



# Transforming Lives: time for a New Social Contract for Care

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*Conference on Carers in Communities*  
**The local transformation agenda**

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# Introduction

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- Background – the evidence base
- Carers: ‘all of us’ - everyday lives, *everyone’s* responsibility
- Time for a New Social Contract for Care
- Challenges, risks and opportunities



# The evidence base on carers

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- Over 30 years of research in the UK: the *scale, contribution, centrality of carers* - and the pressures on them - have all been solidly established
- Demographic/labour force change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: bring *new / different circumstances and escalating challenges*
- Today, the overwhelming majority of carers are people of 'working age' – so *combining* work and care *across the life course* is crucial to the personal/family wellbeing of most
- Employers/managers can/must support working carers – but currently local services do little for this group and *local service inadequacies/inflexibilities add pressure and risks*

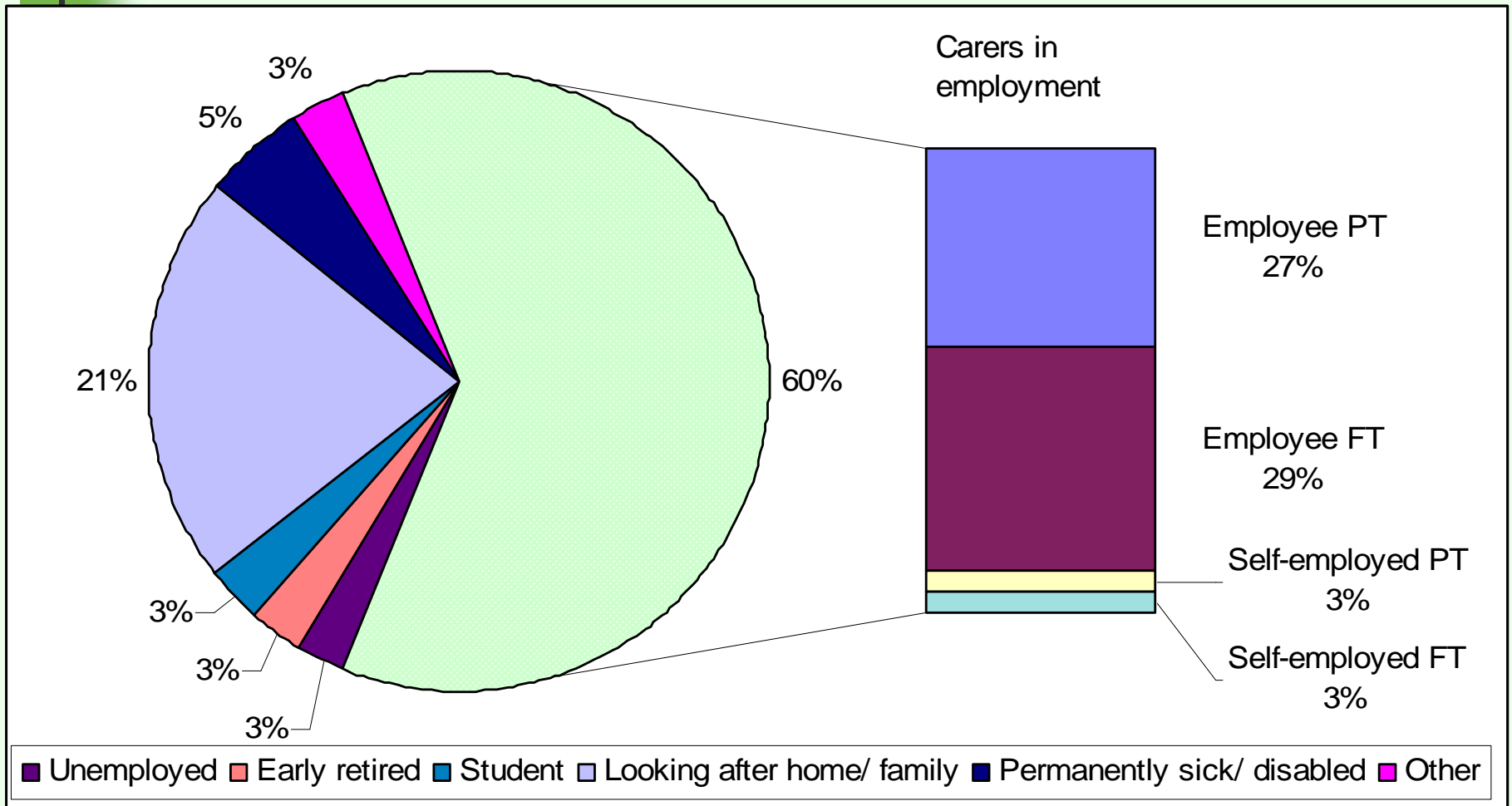


## Carers of working age, GB 2001

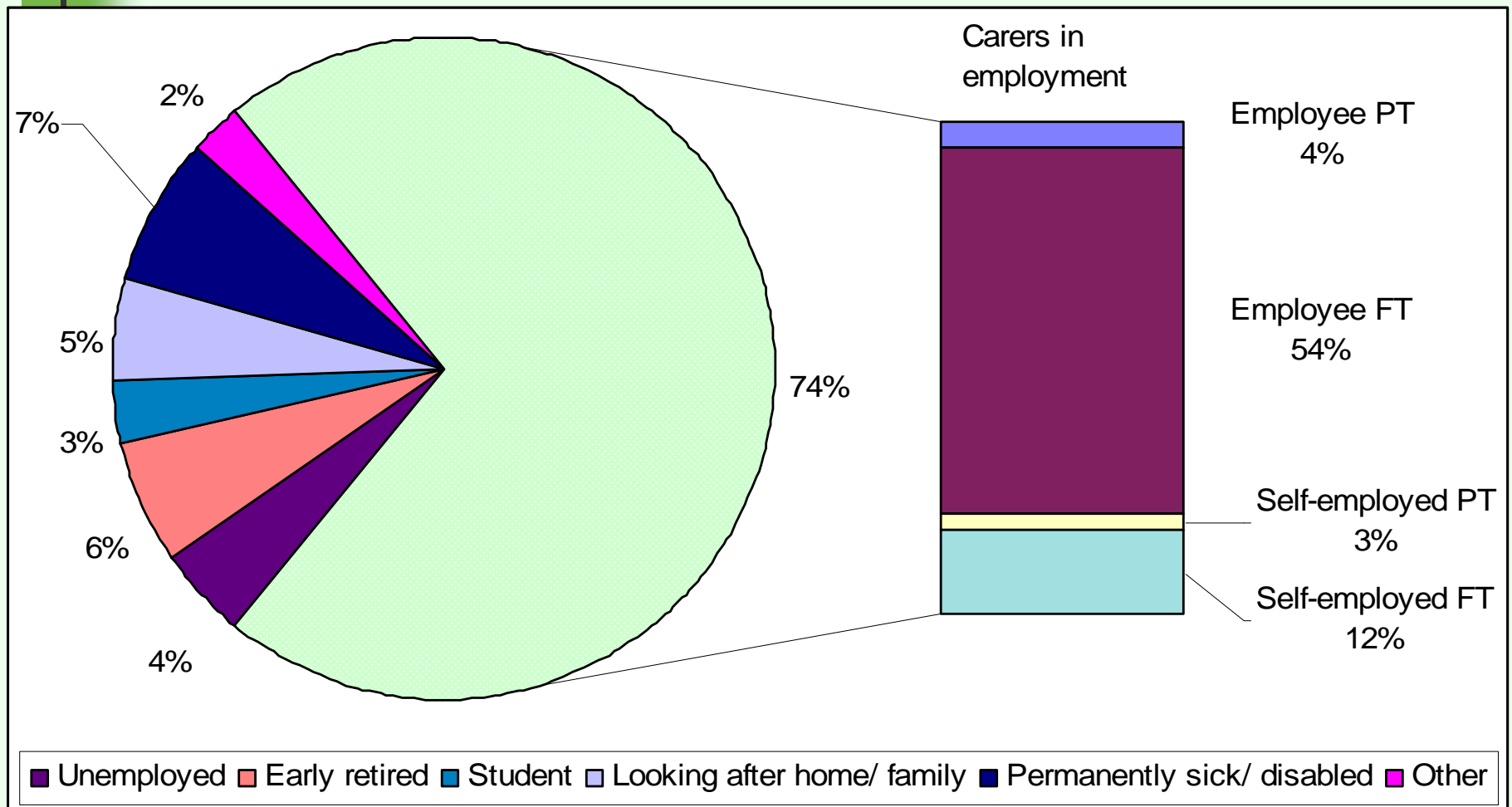
<b>Weekly hours of care</b>	<b>Women number</b>	<b>Men number</b>	<b>Women %</b>	<b>Men %</b>
<b>All who give care</b>	<b>2,419,957</b>	<b>1,845,754</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Caring 1-19 hrs</b>	<b>1,680,528</b>	<b>1,359,269</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Caring 20-49 hrs</b>	<b>285,523</b>	<b>192,896</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Caring 50+ hrs</b>	<b>453,906</b>	<b>293,589</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>39</b>

*Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright.*

# Female carers of working age by economic activity status, GB



# Male carers of working age by economic activity status, GB





# Care/carers: *interdependence, social cohesion, sustainability*

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- **Interdependence**

- Within families/relationships caring is about reciprocity, mutual commitments. Caring / being cared for (and cared about) define us as human beings

- **Social cohesion**

- Care integral part of the social fabric; woven into all our lives; the supporting threads which bind our society/communities and strengthen them

- **Sustainability**

- Unpaid care pivotal to the health and social care system; but pressures on carers will be too great unless we transform local support/services



# Ageing / 21<sup>st</sup> century developments

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- **Care/caring critical issues for our ageing population**
  - *A radically different age structure*
  - *More very aged people needing care*
  - *Longer working lives, more combining work and care*
  - *More care at home, improved survival, disability rights*
- **Local infrastructure across *all* public services must support:**
  - people's personal caring relationships
  - the local/national economy, including employers
  - the social/health/welfare system



# **Time for a new Social Contract for Care**

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- Transformation in historical context
- Background issues
- Contemporary public policy agendas
- Key stakeholders in the carers policy agenda

# System transformation in context

<b>Post-war welfare state</b>	<b>Modernisation of social services</b>	<b>21<sup>st</sup> century transformation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Old-style limited menu of services</i></li> <li>• <i>'Patients' and welfare 'clients'</i></li> <li>• <i>Carers invisible</i></li> <li>• <i>Built on gender divisions: breadwinner/home-maker</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Community care</i></li> <li>• <i>Mixed economy/ user-consumer focus</i></li> <li>• <i>Disabled people's rights</i></li> <li>• <i>Welfare to work</i></li> <li>• <i>Carer 'aware', limited support</i></li> <li>• <i>Erosion of gender divisions</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Caring normal and desirable for all</i></li> <li>• <i>Shared responsibility for carer support</i></li> <li>• <i>All agencies involve and consult carers</i></li> <li>• <i>Carers empowered, integrated, valued</i></li> <li>• <i>Equality goals unite carers /disabled people</i></li> </ul>



# **Social Contract: background**

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- **Giving/receiving care part of human condition**
- **Modern healthcare, assistive technologies, communications**
- **Longer lives, better survival**
- **State cannot cover all care or costs; people don't want to surrender all responsibility**
- **Wellbeing/quality of life depend on full social and economic participation of all**
- **Global competition/demographics mean employers will need all available labour**
- **Britain promotes equality but roles/responsibilities of individuals, families, communities, employers, state unclear**
- **Need new social contract, acknowledging interdependencies and clarifying rights, entitlements, responsibilities**



# Contemporary public policy agendas

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- Welfare Reform/Making Work Pay -New Deals, Opp. Age
- Health Service Modernisation -OHOCOS, Next Stage, Darzi
- Population Ageing and Pensions -new legislation
- Funding of Long-Term Care – Care Support Independence
- Skills, Education and Economic Competitiveness -Leitch
- Regeneration and Urban Renewal -Strong and Prosperous Communities, Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Communities
- Social Inclusion & Equalities -EHRC, Single Equalities Act
- Labour Supply/Migration – within UK and Europe
- Family Policy - work/life balance, fairness, responsibility
- Active Citizenship & Local Democracy - Community Empowerment



# The care agenda: urgent, important

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- Today, carers' reward for their contribution is **financial, social and health disadvantage**
- Yet this makes no economic sense...
  - *For business*
  - *For the social care system*
  - *For the economy*
- The carers' and the disability movements have united in supporting a ***personalisation agenda***:
  - *tailored services*
  - *delivered flexibly – using design and technology*
- to support **independence, choice, wellbeing**



# Challenges, risks and opportunities

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- **Challenges**

- **Challenges in supporting carers - health, financial strain and social exclusion**
- **Local challenges in delivering support**
- **Economic and social challenges**

- **Risks**

- **Opportunities**



# Key challenges in supporting carers of working age

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- For **employees**
  - how to combine work and care without becoming ill, poor or isolated
- For **managers and employers**
  - how to retain and support employees who become carers without an adverse impact on the business/organisation
- For **the state**
  - how to resource the social care system *and* sustain employment



# Challenges: carers' health

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**Caring and poor health; worsens with care intensity/duration; giving up work a particular risk**

- **Helping carers maintain employment / access paid work an important contribution to their health /wellbeing**
- **Health / social care system must not add to carers' stress by poor communications, inadequate information, inflexibility, slow response**
- **Carers need flexible breaks from caring – regularly, to sustain everyday life/citizenship; periodically for a rest**
- **Carers need access to training/support; should not have to take risks not asked of an employed care worker**
- **Carers need ready access to occasional and emergency services at times of crisis, and support in making appropriate plans**



# **Challenges: carer's economic/financial security**

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**Carers pay an unfair financial penalty for caring:**

- **Protecting their right to work/sustaining them in combining work and care is the best protection against financial hardship**
- **The employment, skills and training system must actively support carers in combining work and care**
- **Further pensions reform must ensure carers who take a break from work to care, or change their jobs, are not penalised in retirement for caring. The tax, benefits & pensions system needs to work better for them**
- **Employers /TUs should address job design - more PT/reduced hours working at senior levels; appropriate packages of workplace support**
- **An advisory service for SMEs re support/advice for carers; flexible working solutions appropriate for their business**



# **Challenges: carers' social inclusion**

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**Carers' social isolation limits their active citizenship; means their opinions often not taken into account**

- **'Carer-proof' all strategic developments in local infrastructure, at planning and implementation stages, with carers fully involved**
- **Tailor welfare to work policy to carers' needs, in advice/support provided, so carers can engage in training, learning and work**
- **Actively promote combining work and care to employers / TUs as the most sustainable way forward for most carers, the economy and the social care system**
- **Public sector duty to promote equality for carers; key role for Equalities and Human Rights Commission**
- **Extend right to request flexible working to all, bringing all carers within scope, simplifying its operation for employers**



# Some guiding principles

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- **Caring should not**
  - end a carer's career
  - damage their education
  - put their ability to acquire skills at risk
  - force them to give up work
- **Among working carers**
  - Many feel supported by their family/friends
  - Some have 'carer-friendly' employers
  - **But few consider they have adequate formal services to enable them to manage work and care**



## The local dimension

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- Not just more investment in social care
- *Transformations* in the way services are accessed and delivered
- Focused on whole population of carers, not just those ‘in touch with services’
- Success will mean ***joining up local infrastructure***, with agencies working together to support people’s everyday lives:
  - their normal, desirable, caring relationships



# Key Stakeholders

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- Local Authorities
- Independent sector care providers
- NHS providers
- Employers
- Trade Unions
- Families, friends and neighbours – including carers and those who need care or support
- Employment, Careers and Job Search agencies
- Skills and Training agencies and IAGs
- Voluntary and Community organisations



# A new Social Contract for Care focused on sustainability & fairness

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- National **legal & fiscal frameworks**, ensuring:
  - Equal treatment
  - Financial security
- Core **ethics, values and beliefs**, guaranteeing:
  - Dignity and respect for carers/ those cared for
  - Recognition and inclusion of carers/service users
- **Local infrastructures of support** for carers:
- *Sustaining* the care of **families and friends**
- *Engaging* **health and social care providers**
- *Comprising* **workplace/employer** carer support
- *Involving* **other services** – housing, transport, leisure, inclusion



# Opportunities

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- ***National Strategy for Carers*** - 10 year vision
  - **Health and social care**
  - **Income**
  - **Employment**
  - **Equalities**
- ***Work and Pensions Parliamentary Select Committee Inquiry into Carers***
- ***Health: Next Stage Reform, Darzi Review***
- ***EHRC – united approach to equalities and human rights:***
  - ***Linking the carers' and disability movements***
  - ***Focusing on gender equality in care and work***
  - ***Protecting rights to respect for private and family life***



## **Risks – if transformation not achieved**

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- **Carers' ability/willingness to provide support compromised**
- **Mid career carers drop out of paid work, with negative impact on pensions/incomes**
- **Dignity and citizenship of sick/disabled people threatened**
- **Employers lose valued staff in whom they have made significant investments**
- **Social divisions intensify – polarisation between those who can/cannot afford to pay for care**
- **Intergenerational conflict**
- **Healthy ageing compromised**



# **CES study: recommendations (1)**

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## **Carers' health**

- More responsive services in health and social care
- Investment in Carers Breaks
- Improved GP / community health support for carers
- Information, training and brokerage services for carers



## **CES study: recommendations (2)**

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### **Carers' economic and financial security**

- A new advice, guidance and advocacy service on caring and employment.
- A wider range of jobs available to those working part-time or flexibly.
- Review of the integration of the tax, benefits and pensions system.
- Investment in improving access to education, skills and training for carers.
- A new specialist SME advisory service.
- New support/services for those whose caring changes/ends.



## **CES study: recommendations (3)**

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### **Carers' social inclusion and equal rights**

- Carers identified in all equalities legislation.
- A strong statistical evidence base about carers.
- Services which support carers' participation as active citizens.
- Extension of the right to request flexible working to all employees.
- 'Carer-proofing' of local strategic developments and planning processes.
- Welfare to work policy tailored to meet carers' needs.
- Campaign on carers and employment targeting employers and trade unions



# Concluding thoughts (1)

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- Strengths on which the transformation agenda can build:
  - Strong families and caring relationships
  - Humane employers
  - Trained/committed professionals
  - Strong voluntary sector
  - Good housing design
  - Empowering communications
  - Cohesive communities



## Concluding thoughts (2)

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Our economic and welfare systems must evolve:

- *Most women are now active in the labour market*
- *The economy depends on high employment rates among women and men*
- *The alternative is labour/skill shortages and an inability to fund the pensions system*

**There can be no more critical  
challenge than how we  
support care and caring in society**



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