

The Health and Wellbeing of Older People in Surrey

The Independent Annual Report of the Director of Public Health
Surrey County Council 2018

“People are living longer than ever and so retirement presents a real opportunity for baby boomers to be more active than ever before. For many people it is a chance to take on new challenges, it is certainly not the start of a slower pace of life it once was.”

“Staying in work, volunteering or joining a community group can make sure people stay physically and mentally active for longer. The health benefits of this should not be underestimated.”

Professor Dame Sally Davies
Chief Medical Officer of England, 2016



I am pleased to present this, my independent Annual Public Health Report, on the health and wellbeing of Surrey's older adults. Our older residents are a significant asset to Surrey, giving their time and money to support family friends and local communities. We don't always recognise their contribution as we should, nor do we harness this resource to its fullest extent.

Some older people are more vulnerable and need support from both health and social care. These numbers will increase significantly over the coming decades with the ageing population which poses significant challenges to the public purse. We need to do more to keep people healthy and independent in their own homes to meet this challenge going forward.

In my report, I focus on both the positive and the negative across different dimensions of aging. I highlight ways in which prevention can help people add more life to their years, what local residents can do to help themselves and how local organisations can support them.

Helen Atkinson,
Executive Director of Public Health
and the Wider Determinants of
Health, Surrey County Council



I am delighted to support this independent report of Helen Atkinson, the Director of Public Health. It is important that, as a society, we see older people as individuals with a diverse range of skills and knowledge, rather than as single similar group. We need to work hard to change perceptions of older adults – looking at what they have to contribute to society first before we consider that they may also have support needs. This report is a step towards recognising the contribution older people make as well as highlighting the needs of some of our more vulnerable older people.

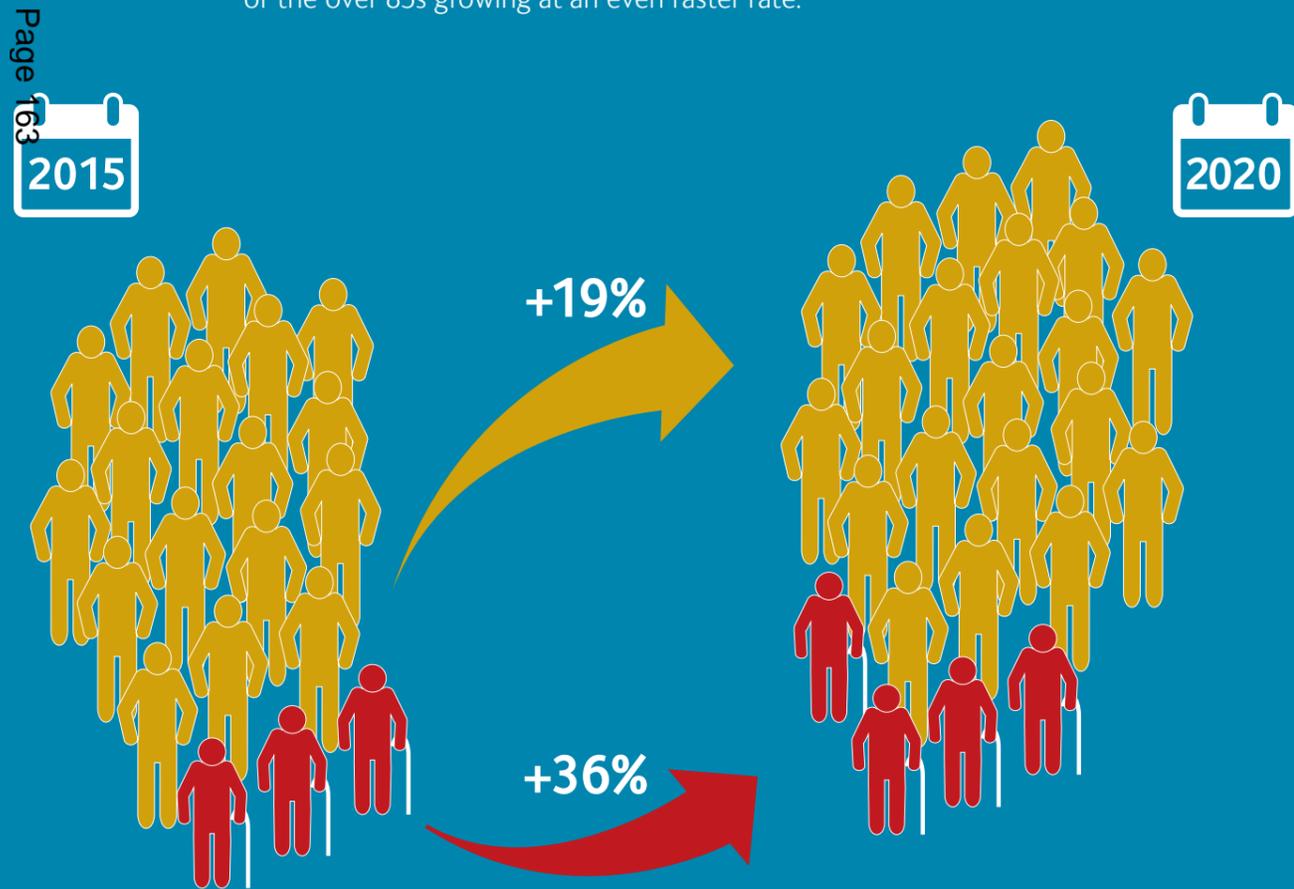
Tim Oliver,
Cabinet Member for People,
Surrey County Council

Why focus on the health and wellbeing of older adults?

In Surrey, as across the rest of the UK, we have an ageing population. This change is being driven by three distinct trends:

- We are now living longer than ever before – life expectancy is increasing at an estimated 5 hours a day (Nesta 2013)
- The increase in overall population that took place after the second world war - the baby boom generation - is starting to reach retirement age; and
- People are commonly choosing to have fewer children so younger people make up a smaller proportion of the population than before.

The overall effect of this is that our population is made up of a large and growing proportion of people aged over 65, with the proportion of the over 85s growing at an even faster rate.



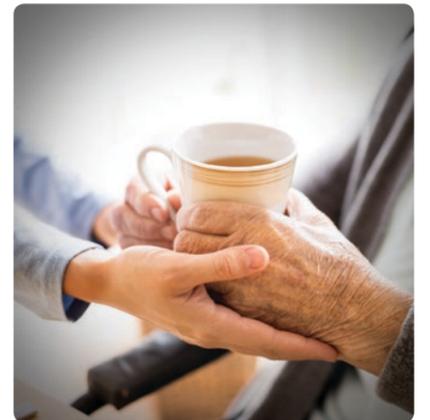
In 2015 Surrey's population aged 65 and over was 217,200; of those 33,000 were over 85

By 2020 the number of over 65 will increase by 19% to 259,000 and the over 85 by 36% to 45,000

People living longer is something that should be celebrated. Older people are net contributors to society, adding both social and financial value through activities such as caring for family and friends, volunteering, paid employment and many other activities. It was estimated that in 2013, people aged 65 and over in the UK contributed £61 billion to the economy (Age UK, 2014).

Older age is not always healthy – the gains in life expectancy haven't been matched by gains in healthy life expectancy (Government Office for Science, 2015). Across Surrey, at age 65 a man can expect to spend 13 years out of his remaining 20 years in poor health. Women can expect to spend 14 out of 22. And the differences in resident experience across Surrey are stark – for both men and women at age 65 there is a difference of 10 years between the areas with the best and the worst healthy life expectancy. Those with poorer healthy life expectancy are likely to need support from both health and social care which is creating demand which local services are struggling to meet.

However, poor health in older age is not inevitable. Individuals, families and communities can act to improve health, supported by local services. This report highlights areas where older people are already helping themselves, where they could do more and where they will need more support.





Did you know?
One third of people living with dementia do not feel part of their community (Alzheimer's Society 2016)



Fact
The health risks associated with social isolation have been strongly compared with the well-established detrimental effects of smoking and obesity (JSNA 2017)



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Did you know?
Volunteering helps to build resilient communities. 44% of 64-75 year olds volunteer in their local community; this is more than any other age group (Surrey Residents Survey 2016)

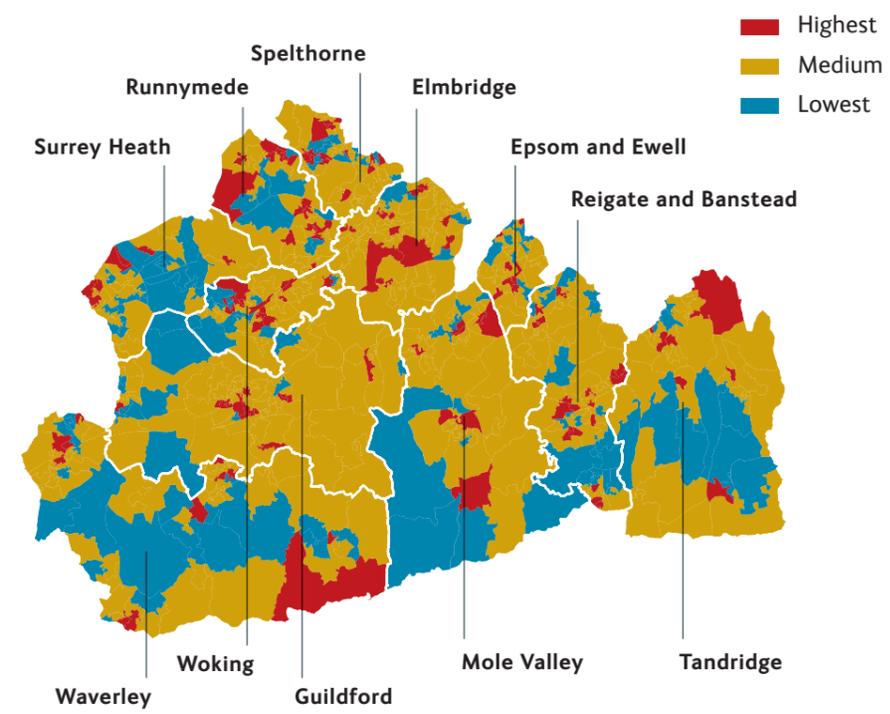
Resilient communities and social isolation

In addition to the many who continue to work, older adults across Surrey make an important contribution to the life of their local areas and the broader economy through providing unpaid care, involvement in civic organisations and other forms of volunteering. It is beneficial for people of all ages to participate in their local communities to enrich their lives, make them feel valued and to benefit their health and wellbeing. Nationally, increasing numbers of people say they feel more connected to their neighbourhood (ONS 2017).

An individual's relationship with their community becomes increasingly important as they age, as the immediate environment can have significant impact on whether or not an older person becomes lonely or socially isolated. Those making the shift from employment to retirement tend to spend more time in their local area. Older adults who are an active part of their community may be more able to stay in their own home for longer and not move into shared accommodation or residential homes, particularly if family members live far away. Evidence shows that people who live in neighbourhoods that support older people through having accessible local services and shops, good community connections, adequate street lighting and paving are more likely to score higher on self-assessed health scores (Baker 2014). All of these factors make it important to develop strong and resilient communities across Surrey.

Despite efforts by local communities and government, many individuals living in Surrey are socially isolated. Experiencing feelings of loneliness and isolation is associated with poor mental, physical and emotional health, including increased rates of cardiovascular disease, hypertension, cognitive decline and dementia (LGA Task and Finish Group on Ageing 2016). The map opposite shows areas of Surrey where we estimate greater number of people living in social isolation are to be found, with red colour indicating higher numbers. Social isolation is estimated based on a score of eight factors related to loneliness, deprivation, long term illnesses, access to transport and age.

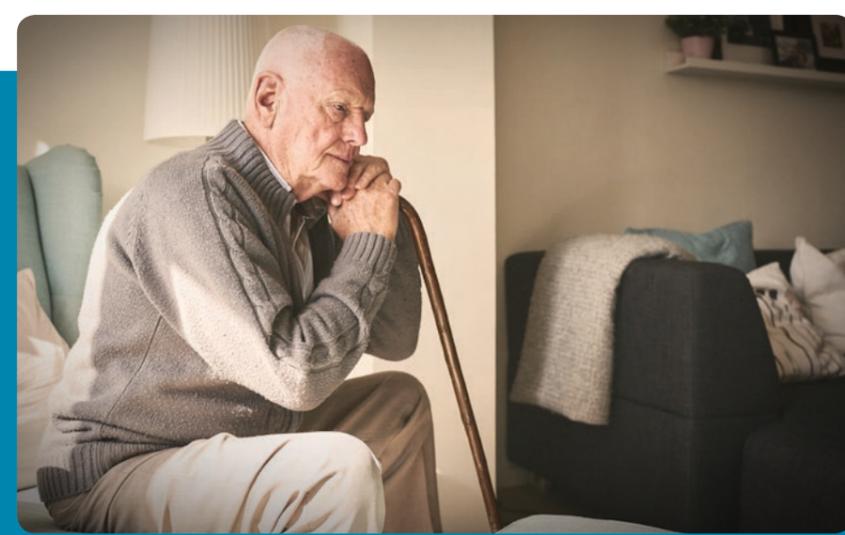
Social isolation in Surrey



Fact
Almost a third (31%) of Surrey residents aged 65+ who live in their own homes live alone (Surrey County Council, 2017). While living alone isn't the same as feeling lonely, living on your own can be one aspect of social isolation.



Did you know?
Social networks have been shown to be as powerful predictors of mortality as common lifestyle and clinical risks such as moderate smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, obesity and high cholesterol and blood pressure (Pantell et al 2013; Holt-Lunstad et al 2010).



Call to action:

What you can do:
 Volunteering can be a great way to stay involved in your community and meet new people - sign up to timebanking to exchange your skills and time with others in your community. Get involved in local community activities such as singing, walking, book clubs, bridge or bingo. Start a community enterprise or join an adult learning course to develop a new skill or interest. Look out for your neighbours.

What professionals can do: Consider options such as social prescribing, signposting to volunteering activities or social groups to keep people using their skills and more connected to their community.

What organisations can do: Ensure advice and information for those at risk of becoming isolated is clear and easily accessible. Support initiatives which promote volunteering and enable social prescribing in Surrey. Work within your own organisation and with others in the public and private sector to reduce age-related barriers to employment.



Case Study - Time banking

Surrey County Council is supporting volunteering and local communities by teaming up with the national charity Timebanking UK to support the creation of a network of Timebanks across Surrey. These Timebanks are accepting new members and enabling people to exchange time in their communities. Everyone's time is valued equally and one hour of help earns one credit which can be exchanged or donated to fellow members.

- An example of an exchange is:
1. A resident volunteers one hour of their time to teach someone to bake a cake.
 2. This earns them one 'time credit'.
 3. They then spend this credit on someone helping in their garden for an hour.

More information about Timebanks in your area can be found on the Surrey County Council Website.



Fact

The Surrey 2014-15 survey of carers found 57% of respondents had 'cancelled or postponed their own doctor's or hospital appointments because of their caring role'. (2016 Carers Trust survey)



Did you know?

The number of women carers outnumber men until age 85 and over, when men make up almost 60% of carers.



Fact

More than 9 out of 10 carers report that caring has a negative impact on their mental health, including stress and depression, while 75% of carers said it was hard to maintain social relationships (King's Fund, 2017)

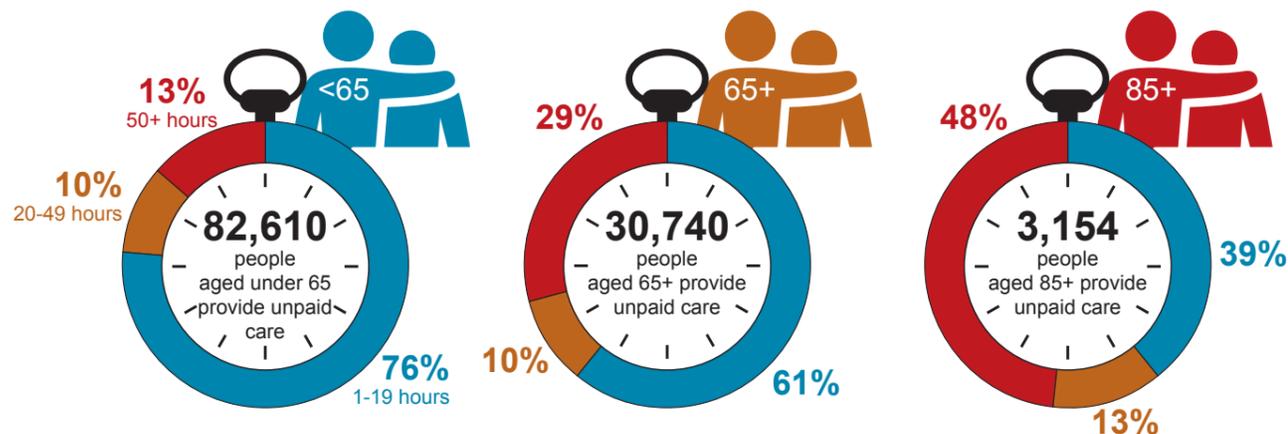
Older carers

Carers of all ages are the largest source of support for people with disabilities or illness, contributing to robust communities in Surrey. It is estimated that carers of all ages in Surrey save the public purse £1.8 billion a year (Surrey Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), Adult Carers Chapter).

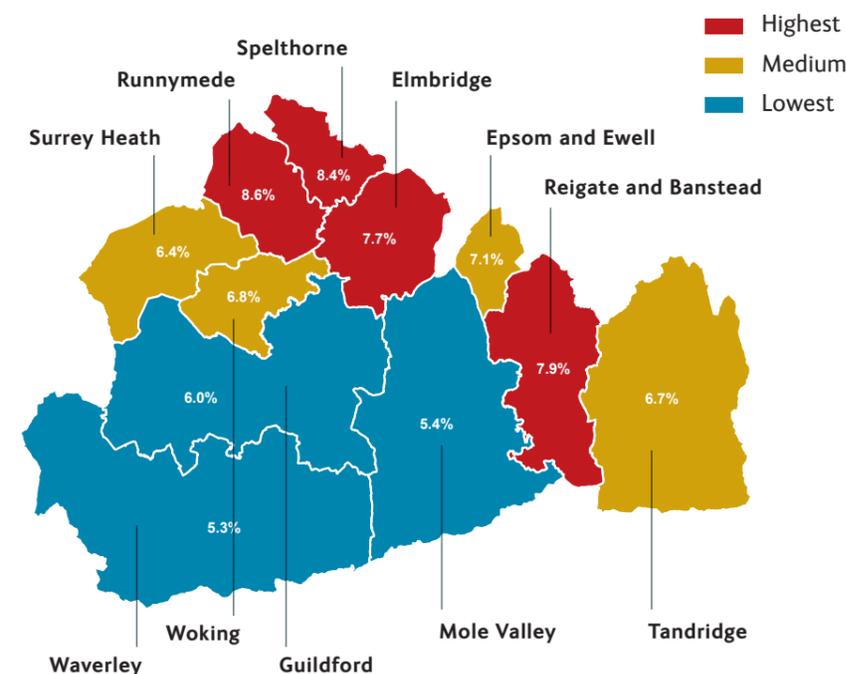
Surrey's ageing population means that more and more over-65s are spending their time caring for the 'older-old', like frail parents in their 80s and 90s or partners that are unwell. Many are also still in paid employment or grandparents juggling these caring responsibilities with looking after their grandchildren. There are currently about 30,740 carers aged 65 or over in Surrey, of whom 1 in 10 are 85 or over. The number of older carers are expected to grow by 2025 to 36,000 and indeed older carers account for about 60% of the projected increase in carers of all ages. More detail on changes to the caring population can be found in the Adult Carers chapter of the JSNA.

Age	People working unpaid hours			Total number of people providing unpaid care
	1-19 Hours	20-49 Hours	50+ hours	
65-69	7,570	906	1,820	10,296
70-74	5,206	768	2,106	8,080
75-79	2,834	582	1,730	5,146
80-84	1,863	490	1,711	4,064
85+	1,237	400	1,517	3,154

Older carers spend substantially more hours per week caring than do their younger counterparts, which has consequences for their own physical and mental health. Health outcomes generally worsen with the number of hours spent caring or in those carers experiencing strain caused by their responsibilities. Carers report mental health problems including depression, and may also risk physical injuries such as back strain due to their caring activity. Carers are also at higher risk of death or life-changing impacts from heart attacks and strokes, compared to those without caring duties (Supporting Carers: The case for change).



Percentage of unpaid carers over 65 reporting their health is bad or very bad



Case Study - Jointly App – care co-ordination app

Jointly is a free app that provides a central place to store and share the important information about the person a carer is looking after. It allows carers to set up appointments, allocate tasks, save files and notes and manage medication. This means that whoever carers share their care with, everyone can be kept in the loop.

Jointly is part of the "Digital Offer" for carers, which was co-designed with carers and was first produced for Surrey County Council and our CCG partners by the national carers' charity, Carers UK.

www.carersuk.org/search/jointly-app

Call to action:

What individuals can do: Caring is an important role which can be tough, and may affect your physical or mental health. Make sure you look after yourself. You can register as a carer with your GP so that they are aware of the extra pressures you are under and can offer you appropriate help, information or entitlements. Action for Carers Surrey can also help you access the information and support you need. www.actionforcarers.org.uk

What professionals can do: Recognition of an individual's caring role is the first step to ensuring that carers are informed, respected and included by health and social care professionals. Be proactive in asking about and registering caring roles. Older carers should be offered information and advice on planning for the future and managing their care responsibilities along with their own health needs.

What organisations can do: Health and social care organisations in Surrey are working together to provide a more coordinated and reliable service to carers and those requiring care. Local commissioners and providers should implement plans that are linked to the 2017 memorandum of understanding 'Together for Carers' and the Surrey Carers Strategy 2016 -17 to 2018-19 'A Life Outside of Caring'.



Physical Activity and Falls

Increasing physical activity levels is one of the most important interventions to improve health in people of all ages. Physical activity can also help to prevent and alleviate some of the symptoms or conditions of older age such as poor mobility, cognitive decline, muscle weakness and falls (Taylor 2014). Maintaining a good level of physical activity into old age can therefore help more people to live independently for longer.



Did you know?

The oldest person to participate in Get Active 50+ session was 104 years.



Fact

The number of people predicted to have a fall in Surrey is estimated to rise from 59,000 in 2015 to 84,000 by 2030.



Did you know?

More than half of people over 65 years in Surrey do not get the recommended amount of exercise (54%). This compares to 37% in all age groups.

Falls in older people can have profound consequences for the individuals concerned as well as significant impact on the local health and care services. One in three people aged 65 years and older (around 70,000 people in Surrey) fall at least once a year. In people over 80 years the figure is one in two (estimated at 16,000). Women are more likely to suffer an injury as a result of a fall, and older people are more likely to suffer severe consequences from a fall such as hip fractures. Just under 10% of falls result in hospitalisation. With the ageing population, the number of falls is likely to increase over the coming years.

There is good evidence that falls, including falls that result in injury, can be prevented. A system wide approach which includes keeping older people physically active, reduces trip hazards in homes and public spaces, and more targeted falls prevention services could reduce the number and severity of falls (Surrey Falls Needs Assessment, 2016).

Every day, 9 people aged 65 and over in Surrey fall and sustain an injury requiring medical attention



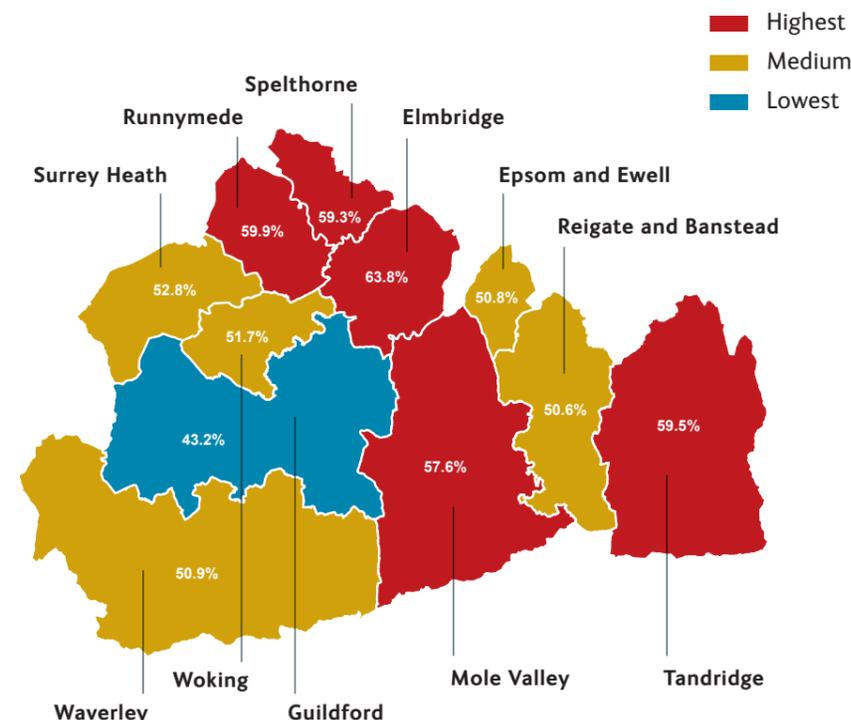
1 in 8 ambulance call-outs in Surrey are responding to someone who has had a fall



All falls are estimated to cost the NHS more than **£2.3 billion** per year



Percentage of Over 65s not doing the recommended level of activity



“Life’s all about confidence. If you don’t have it, you fall down”

Surrey Fall Needs Assessment Focus group participant

Call to action:

What you can do:

Older adults need to do two types of physical activity each week – activities which get your heart beating faster and exercises that build strength. Exercises to improve balance and co-ordination are also helpful, particularly in those at risk of falling. Try to build physical activity into your daily life and travel. You could also get in touch with Active Surrey to join in with local activities that suit your interests and abilities. Find out more at www.healthysurrey.org.uk/your-health/get-active

What practitioners can do:

Be aware that lack of physical activity contributes significantly to older people becoming frail. Encourage service users to consider the ways in which they can build in more activity into their daily lives.

What organisations can do:

Promoting physical activity and preventing falls are within the remit of many different agencies and it is important for services to work together across Surrey. The Surrey JSNA includes detailed information and recommendations for organisations on these topics. <https://www.surreyi.gov.uk/jsna/>

Case Study - Get Active 50+

Summary

Active Surrey provide a physical activity programme specifically targeted at those aged 50+. Activities offered ranged from swimming, badminton, dance and exercise classes to bowls and jogging. All activities are heavily discounted to reduce any potential cost barriers to people wishing to take part in some exercise. Find out what is available in your area at www.activesurrey.com/over50s



What’s it like?

One of the activities offered in Spelthorne is Touch Tennis, played with softer balls and smaller rackets. One participant said “the key difference with standard tennis is that it’s not so much about power, but more about clever angles and technique. ... The sessions are great because you can turn up on the day and the equipment is provided. It’s also very affordable, at £3 per session. The people in the group tend to be retired and of a good standard, so you can have a good game. Although no-one is criticised for their lack of expertise.”

Impact:

In 2016, nearly 2,000 people took part in Get Active 50+ activities, attending over 7,000 sessions of sport or physical activity. Almost all of those taking part did so to improve their physical health while three quarters wished to improve their mental health. Just under half took part to meet new people. Just under half increased the number of days they were physically active in a week.



Did you know?

In Surrey 10,000 people have a formal diagnosis of dementia although it is estimated that around 5,400 people may have dementia but have not been diagnosed.



Fact

Just 2% of people in Britain can identify all the health and lifestyle factors that can increase risk of developing dementia.

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Did you know?

Older people from ethnic minority groups may be particularly susceptible to the ill-health effects of isolation due to language barriers and higher rates of poverty than the general population.

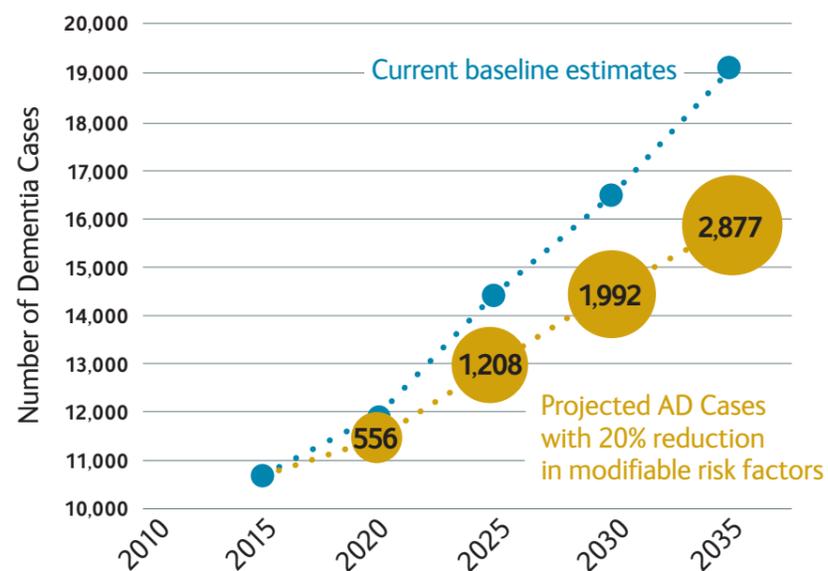
Mental wellbeing and dementia

Now more than ever, many of us can look forward to a long retirement in good physical health. Older age can also be one of the happiest times in a person's life with the ages 65 to 79 reported as the happiest adult years (ONS 2016). Promoting mental wellbeing in older people benefits those individuals as well as families, communities and society as a whole.

Despite the increase in happiness, common mental health problems are just as prevalent in the older population as people of working age. Each year around 22% of men and 28% of women over 65 are affected by depression. In Surrey, this equates to 22,300 men and 34,400 women. This rises in older age with 40% of over 85s having debilitating depression which affects their ability to engage in daily activities.

These figures exclude dementia which is a mental health problem which mainly, but not exclusively, affects older people. According to most recent estimates there are 15,400 with dementia in Surrey although only 64% of these (10,000) have been officially diagnosed. This could rise as the population ages. Encouragingly, there is growing evidence base that there are potentially modifiable risk factors for dementia which can prevent or delay dementia. A paper published by the King's Fund estimated that around a third of Alzheimer's disease (AD, accounting for 67% of dementia cases) were attributable to factors in our control. The key risk factors to address are: diabetes management as an adult, raised blood pressure in mid-life, excess weight in mid-life, depression, physical inactivity, smoking and low educational levels. Based on an approach developed by an academic team at Kings College, we have looked at the impact of reducing the risk factors by 5%, 10% and 20% on predictions of cases of dementia over the coming years. We show the potential impact of a 20% reduction in these risk factors in the graph opposite.

Dementia Projections with Reductions in Risk Factors



Call to action:

What you can do:

Communication is key to mental wellbeing. Speak to your GP if you are feeling down, isolated or anxious. Look after your brain by eating healthily, stopping smoking and keeping your mind and body active. Follow your doctor or nurse's advice on how to manage health conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

What practitioners can do:

Poor mental wellbeing can have a significant impact on an older person's mental and physical health. Give those older people most at risk (people whose partner has died in the past 2 years, carers, living alone, over 80's etc.) information on activities that might help them. Be proactive in promoting healthy lifestyles and treating health conditions to help prevent dementia and be familiar with diagnostic and referral criteria to recognise and manage the condition earlier.

What organisations can do:

Ensure staff in contact with older people can identify those most at risk of a decline in their independence and mental wellbeing and know how to promote good mental health. Organisations need to work together to tackle dementia. Most people in Surrey are covered by the Surrey Heartlands Partnership and East Surrey Dementia Strategy (see back cover).

Case Study - Surrey and Borders Partnership's Technology Integrated Health Management for people living with dementia

Summary

Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust has launched a pioneering new study that aims to transform support for people with dementia and their carers. Using small technological devices that are worn or placed around the home they are able to monitor a person's health in real time. Its key aims are to help people with dementia stay safe and well in their homes by helping clinicians to identify

health problems before they become urgent and to reduce pressure on carers. If the technology identifies a health or safety problem, clinicians based at a Monitoring Unit, are immediately alerted and will step in to offer support. This may involve calling the carer to advise them of a concern, arranging for an Alzheimer's Society Dementia Navigator to visit or, if necessary, contacting the emergency services.

The technology has been tested at a purpose built 'Living Lab' at the University of Surrey, a key partner in the study. Fourteen hundred people are being recruited onto the study.

Impact

A group of people recruited to test the technology have already found the programme helps them to manage their condition while staying in their own home. A full evaluation is in progress. For more information visit www.sabp.nhs.uk/tihm

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all those in Surrey County Council and our partner organisations who contributed to this report and continue to support the work described.

Further information

Surrey Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
www.surreyi.gov.uk/jsna

Healthy Surrey and the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Board
www.healthysurrey.org.uk

Time Banking in Surrey
<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/voluntary-community-and-faith-sector/be-a-volunteer/only-got-an-hour/timebanking-in-surrey>

Surrey Carers Commissioning and Development Strategy 2016/17-2018/19
https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/152942/Carers-Commissioning-and-Development-Strategy-2016_2019.pdf

Action for Carers Surrey
<https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/>

Active Surrey
www.activesurrey.com

Surrey and Borders Partnership's Technology Integrated Health Management project
<https://www.sabp.nhs.uk/tihm>

Surrey Dementia Commissioning Strategies
<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/care-and-support-for-adults/information-for-professionals-partners-and-providers/adult-social-care-strategies-policies-and-performance/dementia-and-older-peoples-mental-health-joint-commissioning-strategy>

Chief Medical Officer Report
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/health-of-the-baby-boomer-generation>

To request further information, including details behind specific facts and figures in this document and their full references please email public.
health@surreycc.gov.uk