

Care in the community

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Introduction

I chose to research care in the community as it benefits so many people and I would like to find out more. Also, care is linked to my family in many different ways both as care givers and receivers. I already knew that carers used a variety of equipment and care is for a variety of ages not just the elderly.

I taught myself research skills using the MyShout! website.

My research question is : How do carers make a difference to people's lives ?

Methods

Interview

I interviewed a representative of a company which provides care to the community. I recorded the interview on the iPad the university gave me. I used a variety of questions including open questions so I could get more information than using a closed question which is only a yes or no answer. I listened carefully to what the interviewee had to say and gave them time to think.

Questionnaires

My questionnaire had a variety of questions including : open, closed, yes/no, Likert scale. An advantage of having a variety of questions is that you get a variety of information but a disadvantage is it's harder to analyse the data. I gave out 17 questionnaires to people with a mix of genders and ages and I analysed my data using graphs and tallies. All questionnaires were anonymised and each participant signed a consent form. This made my research moral and ethical. I received all 17 questionnaires back. Then I analysed the data using Excel.

Ethics

I made sure my research was ethical by :

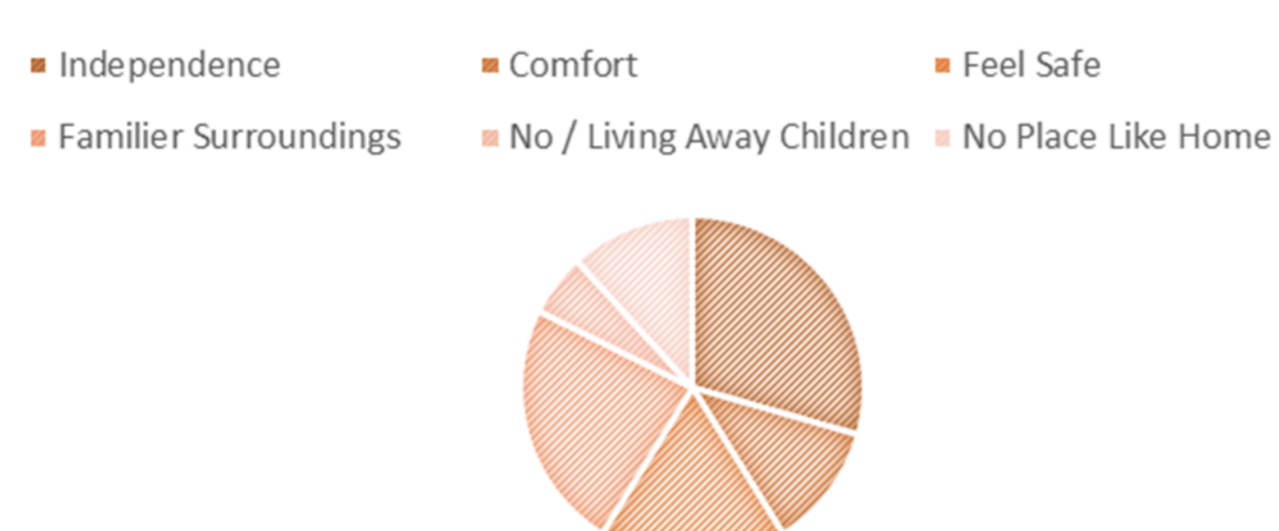
- Keeping questionnaires private
- Everyone signed a consent form
- I checked with the interviewee's boss that it was ok to carry out the research
- I destroyed all information after my research was complete

My Research Findings

My interviewee said that the care company uses a variety of equipment including : slide sheets, hoists and slings and other little aids such as a kettle sling which enables the elderly to cradle the kettle rather than lift it. The most frequently used equipment is the slide sheets and hoists. They care for around 40 people but the number may change due to people going in and out of hospital. There is roughly 20 carers but they are always looking for more! It is a family run business which is over 60 years old

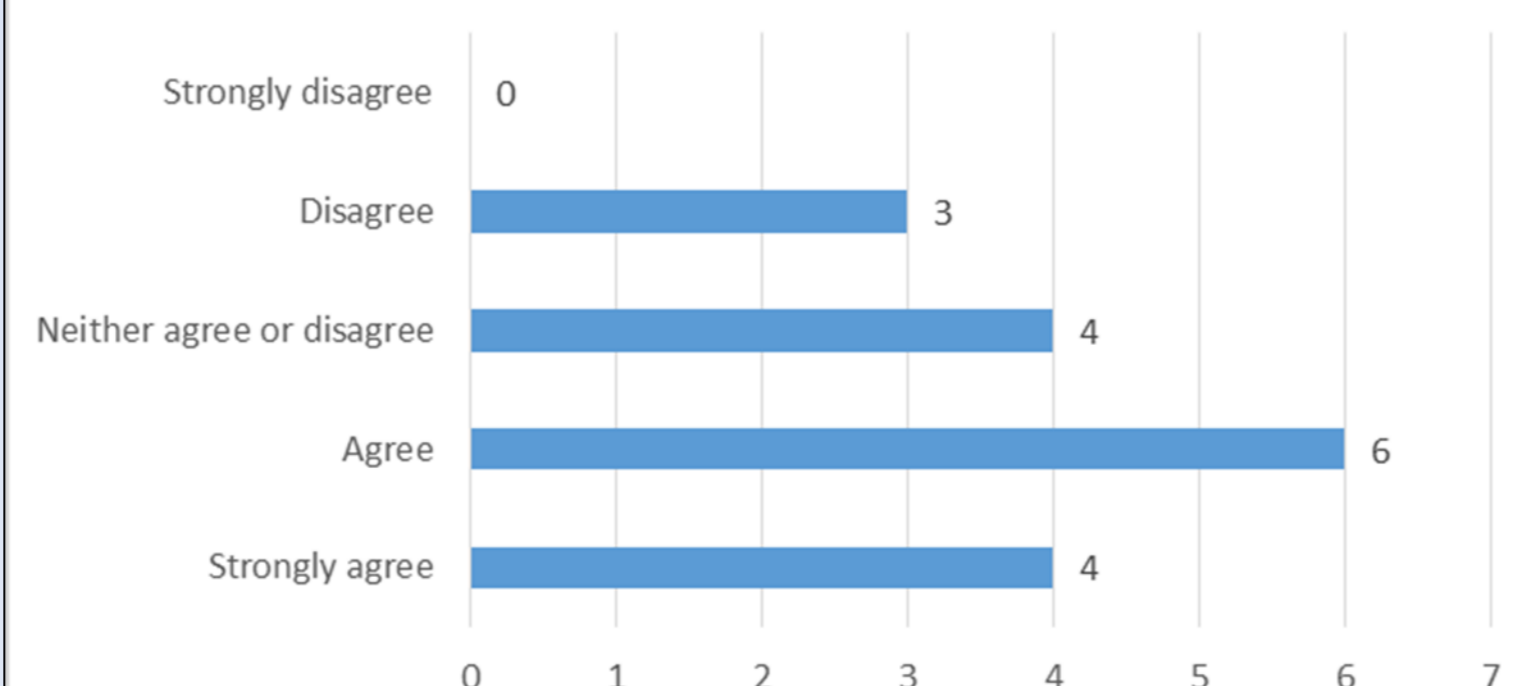
My first open question on the questionnaire was : What is your opinion on older people being cared for in their own homes? The pie chart shows that independence was one of the main reasons why people prefer being cared for in their own homes closely followed by familiar surroundings .

OPINION ON OLDER PEOPLE BEING CARED FOR IN THEIR OWN HOMES?

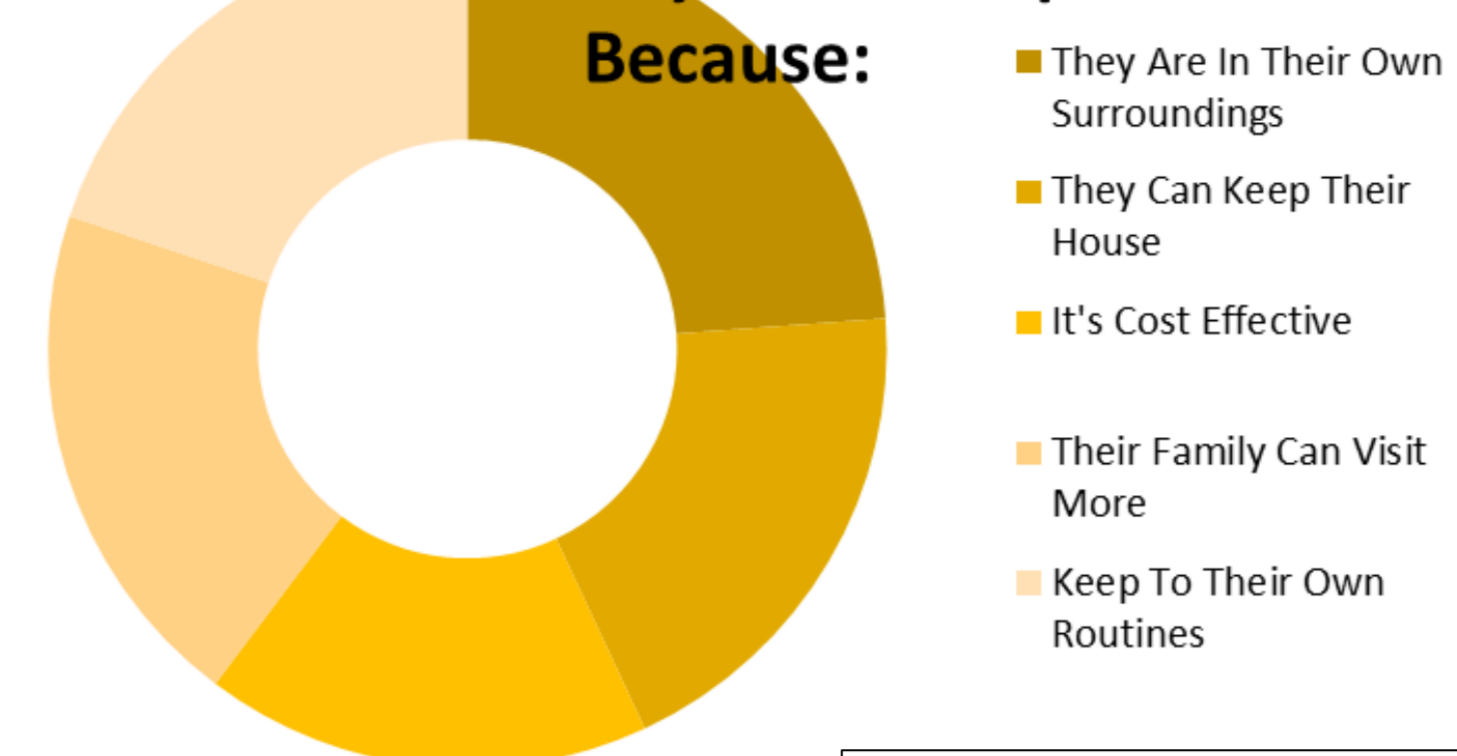


The second question was in the form of a Likert scale. Most people agreed with the statement but they also said it depends on the person's personal circumstances. But as shown on the bar chart 'neither agree or disagree' was close behind.

Q2 - It is always best for the elderly to be cared for in their homes?

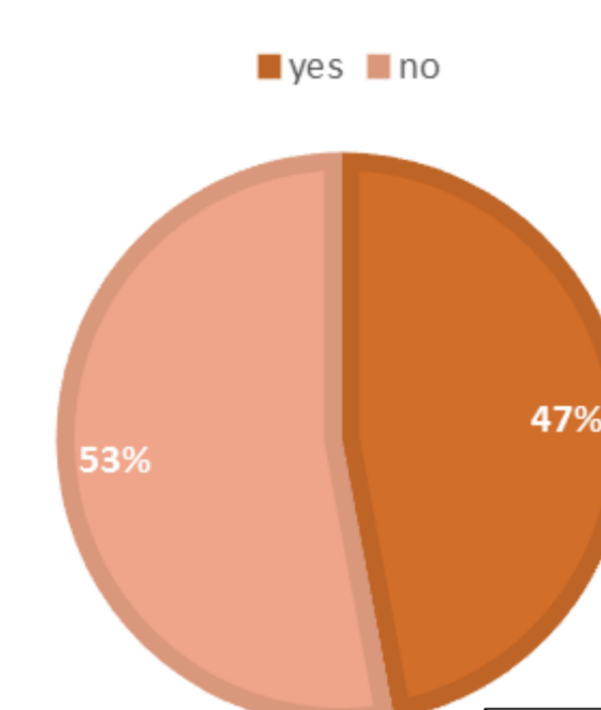


Q3 - Community Care Is Important



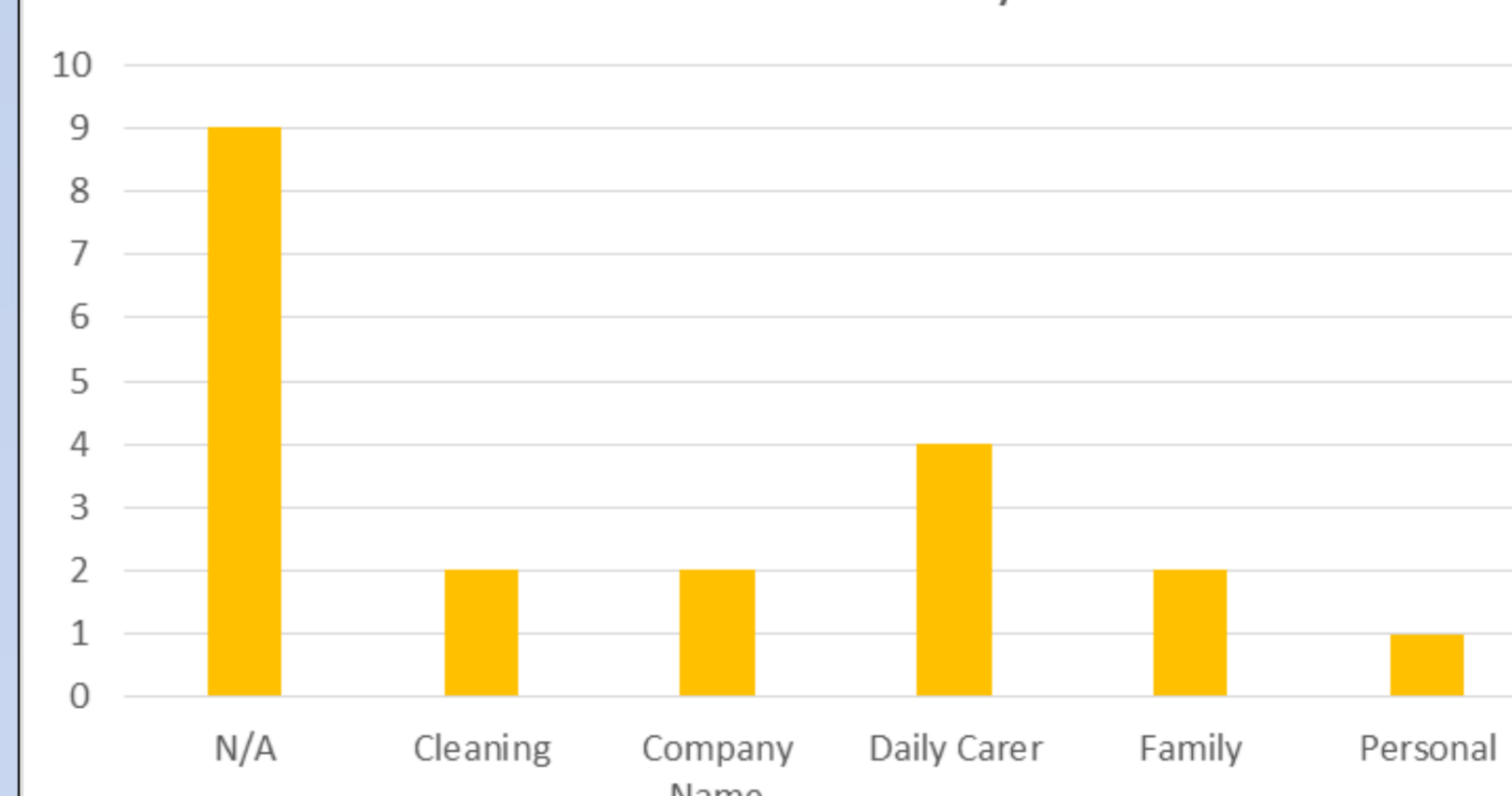
My third question as shown in the doughnut graph above shows that for most people being in their own surroundings is most important followed by keeping to their own routines then the family can visit more often, the least important reason was being cost effective.

Q4 - DO ANY PEOPLE IN YOUR FAMILY BENEFIT FROM CARE?



This pie chart shows that 53% of the people who filled in a questionnaire have family who benefit from care in the community : this surprised me as it is not talked about much yet it benefits so many people

What services do they use?



My next question was : what services do you use? Most people who used carers had a daily carer who came in and did various jobs. Also many people had family members who came in to check on them.

Quotes

From Q1 on my questionnaires: 'what do you think about older people being cared for in their own home?'

'Gives many much needed company and support. Too difficult for many to leave their homes and could be the only contact they may have - very important '

'It is a necessity as the elderly require to keep some dignity and independence'

'It's a good thing as long as they are safe, old people shouldn't be stuck in a home if they can stay in their own house.'

Conclusion

I chose my research question as members of my family have benefitted from care. From my questionnaires I was not surprised to find that over 50% of families benefit from care in some way. Something I found surprising was that independence was one of the main reasons that people liked about community care. Something else that I was surprised about was that not many people cited personal care as a reason. If I had more time I would have liked to use the questionnaires as a basis to interview members of the public to find out their opinions in more depth.