Caregiving and Social Participation: Issues Arising

Janet Fast
University of Alberta
Research: State of Knowledge

Upsurge in research activity

- Population aging → more salient issue
- Growing appetite for evidence among policymakers
- More and better data
- More effective caregiver lobby
Research: State of Knowledge

- Have robust evidence on the caregiver population
  - Size, composition
  - Select sub-groups
  - Forecast supply and demand
  - What they do (tasks; time)
  - Negative (and positive) consequences for caregivers
    - Economic (employment, out-of-pocket, labour)
    - (health and social)
  - Risk factors for negative consequences
More modest evidence about:
- Care networks
- Family/formal care interface
  - Complements not substitutes
- Health and social consequences for caregivers
- Consequences for employers, labour force, formal health care sector
- Care histories and care trajectories (across the life course)
Research: Knowledge Gaps

- Evidence needs
  - High risk sub-groups
  - Monetary implications of employment & out-of-pocket costs
    - Accumulation of costs, and risks, over time
  - Transitions into caregiving
  - Care trajectories (patterns over time)
  - Implications of public and private supports for caregiver outcomes
Research: Future Issues

Implications of

- aging baby boomers
- growing diversity (age, family, ethnicity)
- policy reform: pension, health immigration
- emerging technologies
- continued globalization (eg. transnational caregiving; labour mobility)
More and Better Data

- Time series of 4 GSS on social support/caregiving
  - Improved coverage of salient issues
  - Caregiver identifiers added to other surveys (LFS, health, health service use, digital literacy …)

BUT, gaps remain

- Out-of-pocket costs
- Health consequences
- Care networks
- Longitudinal/retrospective data to answer life course questions
Future Data

- Administrative data
  - Potential to link to survey data

- Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA)
  - Longitudinal panel; 55,000 respondents age 45-85; minimum 20 years; biological, medical, psychological, social, lifestyle and economic data
  - Caregiver identifiers in each wave
Delivering sustainable and inclusive support for caregivers

**Financial Support**
Preventing financial hardship for caregivers

**Work-Care Reconciliation**
Workplace and life course flexibility

**Services for Users and Carers**
Reliable, flexible, affordable, accessible. tech enabled

**Caregiver Recognition and Rights**
The economic, social moral case ➔ value, respect, inclusion