

# REFRAMING NARRATIVES ON CARE IN THE UK

Qualitative discussion groups – technical addendum to research report

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# 1 SCREENER QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RECRUITMENT

**Q1a. Have you taken part in a market research discussion before?**

- Yes, more than a year ago                    1 → *Go to Q1b*
  - Yes, less than a year ago                    2 → *Close*
  - No    3 → *Go to Q2*
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**Q1b. What was the subject being researched?**

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*Close if to do with charity, NHS, social care or childcare*

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**Q2a. Are you or your close family involved in any of the following professions?**

- Market Research                            1 → *Close*
  - Media/Advertising                        2 → *Close*
  - Television/Radio                         3 → *Close*
  - Journalism/PR                            4 → *Close*
  - Charity                                      5 → *Close*
  - Adult social care                        6 → *Go to Q2b*
  - Social work                                7 → *Go to Q2b*
  - Childcare                                 8 → *Go to Q2b*
-

**Q2b. Do you or anyone in your close family involved work as any of the following:**

Support worker	1
Care assistant	2
Community support or outreach worker	3
Social worker	4
Childcare worker	5
Teaching assistant	6
Foster parent	7
Cleaner	8
Kitchen staff	9

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**Q3. Which of the following best describes your family situation?**

I have young children (0-11) living at home*	1 → <i>Go to Q5a</i>
I have older children (0-16) living at home*	2 → <i>Go to Q5a</i>
I have children but they don't live with me	3 → <i>Go to Q4</i>
I have adult children living at home	4 → <i>Go to Q4</i>
I have adult children no longer living at home	5 → <i>Go to Q4</i>
I don't have children	6 → <i>Go to Q4</i>

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**ASK THOSE WHO DON'T HAVE CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME**

**Q4a. Do you have older relatives or other adults with additional needs (e.g. illnesses, conditions or disabilities) in your life?**

Yes	1 → <i>Go to Q4b</i>
No	2 → <i>Go to Q5a</i>

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**ASK THOSE WHO HAVE PEOPLE WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS IN THEIR LIFE**

**Q4b. Which of the following statements best describes the situation of the older relative or other adult with additional support needs?**

They live independently and look after themselves	1
They live independently and look after themselves but I've been thinking that they are likely to need more support soon	2
They live independently but I support them in some ways (shopping, cleaning etc.)	3
They live independently but have care workers to support them	4
They live in sheltered housing	5
They live in a nursing home or hospital	6
Other (write in)	7
Prefer not to answer	8 → <i>Close</i>

*Caring experiences: We're looking for people who have some informal caring responsibilities for other people – or know that it's coming down the line (i.e. have older parents who might start to need some support) and have started thinking about it.*

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**CARING EXPERIENCE - CHILDREN GROUPS**

All have children living at home all or part of the time (Q3)

**CARING EXPERIENCE – ADULTS GROUPS**

All have some informal caring responsibilities for other people – or know that it's coming down the line (i.e. have older parents who might start to need some support) and have started thinking about it (Q4b)

**NO CARING EXPERIENCE GROUPS**

Have no children living at home and don't do any informal care for anyone else (Q3, Q4b).

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**ASK ALL**

**Q5a. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more?**

- |                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Yes               | 1 → <i>Go to Q5b</i> |
| No                | 2 → <i>Go to Q6a</i> |
| Don't know        | 3 → <i>Go to Q6a</i> |
| Prefer not to say | 4 → <i>Go to Q6a</i> |
- 

**Q5b. Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?**

- |                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Yes               | 1 → <i>Go to Q6a</i> |
| No                | 2 → <i>Go to Q6a</i> |
| Don't know        | 3 → <i>Go to Q6a</i> |
| Prefer not to say | 4 → <i>Go to Q6a</i> |

*Those who answer yes at Q5a and Q5b would count towards the disability quota.*

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**Q6a. Thinking back to the last three General Elections (2015, 2017, 2019) how many political parties have you voted for?**

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| I've always voted for the same party    | 1 → <i>Close</i>    |
| I've voted for different parties        | 2 → <i>Continue</i> |
| I didn't vote in any of those elections | 3 → <i>Close</i>    |

*All must be swing voters – i.e. have voted for different parties in the last three elections.*

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**Q6b. I'm going to read out two 'groups' of political parties – please let me know which group you tend to feel most drawn towards.**

- Liberal Democrats, Conservatives 1 → *Recruit as Centre Right*
- Liberal Democrats, Labour 2 → *Recruit as Centre Left*
- I don't know, I switch across the two groups! 3 → *Go to Q6c*
- I'm not drawn to either of these groups 4 → *Close*

*Northern Ireland only*

Alliance Party of Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Conservatives	1 → <i>Recruit as Centre Right</i>
Alliance Party of Northern Ireland, Social Democrat & Labour Party (SDLP), Sinn Fein, Progressive Unionist Party (PUP)	2 → <i>Recruit as Centre Left</i>
I don't know, I switch across the two groups!	3 → <i>Go to Q6c</i>
I'm not drawn to either of these groups	4 → <i>Close</i>

**Q6c. Which of these political parties have you voted for the most (across General Elections & local council elections)?**

- Conservative Party 1 → *Recruit as Centre Right*
- Liberal Democrat Party 2 → *Recruit as either Centre Right or Left*
- Labour Party 3 → *Recruit as Centre Left*
- None of these 4 → *Close*

*Northern Ireland only*

- Northern Ireland Conservatives 1 → *Recruit as Centre Right*
- Alliance Party of Northern Ireland 2 → *Recruit as either Centre Right or Left*
- Social Democrat & Labour Party (SDLP) 3 → *Recruit as Centre Left*
- Sinn Fein 4 → *Recruit as Centre Left*
- Progressive Unionist Party 5 → *Recruit as Centre Left*
- None of these 6 → *Close*

**Q7. Which gender do you identify as?**

- Male 1 → *Check quotas*  
Female 2 → *Check quotas*  
Non binary 3 → *Recruit to either male or female quotas*  
Prefer not to say 4 → *Recruit to either male or female quotas*
- 

**Q8. Which of the following best describes your ethnicity?**

<b>A: White</b> English Other British Irish Any other white background, write in:	<b>B: Mixed</b> White & Black Caribbean White & Black African White & Asian Any other mixed background, write in:	<b>C: Asian or Asian</b> British Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi Chinese Any other Asian background, write in:	<b>D: Black or Black British Caribbean</b> African Any other black background, write in:	<b>E: Other ethnic group</b> Arab Gypsy Romany Irish Traveller Any other, write in:
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*Check ethnicity quota – please ensure a mix of different ethnicities amongst the quota*

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**Q9. Which age group do you fall into?**

- 18 – 24 1 → *Close*  
25 – 29 2 → *Check quota*  
30 – 34 3 → *Check quota*  
35 – 39 4 → *Check quota*  
40 – 44 5 → *Check quota*  
45 – 49 6 → *Check quota*  
50 – 54 7 → *Check quota*  
55 – 64 8 → *Check quota*  
65+ 9 → *Check quota*
-

Q10. What is (or was) the main occupation of

Yourself (if working)

The main income earner in your household?

*Write in occupation of respondent :* \_\_\_\_\_

*Write in occupation of main income earner:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Recruiter to record SEG**

- A            1 → *Close*
- B            2 → *Check quota*
- C1          3 → *Check quota*
- C2          4 → *Check quota*
- D            5 → *Check quota*
- E            6 → *Close*

*All must be BC1C2D*

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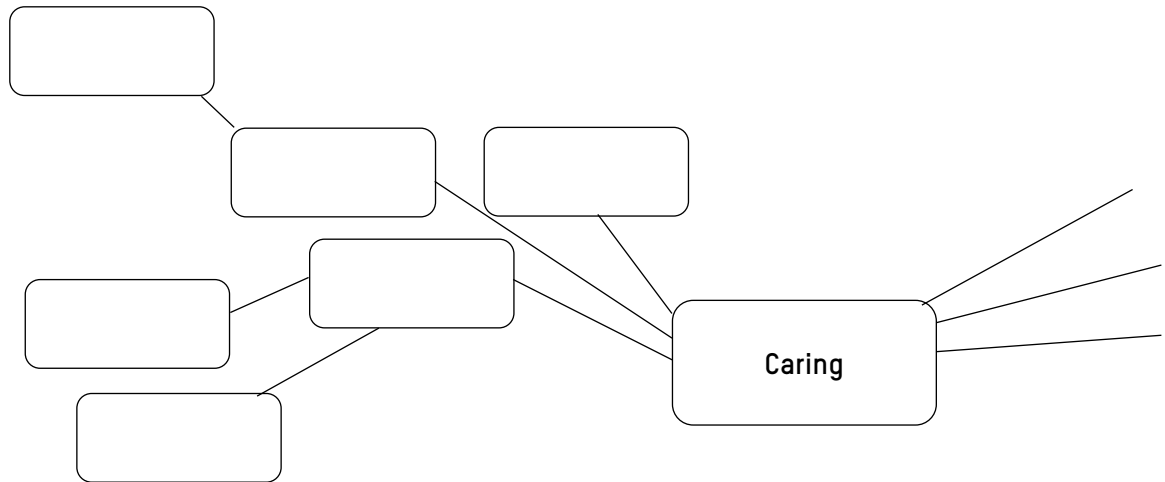


## 2 PRE-TASK COMPLETED BEFORE DISCUSSION GROUPS

### Task 1: What 'Caring' Means to Me.

Think about all the associations you have with the word 'caring' – things like the **emotions, actions, skills, work, people** (the cared for and the caring), **jobs, value** etc. involved in caring. Please complete and build on the spider diagram below.

*NB. Please don't worry about doing boxes – just type words or draw, photograph and send back!*



### Task 2: My Personal Pandemic

Think about your life - before, during and after the pandemic. Has anything changed and how do you feel about those changes? Is there anything you wished had changed that hasn't? These changes could be about anything – working from home, spending more time with your family, new hobbies etc. It would be great to hear about anything that relates to caring.

*NB. If nothing's changed and there's nothing you wished had changed that's fine – just let us know.*

1. **One thing that's changed in my life and how I feel about it:**
2. **One thing I wished had changed in my life:**

### Task 3: The UK's Pandemic

And thinking about our society – has anything changed? Or is there something you wished had changed but hasn't? Could be anything from how we treat each other to Government policy to where and how we work. It would be great to hear about anything that relates to caring.

*NB. If nothing's changed and there's nothing you wished had changed that's fine – just let us know.*

1. **One thing that's changed in society and how I feel about it:**
2. **One thing I wished had changed in society:**

### 3 TOPIC GUIDE USED DURING DISCUSSION GROUPS

#### A note for the reader

Please be aware that this is a discussion guide and not a script. The discussion will follow the flow of the themes / questions outlined but will be dictated to some extent by what's relevant to the respondents. Questions won't necessarily be asked in the order that they're written or in the way that they're written.

#### INTRODUCTION

10 mins

- **Warm Up Activity:** everyone to write down the last thing someone else did for them that showed 'care'.
- **Participant Introductions & Warm Up**

#### PART 1: EXPLORING THE 'CARE' FRAME OF REFERENCE

30 mins

Explain that we want to understand what 'care' means to them in their own lives and in the broader societal context.

Ask them to refer to their 'what caring means to me' pre task

#### Explore

- **'Cared for' People:** who do they think of when they think about people who are 'cared for'? Why these people? What are their needs? How do they feel about them? **Gently probe and be alert to any sense of a disparity in care – do some get more / better care than others?**  
Probe around;
  - Children
  - People / children with disabilities / illnesses
  - Older people
- **'Caring' People:** who do they think of when they think about the 'carers'? Are there any particular types of people? Why these people? How do they feel about them? **Gently probe and be alert to any sense of a disparity of perceived value.**  
Probe around;
  - Women vs men
  - Older vs younger
  - Lower vs higher income
  - Different ethnicities
  - Skilled vs unskilled
- **Jobs:** when they think of care do they tend to think about paid vs unpaid care?
  - Who are the unpaid carers? How much time does their caring take up? Is anyone a full time carer? What do they live on, how are they supported?
  - Who are the paid carers? What kind of jobs do they do? Who do they work for? How much are they paid?

- What do they see as the difference in what these people do? **Gently probe and be alert to any sense of a disparity of perceived value. Use different job and role examples to explore.**

**Summary (don't explore in depth – just get a sense of topline attitudes)**

- Broadly, how would they say 'care, carers and caring jobs' are viewed ....
  - By the public
  - By employers
  - By national governments
  - By Westminster Government
- How do they feel about that?

<b>BREAK</b>	<b>10 mins</b>
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<b>PART 2: RESPONSE TO CARE NARRATIVES</b>	<b>60 mins</b>
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**Rotate order of narratives shown (but always show Contribution to the Economy last).**

- Care: The Driving Force of the Economy (Infrastructure)
- Without Care We All Face An Uncertain Future (Universality)
- The Unique Knowledge, Skills and Qualities of Caring (Skills)
- Care: The Driving Force of the Economy (Contribution to the Economy)

**Repeat the following for each narrative (c 15 mins per narrative):**

Show and read out the narrative

**Activity:** Conduct a quick poll – on gut instinct how much does this spark their interest (out of 10)?

**Activity:** Ask respondents to use chat to answer the following two questions:

- What is this telling you – what is its main message?
- What's your response – what do you think and feel about this message?

**Explore**

- Spontaneous response – likes and dislikes
- Communication – what's this telling them? What's its main message? What's it saying about care?

- Who is it talking about when it references care? (types of people / jobs etc)
- What settings is it talking about when it talks about care? (NHS, Childcare etc)

If necessary, clarify that by care, it's talking about both:

- **Paid care work: is caring for people or doing domestic work for pay, e.g. social care and childcare workers. It takes place in public and private care sectors, such as education,**

- health and social work, but also in private households. Domestic workers might care directly for other people and do tasks such as cleaning, cooking and washing clothes.”
- Unpaid care work: “Unpaid care work is caring for people – such as bathing a child or taking care of adults who are sick, frail or have additional needs; and undertaking domestic work such as cooking and doing laundry – without receiving any explicit financial compensation.
  - Emotional response – how do they feel about that message? How does it make them feel about care? About the people who work in care?
  - Comprehension – is it clear? Does it make sense? Is there anything confusing here?
  - Credibility – do they believe it?
  - Relatability – does it resonate with their own experiences? With their own beliefs?
  - Importance: how important does this issue feel? To individuals and to society?
  - Refreshing perspectives:
    - Do they feel that the public / Govt sees care in this way? If not, why not and what’s different?
    - Does it change how they feel about care or carers in any way? How they view it?
    - Does it make them feel anything should change in terms of how care is viewed and treated? **Probe around ...**
      - Levels of resource
      - Levels of pay
      - Increases in social security for unpaid carers (e.g. carers, foster parents, child benefit, child tax credits etc) – probe around different types of unpaid carers
  - Ask them to pinpoint the specific messages that have shifted perception.

### Review all four narratives

- If they were going to give their heart to one of this ‘angles’ which one would they give it to and why?
- If they were going to invest in one of these ‘angles’ which one would they invest in and why?
- If they were a politician who wanted the public’s support for more investment in the care sector which ‘angle’ would they use to persuade them and why?

<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>10 mins</b>
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- Overall, if a politician talked about making increased investment in the social care and childcare sectors a priority what would they think? How would they feel?
- Do they see any challenges that the politician would come up against? What and why? Any ideas on how to overcome them?

**Thank and close**

## 4 DRAFT NARRATIVES EXPLORED DURING DISCUSSION GROUPS

<p><b>1. Care is the heart of our social infrastructure</b></p>	<p>Every day across the UK the work of paid and unpaid carers helps hold society together - it's the invisible network of support, empathy and care for the most vulnerable that flows through the country.</p> <p>In the UK, there are over 8 million people<sup>1</sup> providing unpaid care and millions more providing childcare and paid care - helping our children grow and learn, supporting those with disabilities and long-term illness so they have greater independence, and ensuring our elderly relatives thrive.</p> <p>We don't see or hear much about the benefits they bring to society, but their contribution supports the social and economic foundations of our country.</p> <p>Without their ongoing efforts there would be serious negative consequences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The NHS would struggle to cope even more than it already does, causing thousands more people to suffer and unnecessary deaths</li> <li>- Even fewer mothers would be able to return to paid work – damaging economic prospects for all of us</li> <li>- Young children's development would be negatively impacted, affecting their futures and prospects</li> <li>- People with disabilities and long-term illnesses would find it more difficult to work and lead a dignified life</li> <li>- And our elderly would be more likely to suffer physical and mental health traumas</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Without care we all face an uncertain future</b></p>	<p>The advances we have made in science and technology mean that we are all more likely to live longer, fuller lives.</p> <p>This means that at some point in the future we're probably going to need somebody to care for us – whether this is our own children, family members, neighbours or a professional care worker</p> <p>Over a quarter of people over 65 need at least some form of care to get by and for those over 80 the figure is greater than 40%.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Carers help us retain our independence and vitality, they help us stay strong and healthy, keep us connected and ensure we get the physical and emotional nourishment we need so that our old age is an opportunity to thrive not deteriorate.</p> <p>But without good quality care, our old age could be a significantly less positive experience – struggling with simple everyday tasks, increased risk of injury and ill-health, and the absence of human connection – simply surviving and what kind of life is that.</p>
<p><b>3. The unique knowledge, skills</b></p>	<p>Those who receive care – young children, and those with additional support needs due to disabilities, illnesses or old age – are often extremely vulnerable and have very specific needs that require both practical and emotional support, often of a specialist nature.</p>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.carersuk.org/media/khgkb3fs/state-of-caring-2019-report.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [https://ifs.org.uk/sites/default/files/output\\_url\\_files/WP202040-Long-term-care-spending-and-hospital-use-among-the-older-population-in-England.pdf](https://ifs.org.uk/sites/default/files/output_url_files/WP202040-Long-term-care-spending-and-hospital-use-among-the-older-population-in-England.pdf)

<p><b>and qualities of caring</b></p>	<p>It takes a very special set of skills and talent to care for these people, to make sure that both their essential physical and emotional needs are met - and not just anyone can do it.</p> <p>Caring for those who need it most is one of the most difficult things to master – it combines the medical skills of a nurse, the communication skills of a teacher, the organisational skills of a PA, the strength and endurance of a sports person as well as the empathy and kindness of a friend.</p> <p>On top of this, as a carer you have to be constantly prepared for the unexpected and be ready to deal with it in a humane and compassionate way – when a person’s health and wellbeing are in your hands, being on the ball and proactive is necessary to prevent any lasting consequences.</p> <p>In a world that is becoming increasingly impersonal, caring is the most personal service – tailored to the needs of those whose wellbeing depends upon it.</p>
<p><b>4. Care: the driving force of the economy</b></p>	<p>As well as providing essential practical and emotional support to people who need it the most across the UK, caring brings incredible wealth to our economy.</p> <p>The contribution made by paid carers to the economy is estimated to be over £50billion,<sup>3</sup> if we put a number on the value of unpaid care, this figure comes to over £182billion.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>This exceeds the contributions of the financial sector - £164.8billion<sup>5</sup> - and the tech sector - £149billion.<sup>6</sup></p> <p>As the UK population ages, it’s also a rapidly growing sector – it’s estimated that 40% of projected job opportunities will be in care<sup>7</sup> – a sector that is, by definition, low carbon, so it’s all give and no take.</p> <p>Providing childcare for all would also enable many women to return to work adding an estimated 28.2billion to the economy.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>This means that it’s essential that we properly invest in care to ensure future opportunities for millions of people across the UK.</p>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.homecare.co.uk/news/article.cfm/id/1657822/adult-social-care-50-billion-english-economy>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/news/polopoly\\_fs/1.546409!/file/Valuing-Carers-2015.pdf](https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/news/polopoly_fs/1.546409!/file/Valuing-Carers-2015.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06193/SN06193.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/digital-sector-worth-more-than-400-million-a-day-to-uk-economy>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/05/care-economy-emerging-job-opportunities/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://wbg.org.uk/media/press-releases/childcare-is-infrastructure-amendment-to-the-levelling-up-bill/>