

ADASS Survey - Adult social care: People waiting for assessments, care or reviews

Headlines

- On the 30th April 2022 more than 540,000 people were estimated to be waiting for assessments, care, Direct Payments, or adult social care reviews – 37% (36.9%) increase since November 2021.
- 294,449 people are awaiting care assessments, which represents a 30% (30.2%) increase in the number of people waiting for assessments compared to 31st March 2022.
- 1 in 4 (73,792 who had been waiting for assessments, had been waiting more than six months.
- An extra 11,000 people awaiting care & support or direct payments to begin – an increase of 40% (39.8%) in just one month.
- The number of people who are waiting more than twelve months for a Care Act review is up 3% (2.9%), having fallen 6% in March 2022.

Background and context.

In 2021, ADASS began collecting data on the number of people waiting for different aspects of adult social care as a result of general concerns from ADASS members and partners about the cumulative impact of austerity, Brexit and Covid on already fragile social care, support and safeguards and specifically about the impact for people who had known or unknown unmet needs or who were potentially at risk from lack of contact and/or review. ADASS members were describing the operational experience of managing services and the impact on people needing and working in social care as worse than at the start of the pandemic. This year the cost of living is an additional factor. Those working in social care are familiar with 'winter pressures'. The needs for health and social care increase in the winter months, peaking around January, diminishing in the following months (with a smaller peak over Easter).

This means that we can now track and compare this data between November 2021 and 30th April 2022.

Methodological note

In the period since September 2021, we have used successive ADASS member surveys to gather and track people waiting data. The first survey that included a question about the numbers of people waiting resulted in a variation of responses which led us to clarify what we were specifically asking so that members included the same groups of people.

We have used both our major annual [Spring Survey](#) and additional member surveys (which we have referred to as variously as the Snap Survey, Rapid Survey, Winter Contingencies and Waiting for Care surveys). These were resourced through additional Covid funding from DHSC. We committed to undertaking these surveys on the up until July (resourced from reserves) though may defer the final survey to September).

ADASS member surveys are sent to all 152 Directors with responsibility for adult social care. We have strong response rates for all of our member surveys, with the most recent Spring Survey securing 138 responses to the waiting questions (of 152) and our Waiting for Care survey receiving 83 responses. We work with colleagues across the ADASS regions to ensure a spread of authority types, good geographical coverage and that different authorities are

responding to surveys across the year. Across the last year, 149 local authorities have submitted responses to at least one ADASS member survey. A core set of authorities have responded to all of these surveys and a changing group of authorities that respond to some but not all surveys across the year.

The survey results include indicative national figures in this report are arrived at through the extrapolation of responses. The level of these responses (out of England's 152 councils) has been consistently reported and included in the table below.

ADASS' latest analysis

On the count date of 30 April, an estimated total of 542,002 people were awaiting assessment, review or the start of a service or direct payment – an increase of 37% on an equivalent date in November last year. This has been a consistent increase and has not reflected the 'normal winter pressures' pattern of reductions in need and the ability to meet it in the early Spring.

On that date, 294,449 people were awaiting a first assessment of their care and support needs (including Care Act, Carers, Occupational Therapy and Deprivation of Liberty assessments), an increase of 90,000 (44%) in five months. 1 in 4 (73,792) had been waiting more than six months.

A further 37,447 people who had been assessed as needing care were waiting for it to begin or for their first direct payment to arrange it for themselves. And 210,106 people receiving care were overdue a review under the terms of the Care Act.

It is vital that these latest results are seen alongside the results of the [ADASS Spring Survey 2022](#) which found that most Directors were reporting rises in numbers of people seeking support: 87% said more were coming forward for help with mental health issues, 67% reported more approaches because of domestic abuse or safeguarding, and 73% said they were seeing more cases of breakdown of unpaid carer arrangements.

82% of respondents reported increased numbers of referrals of people from hospital and 74% were reporting more referrals or requests for support from the community.

Almost seven in 10 ADASS members surveyed said that care providers in their area had closed or handed back contracts. Many more said they could not meet all needs for care and support because of providers' inability to recruit and retain staff.

The implications of this are significant. If people have unmet (or unknown) needs this has a significant impact on their lives and on the lives of unpaid carers who may feel obliged to step in. There are risks if reviews aren't undertaken. If people are waiting for assessments and care a proportion will inevitably deteriorate and need hospital care.

ADASS Data – November 2021 to 30th April 2022

Assessment category reported	Homecare & Workforce Rapid Survey (Nov 2021)	% Change (Nov 2021-Jan 2022)	Number on 31 Jan 2022	% Change (Jan-Feb 2022)	Number on 28 Feb 2022	% Change (Feb-Mar 2022)	Number on 31 March 22 Asked as part of Spring Survey 2022	% Change (Mar-Apr 2022)	Number on 30 Apr 2022
Awaiting assessment, care or direct payments, or reviews	395,845	16.5	461,269	9.8	506,131	-9.7	456,816	18.6	542,002
Awaiting assessment	204,241	6.5	217,557	12.9	245,537	-7.9	226,032	30.2	294,449
Awaiting assessment for over 6 months	41,192	48.6	61,226	5.8	64,772	-2.5	63,128	16.8	73,792
Awaiting care & support or direct payments to begin	25,468	7.6	27,406	58.7	43,503	-38.4	26,785	39.8	37,447
Overdue 12+ months Care Act reviews	166,136	30.2	216,326	0.4	217,090	-6	203,999	2.9	210,106
DASS Respondents	84		101		94		138		83