Valuing informal care

- Informal care refers to unpaid assistance provided by non-professional caregivers to a family member or friend.
  - Informal care is rarely included in economic evaluations
  - While informal care is by definition, unpaid, it has an implicit economic value that includes the opportunity cost of time spent caregiving
  - Traditionally valued use replacement wages or opportunity cost approaches
  - But informal care includes other positive (e.g. satisfaction) and negative effects (e.g. stress)
Aim of this project

- Undertake a preference-based monetary valuation of informal care provided to children with intellectual disability (ID)
- Intellectual disability (ID)
  - ID is characterised by an impairment of intellectual functions and adaptive functioning
  - Children with ID often have significant educational, social and health care needs
  - Caring for a child with ID places significant demands on caregivers.
  - ID in Australia - Families spend 52-85 hours per week on care for their child with ID
- Overall project aim to see if these values can be directly applied in economic evaluations

Stepping Stones Triple P – Analysis approach

Stage 1: DCE Design
- Literature and questionnaire-based choice of attributes & levels
- Design: full factorial = 1280 (4^4) profiles. 128 choice sets; each participant received 16

Stage 2: DCE Implementation (n=198)
- Parent of children with ID within the Stepping Stones Triple P Program
- 198 responses (response rate 52%), 6088 completed choice sets

Analysis & Reporting
- Conditional logit – mixed logit – GMNL-latent class
Development of attributes and levels

- Attributes were identified by literature review, a pilot study and clinical consultation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal care</td>
<td>Dressing, toileting, meals, taking your child to school, attending appointments and administering medications</td>
<td>0, 3, 6, 9 hours per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social support</td>
<td>Playing with your child, supervision, companionship, teaching and emotional support</td>
<td>0, 3, 6, 9 hours per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Errands</td>
<td>Grocery shopping, keeping records, paying bills</td>
<td>0, 3, 6, 9 hours per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housework</td>
<td>Preparing meals, washing clothes, cleaning and ironing</td>
<td>0, 3, 6, 9 hours per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash compensation</td>
<td>Dollars received per week (Presented to the respondent as a $ per week value) Total informal care package ranged from zero (0 hrs<em>4 attributes) to 36 (9</em>4) hours.</td>
<td>$0 per hour $6 per hour $16 per hour (minimum wage) $26 per hour (aver carers wage) $36 per hour (average wage in Australia)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DCE Design

- Example choice set
  - 12 hrs of care (3hr x 4)
  - Care = $16 per hour
  - Plus a constant ~$50
- Respondent choice
  - Care package, or
  - $240 per week

Imagine that the following assistance in care for your child has been offered to you at no extra cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Assistance per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Care for you child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal care (including transport for you child) e.g. dressing, toileting, meals, taking your child to school or other activities, attending appointments and administering medications</td>
<td>3 hours per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Support e.g. playing with your child, supervision, companionship, teaching and emotional support</td>
<td>3 hours per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Errands e.g. grocery shopping, keeping records, paying bills</td>
<td>3 hours per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housework e.g. preparing meals, washing clothes, cleaning and ironing</td>
<td>3 hours per week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you were given a choice between receiving the assistance package described above or providing the care yourself and receiving $240 per week, which would you choose?

- Receive the assistance package described above at no extra cost
- Provide the care yourself and receive $240 per week
### DCE model estimates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficient (SE)</th>
<th>GMNL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASC for Option 2 (cash compensation)</td>
<td>2.20*** (0.56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash compensation</td>
<td>0.02*** (0.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of personal care</td>
<td>0.24*** (0.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of social support</td>
<td>0.37*** (0.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of household errands</td>
<td>-0.01 (0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of housework</td>
<td>0.51*** (0.12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 4% always chose to receive the assistance package.
- 23% always chose to receive the cash compensation.
- 73% traded between the two options.

### Key findings

- Marginal willingness to accept compensation to provide one hour of care, by care type
  - Results
    - Any care = $21
    - Highest value = Social support ($36)
    - Lowest value = Errands ($0)
Policy Implications

- DCE valuations
  - Values were lower than would be expected using traditional approaches
  - Informal care tasks are not valued equally
  - May reflect the satisfaction / pleasure derived by an individual from providing care for a family member
- These values that can be directly applied in economic evaluations to estimate the value of informal care (in children with ID)
- Final thoughts
  - By better understanding the needs and preferences of caregivers, policy makers are better able to provide appropriate resources that can reduce the emotional, practical and time burden faced by this group.

Thank You

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