following tables illustrate how everyday activities tend to become more difficult with increasing age. For example 41 per cent of people aged 85 and over are usually unable to manage on their own going out of doors and walking down the road, 64 per cent are usually unable to cut their own toenails, 28 per cent can't open screw top lids and 15 per cent are not able to cook a main meal.

Table 7: Mobility: percentage usually unable to manage on their own, by age group, Britain, 2001

	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85+	All 65+
Going out of doors and walking down the road	6	10	14	20	41	14
Getting up and down stairs	5	7	10	16	24	10
Getting in and out of bed	2	1	2	3	5	2

Source: *People Aged 65 and Over*, 2003

Table 8: Self-care: percentage usually unable to manage on their own, by age group, Britain, 2001

	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85+	All 65+
Bathing, showering, washing all over	3	5	6	11	21	7
Dressing and undressing	2	2	2	4	8	3
Cutting toenails	18	24	34	43	64	31
Taking medicines	2	3	3	5	10	4

Source: *People Aged 65 and Over*, 2003

Table 9: Domestic tasks: percentage unable to do tasks by themselves, by age group, Britain, 2001

	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85+	All 65+
Household shopping	5	9	14	21	41	13
Wash and dry dishes	1	2	3	3	9	3
Jobs involving climbing	15	23	36	45	67	31
Open screw tops	8	9	11	16	28	12
Use a vacuum cleaner	5	8	10	17	34	11
Deal with personal affairs	3	4	7	10	25	7

Source: *People Aged 65 and Over*, 2003

Table 10: Cooking: percentage unable to do tasks by themselves, by age group, Britain, 2001

	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85+	All 65+
Cook a main meal	3	4	5	9	15	5
Prepare a snack	1	1	2	3	7	2
Make a cup of tea	0	1	1	2	5	1

Source: *People Aged 65 and Over*, 2003

Hearing

In 2001, 32 per cent of people aged 65 and over reported difficulties with their hearing. The proportion of people with hearing difficulties, or who wear a hearing aid, increases with age to 46 per cent of people aged 85 and over. Men are more likely than women to have hearing difficulties. (*People Aged 65 and Over*, 2003)

Eyesight

In 2001, 28 per cent of people aged 65 and over in Britain reported difficulties with their eyesight, while nearly half (49 per cent) of people aged 85 and over had difficulties with eyesight. Women are more likely to have difficulties with their eyesight than men. (*People Aged 65 and Over*, 2003)

The majority of people registered as blind or partially sighted are older people. In 2003, 67 per cent of the 312,000 people who were registered in England as blind or partially sighted were aged 75 and over; a further 10 per cent were aged 65-74 (*Registered Blind and Partially Sighted People Year ending 31 March 2003*, DoH, December 2003). The figures for Scotland are similar at 68 per cent and 11 per cent respectively. (*Statistics Release: Registered Blind and Partially Sighted Persons, Scotland 2003*, Scottish Executive National Statistics, 2003)

Mental illness

The main mental illness associated with older people is dementia, which is a term used to describe the symptoms that occur when the brain is affected by specific diseases and conditions, including Alzheimer's disease. Dementia can result in a wide variety of altered behaviour and is particularly distressing for relatives and carers. Recognition and diagnosis of dementia can be difficult, but according to the Alzheimer's Society, dementia currently affects over 750,000 people in the UK and affects one person in 20 over the age of 65 and one person in five over the age of 80 (see www.alzheimers.org.uk for more information).

The emphasis on dementia can overshadow the incidence of anxiety and depression amongst older people. These conditions will often go undiagnosed despite the fact that treatment is just as effective in old age as in younger age groups. Symptoms of depression can be mistaken for other illnesses, such as heart disease, strokes or early dementia (*Older people and mental health*, MIND, 2003).

Research has shown that 60-90% of suicides and suicide attempts among older people have been made following symptoms of depression, pain and feeling unwell. (Barnes, Diana, *Older People with Mental Health Problems Living Alone: Anybody's Priority?*, Department of Health, 1997). Community surveys in England suggest that from 10 per cent to over 20 per cent of older people may be experiencing depression, but that it is likely that depression may go undiagnosed and untreated. (Tait, Clare and Fuller, Elizabeth, 'Psychological well-being

among older people', *Health Survey for England 2000*, Department of Health, 2002)

Anxiety also affects many older people and can be linked with depression. According to a survey carried out in Britain in 2000, 14 per cent of women and 9 per cent of men aged between 60 and 74 suffer from a neurotic disorder. This includes anxiety, depressive, obsessive compulsive and panic disorders and phobias (*The Mental Health of Older People*, ONS, 2003). Older people aged 75 and over are more likely to be receiving treatment for anxiety than any other age group (*Key Health Statistics from General Practice 1998*, ONS, 2000, Table 5A8).

Disease and mortality

In 2002, there were just over half a million deaths of people aged 65 and over in the UK. The leading cause of death was disease of the circulatory system, which accounted for 42 per cent of deaths compared with 24 per cent of deaths from cancer. Circulatory diseases include heart disease and strokes. By comparison, cancer is the most common cause of death for people aged 50 to 64. Statistics for the four nations are given below; the figures for cause of death are very similar.

- In 2002, 444,100 people died aged 65 and over in England and Wales; 42 per cent from diseases of the circulatory system; 24 per cent from cancer. (*Focus on Older People*, 2004)
- In 2002, 46,056 people died aged 65 and over in Scotland; 43 per cent from diseases of the circulatory system; 24 per cent from cancer. (*Vital Events Reference Tables 2002*, General Register Office for Scotland, 2003, Table 6)
- In 2002, 11,480 people died aged 65 and over in Northern Ireland; 43 per cent from diseases of the circulatory system; 25 per cent from cancer. (*Registrar General Annual Report 2002*, NISRA, 2003, Table 6.2)

Sources of statistics

UK census

Every ten years, the government carries out a census – a count of all people and households in the UK. The census provides information on population, housing, employment and transport and is the most complete source of statistical information there is on the UK population.

In **England and Wales** the Census is planned and carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Results of the last census (2001) are available on the ONS website www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/default.asp or you can contact:

Census Customer Services
Room 3400S ONS
Segensworth Road
Fareham PO15 5RR
Tel: 01329 813800

In **Scotland** the census is carried out by the General Register Office for Scotland. Results from the 2001 census can be viewed online at www.scrol.gov.uk/scrol/common/home.jsp or you can contact:

General Register Office for Scotland
Ladywell House
Ladywell Road
Edinburgh EH12 7TF
Tel: 0131 314 4254

In **Northern Ireland** the census is carried out by the Statistics and Research Agency. Results from the census can be viewed online at www.nisra.gov.uk/census/start.html or you can contact:

Census Customer Services
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
McAuley House
2-14 Castle Street
Belfast BT1 1SA
Tel: 028 9034 8160

The Office for National Statistics

Although some of the information produced by the Office for National Statistics covers the whole of the UK, other ONS data only covers Great Britain, or just England and Wales. Check each report or dataset to see what is covered.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publishes regular statistical reports and publications. The following all provide useful data on the older population:

- **Social Trends** is an annual survey that draws together social and economic data to present a broad picture of our society and how it has been changing. Much of the data included in the survey covers the whole of the United Kingdom. There are chapters on population, households and families, education and training, labour market, income and wealth, expenditure, health, social protection, crime and justice, housing, environment, transport, lifestyles and social participation. The 2004 edition (no. 34) features an article on ageing and gender. You can download it for free from the website www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Product.asp?vlnk=5748 or order a hard copy (price £41.00) from the Office for National Statistics.
- **Living in Britain** is an annual report based on the findings of the General Household Survey. It includes information on population, pensions, health, health services and disability. The most recent report, 'Living in Britain 2002', was published in 2004. You can download a copy from www.statistics.gov.uk/lib2002/
- **Population trends** is a quarterly publication. Some of the data is for the whole of the UK; some only England and Wales. It covers population and demographic information, showing trends, and the latest quarterly information on conceptions, births, marriages, divorces, internal and international migration, population estimates and projections. Each edition also contains topical articles. For example, the Spring 2004 issue has an article on 'Living arrangements among older people: an overview of trends in Europe and the USA'. 'Population trends' can be downloaded from the website www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=6303

- **Focus on older people** is a part of a series of government surveys focusing on specific topics or groups. Based on the 2001 census and other sources, the report covers Britain and includes chapters on population, living arrangements, labour market, travel, health and caring, geographic distribution, housing, pensioner income, life expectancy and lifestyles. It was published in June 2004 and can be viewed on www.statistics.gov.uk/focuson/olderpeople/

For details of other statistics and reports available from the ONS visit the website www.statistics.gov.uk or contact:

Customer Contact Centre
 Room 1.015
 Office for National Statistics
 Cardiff Road
 Newport NP10 8XG
 Tel: 0845 601 3034
 Minicom: 01633 812399
 Email: info@statistics.gov.uk

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

The Department for Work and Pensions produces two key surveys:

- The **Family Resources Survey** collects information on the incomes and circumstances of private households in the United Kingdom. The survey includes data on household characteristics, benefits, housing, assets and savings, carers, and occupation and employment. The most recent edition (2002/3) was published in March 2004, and is the first to include data from Northern Ireland. You can view a summary of the results of the survey or download the full report from www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/frs/2002_03/index.asp
- The **Pensioners' Incomes (PI) Series** contains estimates and interpretation of trends in the levels and sources of pensioners' incomes, based on two household surveys (Family Resources Survey and Family Expenditure Survey). The latest edition (2002/3) was published in May 2004 and includes a section on Northern Ireland. It can be downloaded as a pdf from www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd6/pensioners_income.asp

The DWP also produces a bi-annual report on benefits called '**Client Group Analysis on the Population Over State Pension Age Claiming Key Benefits**'; and quarterly benefit statistics on pensioners, including Pension Credit, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit, Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance and Carers Allowance. See www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/pensioners.asp

For other DWP statistics visit www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/statistics.asp or contact:

Information and Analysis Directorate (IAD)
4th Floor
Adelphi
1-11 John Adam Street
London WC2N 6HT

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) publishes statistics on topics including housing, the environment and fire. Check the reports to see which nations they cover: some, for example the annual 'Fire Statistics' report, cover the whole of the UK; others, for example the housing statistics 'Annual report', contain a mixture of data covering England, Great Britain and the UK. See the ODPM website www.odpm.gov.uk or contact:

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
26 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2WH
Tel: 020 7944 4400

Health Protection Agency

The Health Protection Agency monitors and publishes statistics on different health conditions. Between October and May of each year, this includes a weekly report on flu, covering the whole of the UK. See their website www.hpa.org.uk or contact:

Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre
61 Colindale Avenue
London NW9 5EQ
Tel: 020 8200 1295

Statistics on England

Department of Health (DH)

The Department of Health publishes statistics on:

- public health
- health care (including community care and care homes)
- social care (including disabilities)
- the workforce
- expenditure (NHS and personal social services)

Statistical surveys produced by the Department of Health include the annual **Health Survey for England**. As well as providing general information about the nation's health, the survey focuses each year on a particular topic or group. For example, the Health Survey for England 2000 (published 2002) included the report 'The general health of older people and their use of health services'. According to Department of Health plans, the 2005 survey will focus on older people.

See the 'Publications and Statistics' section of the Department of Health website www.dh.gov.uk or to order hard copies of the DH's statistical publications contact:

Department of Health
PO Box 777
London SE1 6XH
Tel: 08701 555 455

Statistics on Wales

Welsh National Assembly

The Welsh National Assembly has a Statistical Directorate which publishes statistics covering a range of topics including demography, health, housing, education, local government, transport, the environment and the Welsh language. Reports include:

- **Health Statistics Wales:** an annual publication providing information on population, lifestyle and health services. The latest edition (2003) can be downloaded from the Welsh National Assembly website at www.wales.gov.uk/keypubstatisticsforwales/

content/publication/health/2002/hsw2003/hsw2003-intro-e.htm

- **Statistical focus on older people, 2004** presents a range of statistics on older people, comparing their health and social and economic circumstances with those of people in younger age groups. It can be viewed on the Welsh National Assembly website at www.wales.gov.uk/keypubstatisticsforwales/content/publication/compendia/2004/fop2004/fop2004-intro.htm

For other Welsh National Assembly statistics see the Statistics for Wales website www.wales.gov.uk/keypubstatisticsforwales/index.htm or contact:

Statistical Directorate
Welsh Assembly Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff CF10 3NQ
Tel: 029 2082 6023
Email: stats.info.desk@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Statistics on Scotland

Scottish Executive

The Scottish Executive produces statistical surveys which include:

- The **Scottish Household Survey**, which looks at the characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households and individuals on a range of issues including income, housing, employment and community. The latest edition (2001/2) was published in August 2003 and can be downloaded from the SHS website www.scotland.gov.uk/about/SR/CRU-SocInc/00016002/SHShome.aspx

The Scottish Executive also produces statistical data and publications on various topics including community care, benefits, health, housing and population. Visit the Scottish Executive statistics website on www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics or contact:

Central Statistics Unit
Scottish Executive
Rm 3 - West Rear, St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh EH1 3DG
Tel: 0131 244 0442
Email: statisticsgroup@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

NHS Scotland

The Information and Statistics Division (ISD) of NHS Scotland produces statistical reports on health and care, including:

- The **Scottish Health Survey** (commissioned by the ISD on behalf of the Scottish Executive Department of Health). The last edition (1998) was published in 2000 and can be downloaded from the Scottish Executive website (www.show.scot.nhs.uk/scottishhealthsurvey). The next edition (2003/4) is expected to be published in 2005.
- Rachel Wood, Marion Bain, '**The Health and Well-being of Older People in Scotland**', January 2002. This report can be downloaded free from the ISD's website www.isdscotland.org/isd/files/older.pdf or paper copies (price: £20) can be ordered from the ISD Customer Support Desk csd@isd.csa.scot.nhs.uk or from Information Services, NHS National Services Scotland, Gyle Square, 1 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9EB Tel: 0131 275 7777

Statistics on Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)

NISRA is Northern Ireland's official statistics organisation. NISRA's Central Survey Unit (CSU) produces statistical surveys that can be viewed on the CSU's website at www.csu.nisra.gov.uk/surveys These include:

- The annual **Continuous Household Survey (CHS)**, which is similar to the Office for National Statistics' General Household Survey for Britain (see page 21). Data from the most recent survey (2002/3) is published on the CSU's website, along with a bulletin providing a summary and overview.

- The CSU's **Health and Social Wellbeing Survey**, which also provides data on the older population.

For details of other statistics available from NISRA visit the website www.nisra.gov.uk or you can contact:

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
McAuley House
2-14 Castle Street
Belfast BT1 1SA
Tel: 028 9034 8100
Email: info.nisra@dfpni.gov.uk

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS)

The Information and Analysis Directorate of the DHSSPS produces information on health and social care, including hospital and community care statistics. Visit the statistics and research section of the DHSSPS website www.dhsspsni.gov.uk or contact:

Regional Information Systems
Annexe 2
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast BT4 3SQ
Tel : 028 9052 2800

For further information contact:

Information Resources Team
Help the Aged
207-221 Pentonville Road
London N1 9UZ
Tel: 020 7278 1114

People with access to the Internet can download our information sheets and advice leaflets by logging on to: **www.helptheaged.org.uk**

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Help the Aged is a registered charity No. 272786, registered in England at the above address.