Life expectancy, ageing, disability and demand for disability services

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Outline

- Life expectancy and expected years of life lived with disability
- Current level of unmet demand for disability services
- Future growth in demand for disability services
Life expectancy at birth, 1901-1910 and 2002-2004, Australia

- 1901-1910 Males: 55.2
- 2002-2004 Males: 78.1
- 1901-1910 Females: 58.8
- 2002-2004 Females: 83.0
Debate about the likely impact of living longer on morbidity and disability

‘Compression of morbidity/disability’—ill health/disability will be compressed into a shorter period at the end of life span

‘Expansion of morbidity/disability’—increased longevity is accompanied by a longer period of ill health/disability in the later years of life

‘Dynamic equilibrium’—overall prevalence of ill health/disability may increase but the average of severity of illness is decreased
Expected years of life lived with disability at birth 1988 to 2003

Year | Males | Females
--- | --- | ---
1988 | 14.7 | 16.0
1993 | 16.6 | 16.7
1998 | 17.9 | 19.4
2003 | 18.6 | 20.7
Expected years of life lived with a profound or severe disability at birth 1988 to 2003
Differences between males and females

- Life expectancy was higher for females but males gained more.
- Females had higher expected years both with and without disability, but the gaps were much smaller at older ages.
- Females had a lower proportion of expected years of life free from disability and severe disability.
Recent increase in life expectancy and disability, females, 1998 to 2003
Recent increase in life expectancy and disability, males, 1998 to 2003
Living longer and disability: Australian evidence

- No ‘compression of disability’
- No absolute ‘expansion of disability’
- Some indication of expansion (in relative terms) in relation to less severe disabilities
- Population ageing and the greater longevity of individuals are leading to more people with a disability and greater demand for services
Estimates of unmet demand for disability services: methods and data

- Baseline estimates—2003 ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers
- Updated to 2005 to account for population growth
- Adjusted by increased supply of CSTDA-funded services
- Compared with jurisdictional service waiting list information
- Qualitative information—Peak discussions and literature search
Unmet demand for specialist disability services 2005

Conservative estimates:

- 23,800 people aged under 65 years with unmet or under-met demand for accommodation and respite services
- 3,700 people aged 18-64 years with unmet demand for community access—does not include partially-met demand
Unmet demand for specialist disability services 2005 (ctd)

- Low estimate unmet demand for disability employment services in 2005 was largely due to:
  - A decrease of 21,200 people of working age with a severe disability who were in the labour force
  - Recent changes in disability employment policy and program were not reflected in the available data for the estimate
Projected growth in profound or severe disability: 2006–2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aged 0-64</td>
<td>717.5</td>
<td>752.1</td>
<td>1,341.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aged 65+</td>
<td>623.6</td>
<td>705.2</td>
<td>1,457.3</td>
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Changes (%) in the projected increase in profound or severe disability: 2006–2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age groups</th>
<th>Per cent of increase</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-64</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-64</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All ages</td>
<td>8.7</td>
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</tbody>
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Factors contributing to an increase in demand for services

- Increases in the prevalence of some disabling conditions
- Ageing of the disability service users and ageing of their carers
- Trends towards community-based care arrangements
- Decreases in access to some mainstream housing options of particular relevance to people with disability
- A projected fall in the number of unpaid carers relative to the number of people with a disability
Issues relating to interfaces between disability and other service sectors

- People with a disability rely on a range of government-funded services to meet their various needs.
- Need complementary combinations of support from disability, aged care, and other sectors.
- Particularly relevant to people ageing with an early onset disability and younger people with a disability in residential aged care accommodation.
Conclusion

- Gains in life expectancy were accompanied by increases in expected years of life both with and without disability.
- Population growth, ageing, and the greater longevity of individuals are to account for a substantial proportion of the future increase in demand for services.
- There will be increasing demand for flexible services crossing traditional service/sector divides to accommodate changing individual needs.
Acknowledgements

This presentation is largely based on two AIHW reports:
