

Health and social care cost of dementia from 2024 to 2040 using newly available UK patient level data

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INTRODUCTION

Dementia is currently the leading cause of death in England,¹ and due to the aging population, the prevalence of dementia is increasing. There is a need to understand both the total projected costs as well as the important drivers of cost, so that researchers and policy-makers can understand where there are opportunities for improvement.

This study used linked patient-level data to develop a detailed understanding of healthcare resource use for people with dementia by disease severity. By combining the per person healthcare costs with projected prevalence and other costs developed from multiple sources, an estimate of the overall annual costs of dementia between now and 2040 were developed.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study were to estimate the projected prevalence and health and care resource use by people with dementia in the UK. The projections were segmented by disease severity to understand how resource use changes as the disease progresses.

METHOD

- A cohort was developed of 26,097 people in North West London using the DiscoverNOW² secure data environment, 2,757 of whom could be classified by disease severity using scores from the Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE), a screening tool for cognitive impairment.
- Dementia prevalence projections were based on ONS population projections³, with prevalence rates from the MODEM project⁴ and PACSIM model⁵, with estimates of the severity distribution from the North West London cohort.
- Unit costs for healthcare services were developed from analysing the activity of the North West London cohort, and scaled to other regions of the UK. Unit costs for other cost categories were developed from literature, in particular.⁶ The per person costs were combined with prevalence projections to give an overall cost of dementia in the UK.

RESULTS

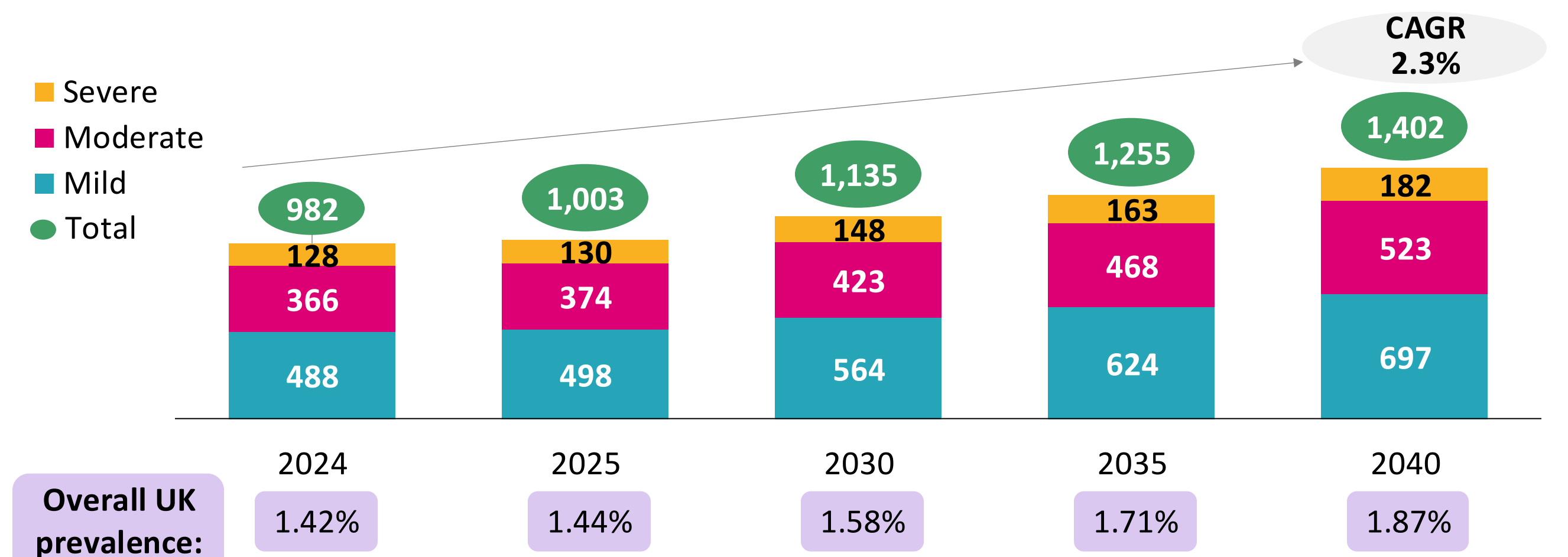
- The number of people with dementia will grow by 40% over the next 15 years, from 982,000 people in 2024 to 1.4 million people in 2040
- The total associated costs including health and social care are projected to be £42 billion in 2024 and more than double to £90 billion by 2040.
- The annual cost per person increases substantially with increasing disease severity, from £28,700 per person for mild dementia to £80,500 for severe dementia
- Healthcare spending makes up 14% of the total cost, with only 1.4% of this spent on diagnosis and treatment.

CONCLUSION

The costs associated with dementia are significant, equivalent to 3.4% of all government spend in 2024 on 1.4% of the population. These costs are borne by society but also by people with dementia and their families. This analysis assumed the use of treatments and the patterns of use of health and social care remain the same over the next 25 years, but it is our hope that new treatments that delay the progression or onset of dementia will have a significant impact in the coming years to change the projections.

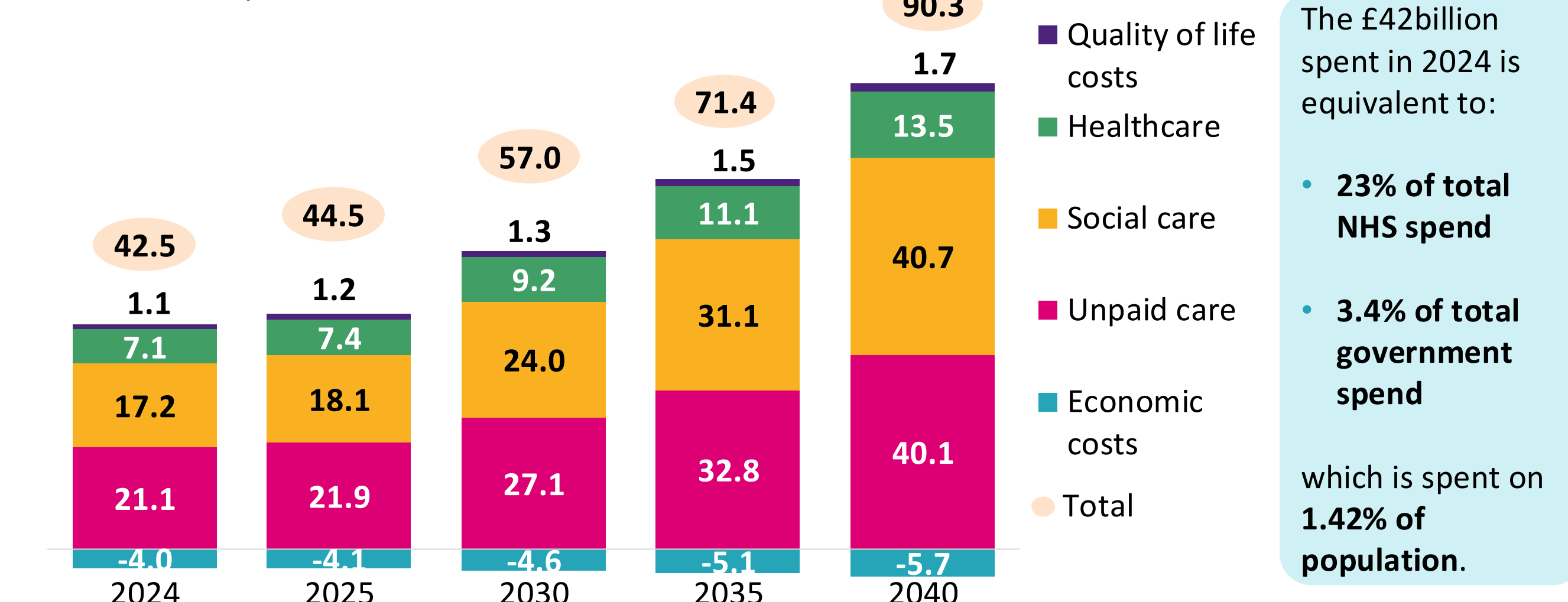
Total UK dementia prevalence by dementia severity

2024 – 2040, Number of people aged 65 and over with dementia in the UK, '000s



Estimated costs of dementia in the UK by cost category

2024 – 2040, £billions



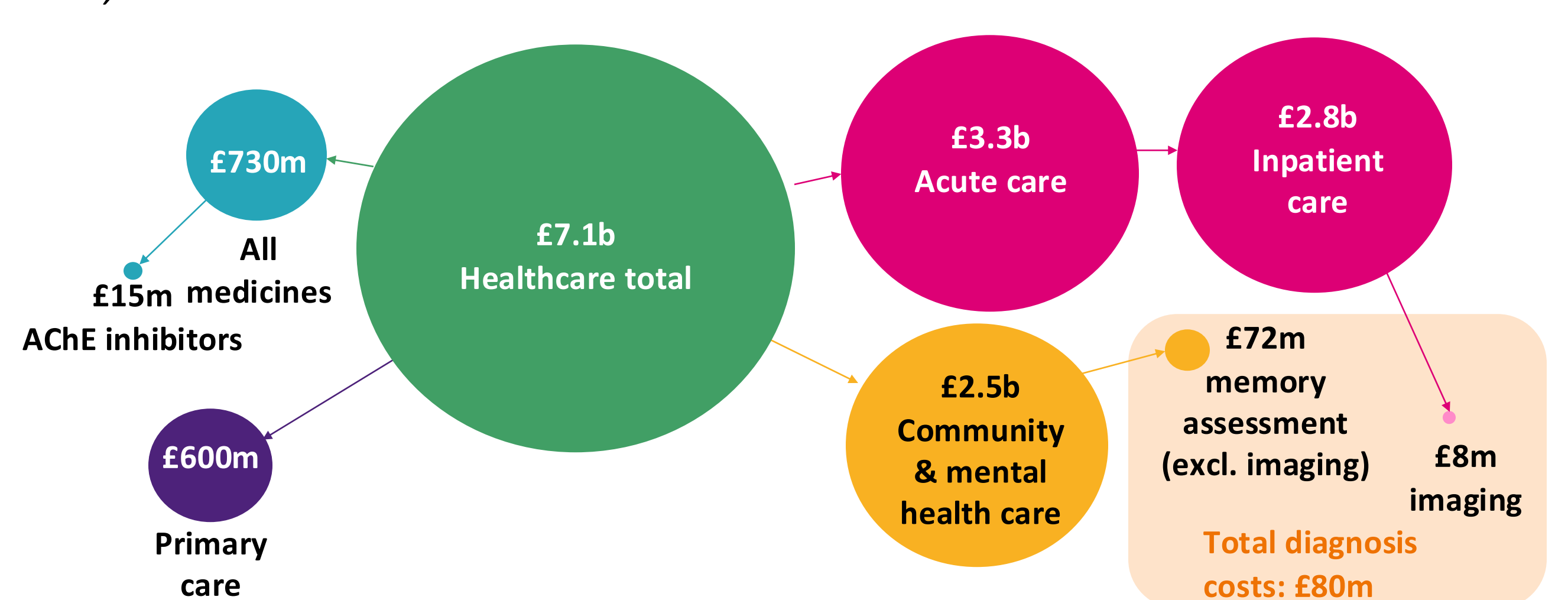
Per person costs of dementia by severity

2024 – 2040, Average UK person costs, £000s

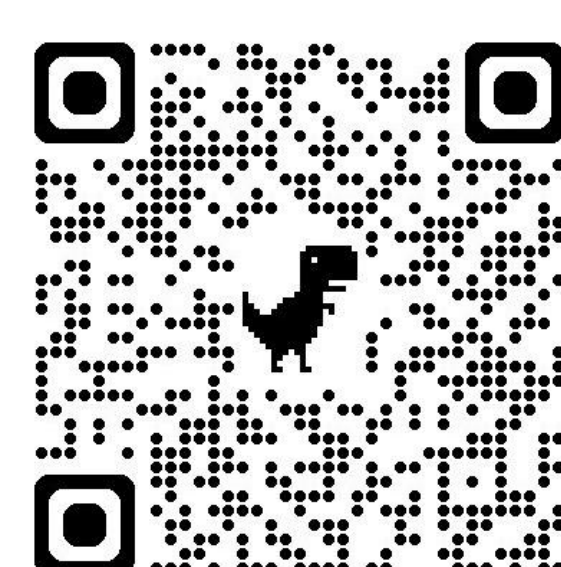


Total costs by service type

2024, £



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