



Carers Supporting a Loved One with Dementia in Sandwell Report August 2025

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A Personal Insight: Caring for a Loved One with Dementia

Caring for someone you love who has dementia is like watching a slow sunset—beautiful, painful, and inevitable. At first, it's the small things: forgotten names, misplaced keys, repeated stories. You brush them off, make light of them, reassure yourself it's just age. But then the fog thickens.

As a carer, you become their memory, their compass, their anchor. You learn to read the subtle signs—a flicker of confusion in their eyes, the hesitation before a familiar task. You adapt, constantly. Routines become sacred. Patience becomes your superpower.

There are moments of heartbreak. When they forget who you are. When they ask for someone who's long gone. When they look at you with fear instead of love. You grieve, not just once, but over and over—for the person they were, for the relationship you had, for the future you imagined.

But there are also moments of grace. A shared laugh over something silly. A hug that feels like recognition. A quiet afternoon where everything feels almost normal. These moments become treasures.

You learn to celebrate the small victories: a good day, a remembered name, a peaceful night. You become fiercely protective, not just of them, but of your own heart. You learn to ask for help, to take breaks, to forgive yourself.

Caring for a loved one with dementia is not just a role—it's a journey of love, loss, resilience, and deep humanity. It changes you. It teaches you what it means to truly be present, to love without condition, and to find strength in vulnerability.

Introduction

Healthwatch Sandwell is your independent champion for health and social care. We listen to the experiences of local people, making sure that their voices are heard by those who plan, deliver and make decisions about services. Our role is to understand what matters most to our community and to make recommendations that help improve care and support for everyone. This short report focuses on carers in Sandwell. By listening to their stories, we gain valuable insight into the challenges they face, the support they value, and the improvements that could make a difference.

What we did

We asked carers a series of open-ended and multiple-choice questions about their caregiving experience. Responses were collected anonymously and analysed to identify common themes and quantify key issues.

Who took part

This report is based on the caregiving experiences of carers living in Sandwell. Participants included a range of people individuals who provide care to loved ones.

Our findings

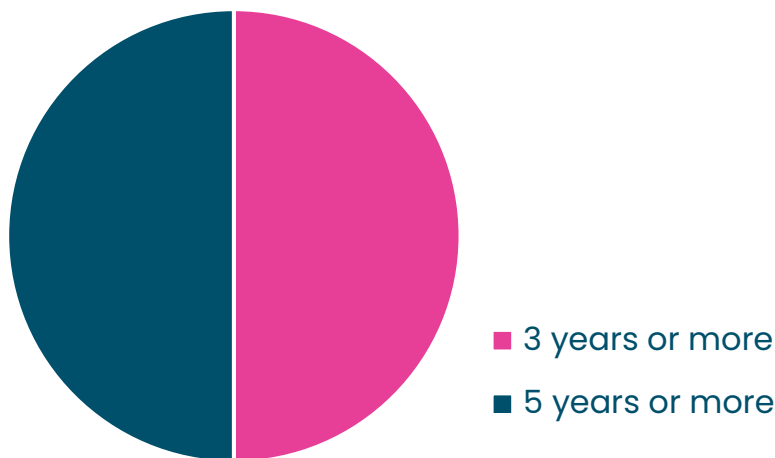
The data was then visualized using pie charts to illustrate the distribution of responses across various topics, including:

- Duration of caregiving
- Challenges faced
- Support systems
- Access to training and respite
- Wellbeing strategies
- Recognition and understanding

All the questions are non mandatory, which means some participants chose to not answer.

Duration of caregiving

How long have you been caring for someone with dementia?



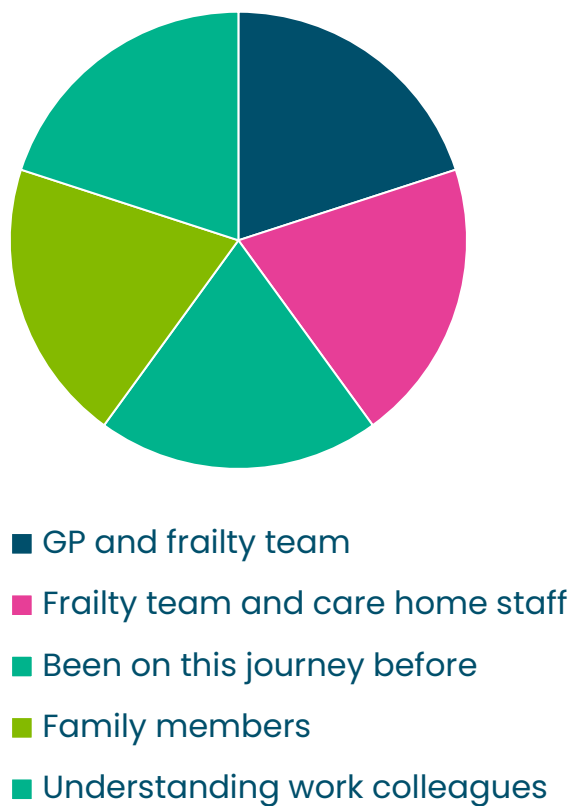
Challenges faced

What challenges have you faced as a carer?

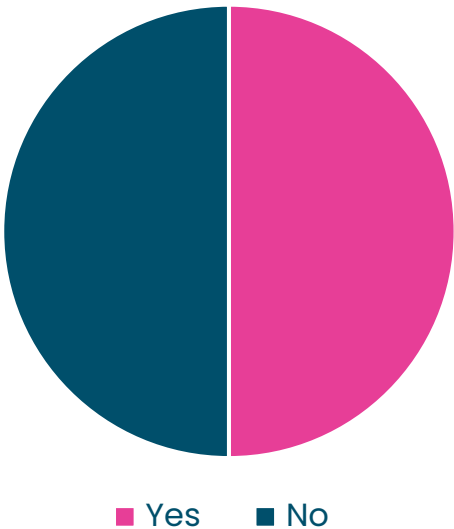


Sources of Support

What support have you used?

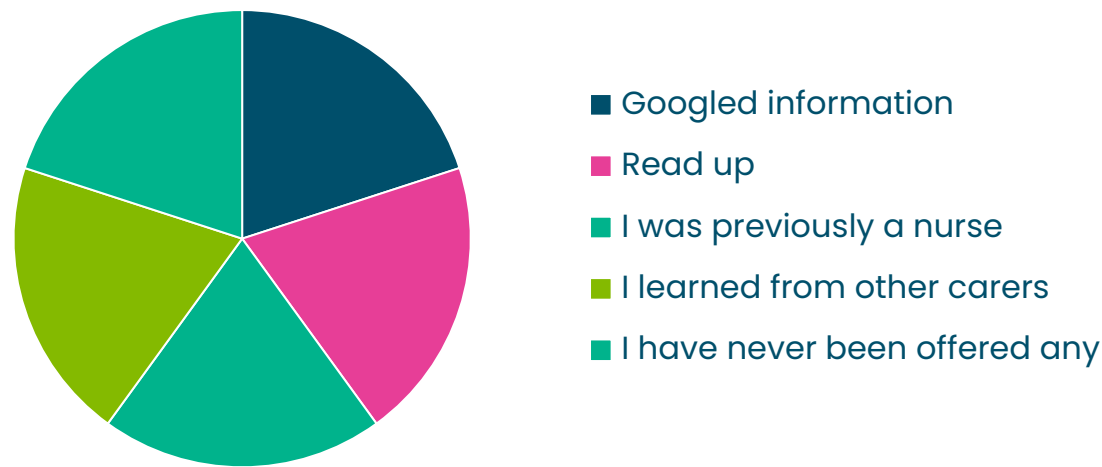


Do you feel you have enough support as a carer?



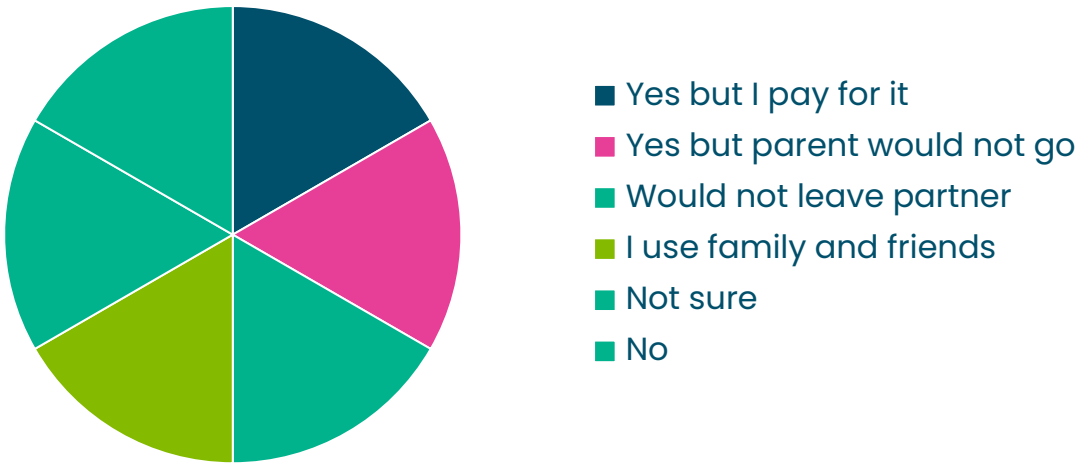
Training or Education

Have you attended any dementia related training/education?



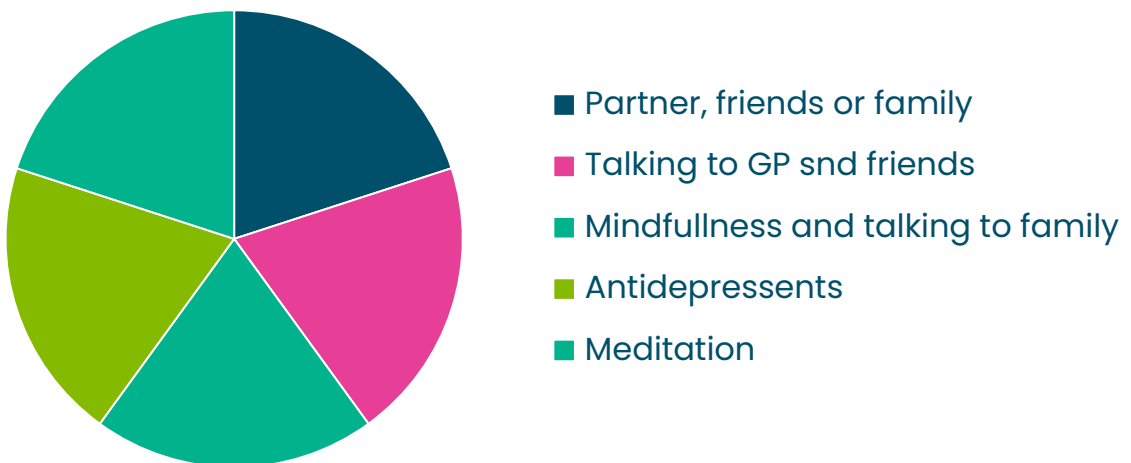
Respite Care Knowledge

Do you know where to go if you need a break or rest bite?



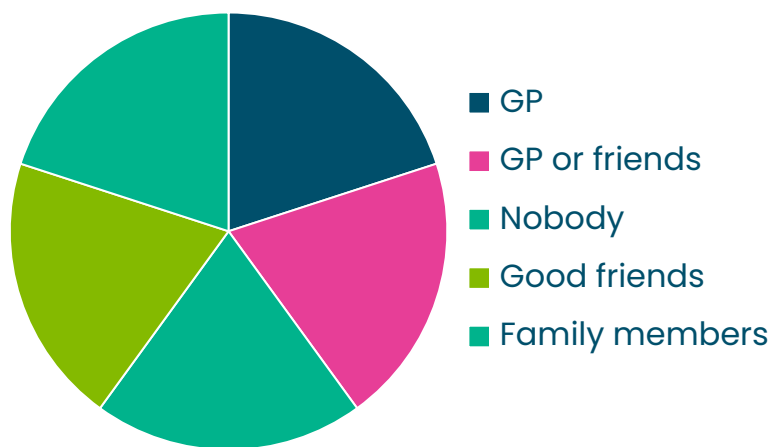
Wellbeing strategies

How do you take care of your own well-being?



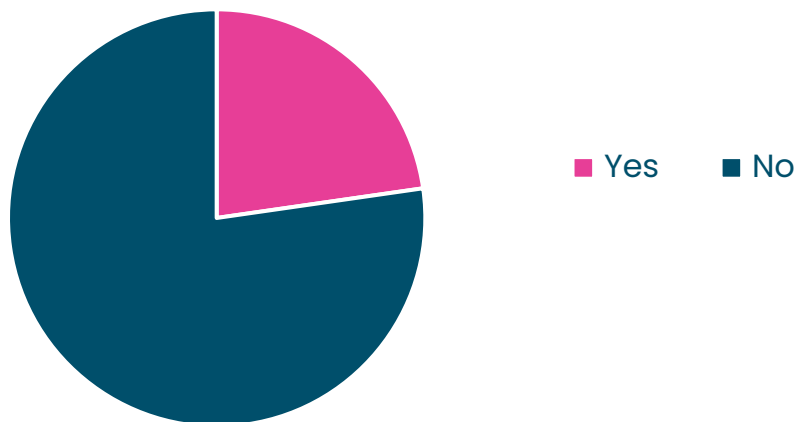
Support Network

Who do you talk to when things get difficult?



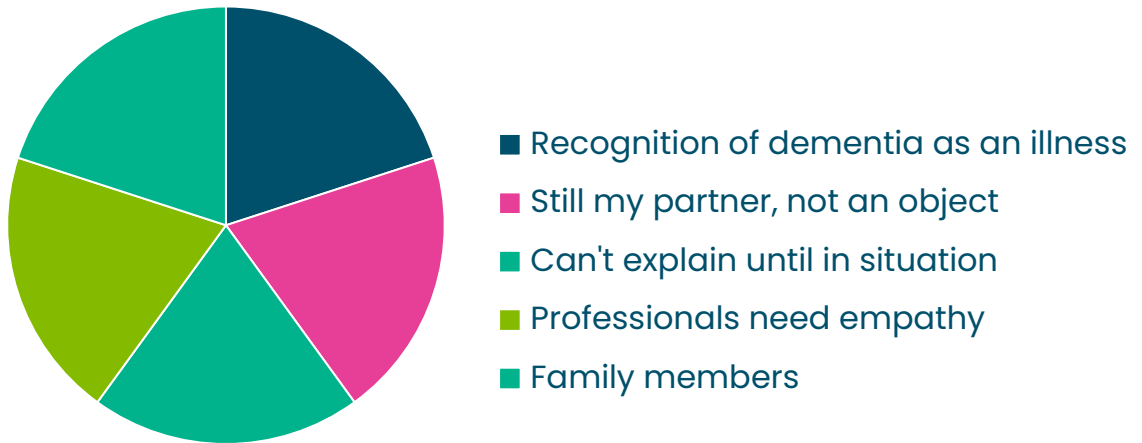
Recognition as a Carer

Do you feel recognised & valued in your role as a carer?



Understanding From Others

What do you wish others would understand about your experience as a carer?



Conclusion

The survey reveals that many carers in Sandwell feel unsupported and unrecognized, despite their long-term commitment and vital role in dementia care. Key challenges include navigating healthcare systems, lack of professional empathy, and limited access to respite or formal training. However, carers also draw strength from personal networks, self-education, and emotional resilience.

These findings underscore the need for:

- Improved communication and coordination among professionals
 - Greater access to respite and training opportunities
 - Enhanced recognition and emotional support for carers
- Community-wide efforts to foster empathy and understanding

By listening to carers and acting on their feedback, Sandwell can continue to build a more compassionate and supportive environment for those caring for people with dementia.

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Get in touch

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Share your feedback on Health and Social Care services in Sandwell by using the "Have Your Say" section on our website.

<https://www.healthwatchsandwell.co.uk/share-your-views>

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