



Birth Cohort Studies: Social Work Social Care and In Care

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Economic
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Outline for today's session

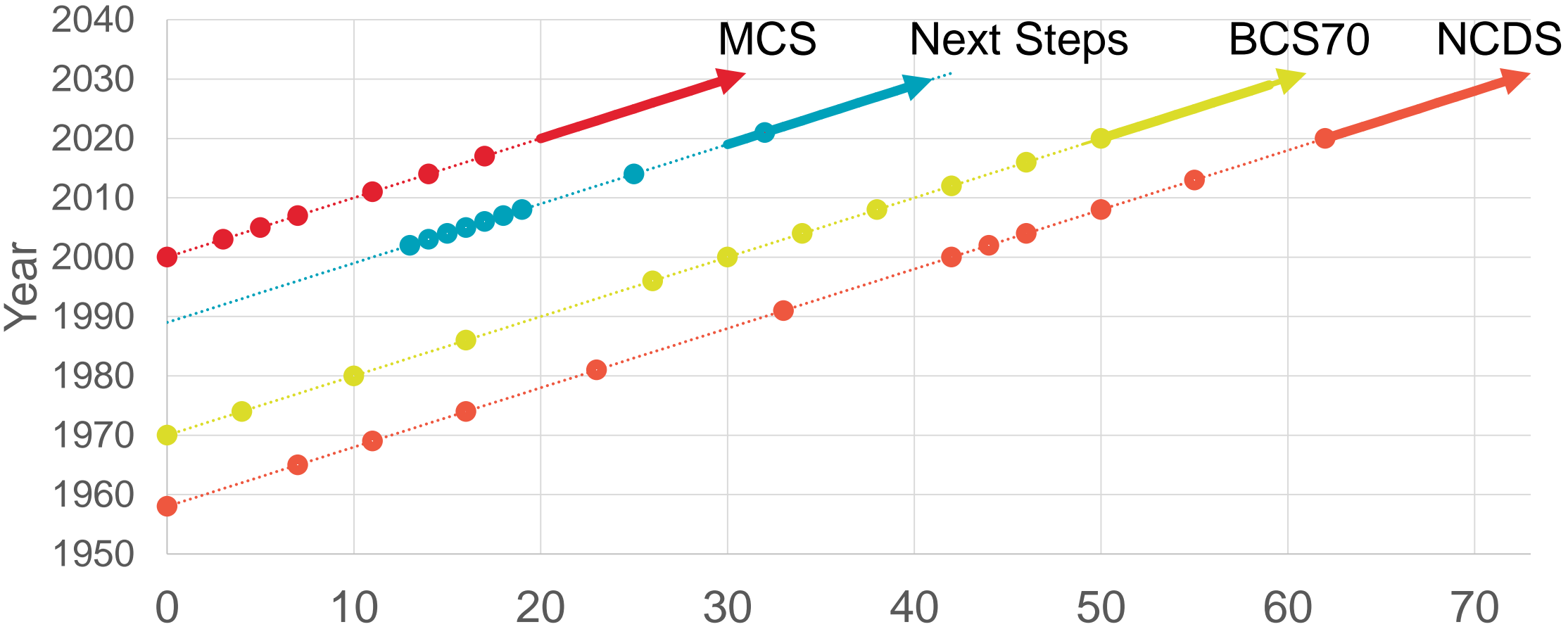
- Overview of datasets
- Overview of relevant variables
- Accessing the data
- Case study #1 Sam Parsons
- Case study #2 Morag Henderson
- Pros and Cons of secondary data analysis; and quantitative approaches
- Questions

Overview of datasets

What we do at CLS (ESRC funded)

- Run major national longitudinal studies
 - Follow thousands of people across life
 - Collect extensive & rich data
- Provide free data to research community (see [link](#), UK Data Archive)
 - Documentation, guidance & training
 - Researchers can input on the data we collect (consultations)
- Conduct research
 - Multidisciplinary, substantive & methodological (survey and statistical)

Study timelines and future 2020-2030

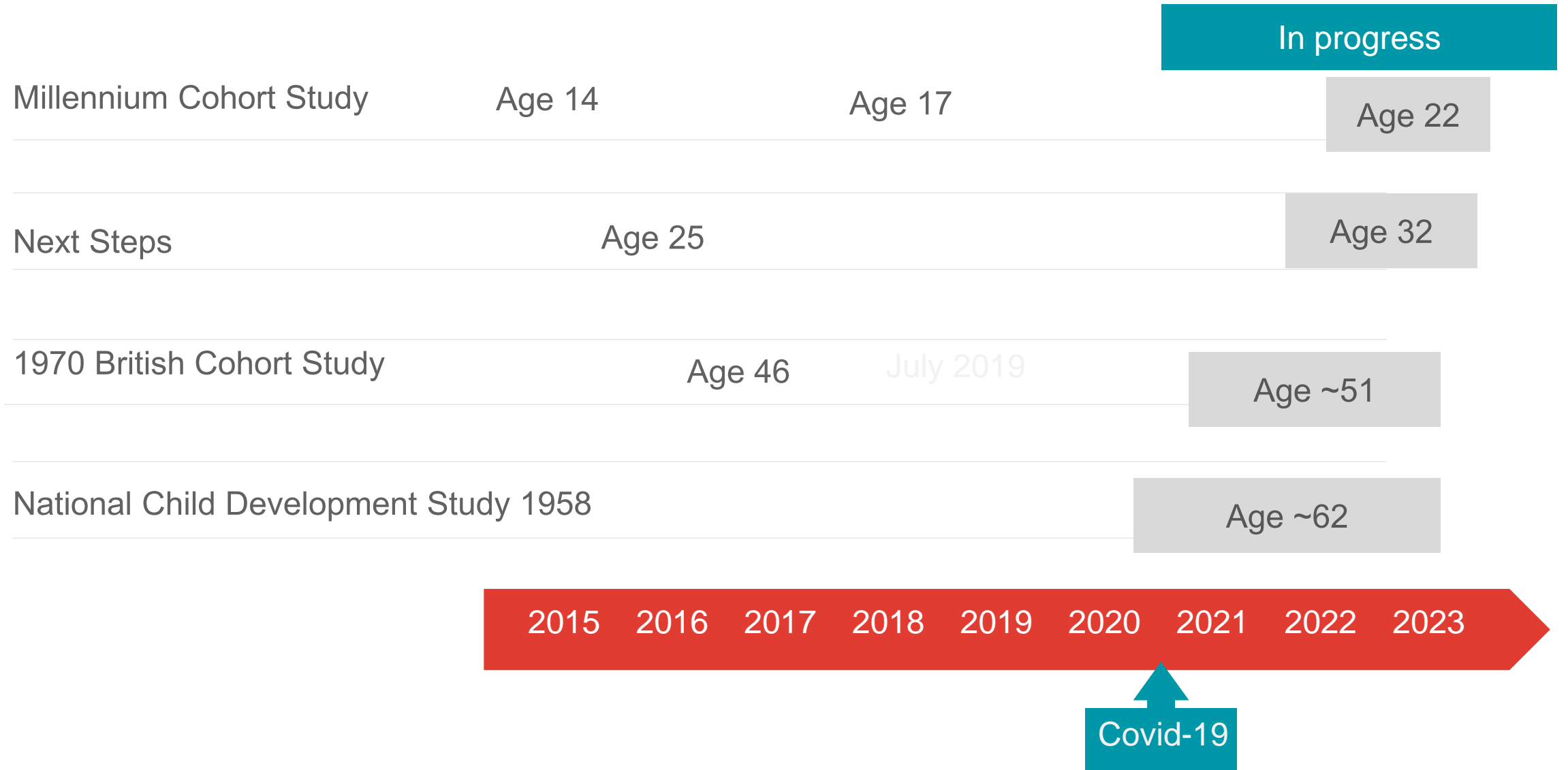


Mental + physical health outcomes

Social and biological exposures

Note ongoing harmonisation programmes ([CLOSER](#)): physical activity, diet, cognition, overcrowding, psych

At a glance: core data collections 2015-2020+



Typical information covered



Birth



School years



Adult

Household composition
Parental social class
Obstetric history
Smoking in pregnancy
Pregnancy
(problems, antenatal care)
Labour
(length, pain relief, problems)
Birthweight, length

Household composition
Parental social class
Parental employment
Financial circumstances
Housing
Health
Cognitive tests
Emotions and behaviour
School
Views and expectations
Attainment

Household composition
Employment
Social class
Income
Housing
Health (including biomarkers)
Well-being and mental health
Health-related behaviour
Training and qualifications
Basic skills
Cognitive tests
Views and expectations

COVID-19 data

- Possible impacts of pandemic on multiple aspects of life; we need empirical evidence to inform this + longitudinal data likely important
 - five national longitudinal cohort studies were surveyed
 - 19y – 74y
 - W1 May 2020, W2 Sept-Oct 2020 and W3 Feb-March 2021
 - wide range of topics including family, employment, home schooling, mental health during lockdown and an open question on affects of the pandemic
 - data on UKDS [link](#) and overview of content, questionnaires and user guide at CLS [link](#)

Update: Three new cohorts!

Early Life Cohort Feasibility Study

- a two-year ESRC funded project starting in April 2021 that will test the feasibility of a new UK-wide birth cohort study
- will recruit several thousand new babies, collecting information about their families and their development
- evaluation early 2023 and if judged to be successful, commissioning of a new, larger main study is anticipated in 2024-5
- extensive UK wide project team and project partners

Children of the 2020s Study

- a new nationally representative birth cohort study of babies in England which has been commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE)
- will answer important scientific and policy questions regarding the family, early education and childcare determinants of early school success
- will include babies born April - June 2021, and seeks to recruit over 8,000 families in early 2022
- consists of a five-wave longitudinal survey of children from nine months to five years

COVID Social Mobility and Opportunities (COSMO) study

- a new cohort study of current year 11 (15/16y) students, which will investigate the educational and employment inequalities brought about by the COVID-19 crisis
- UKRI funded, led by researchers from the UCL Centre for Education Policy and Equalising Opportunities and the Sutton Trust, in collaboration with CLS
- largest study of its kind – 12,000 young people to take part
- will explore disruption to schooling during the pandemic as well as longer-term educational and career outcomes

Other relevant secondary data sources

Other relevant sources

- British Household Panel Survey (BHPS)
- Understanding Society (UKHLS)
- English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA)
- Growing Up in Scotland (GUS)
- Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE2)

Overview of relevant variables

	NCDS	BCS
Have you ever been in the care of the voluntary sector	11, 33,	
Has the child ever been in care (statutory or voluntary)		10
Reason why in care		10
Age last in care		10
Has the child been in the care of the local authority?	7, 16	
How old were you when you finally stopped being in care? AGE IN YEARS	23	
Can I just check, has ... ever been in the care of a local authority? (of child)	33	
Number of separate occasions in care ... times		10
Age when first in care ... yrs ... mths		10
Were you ever, to your knowledge, "in care" as a child?	23	
Has N ever been in any of the following situations? [Child in Care-Family Group Home] In the past but not now		5
Longest period in care		10
Number of hours spent caring for mother/father/parents or partner's mother/father/parents...	50	

	Next Steps	MCS
Was there a reason why N was taken into care?		3, 5, 7, 11
Which best describes the total amount of time you spent in care? (P)		9m,3, 5, 7, 11
Were you in care at the time you left school? (p)		9m,3, 5, 7, 11
Household family grid - fostered, adopted, biological parents	All	All
Which best describes the total amount of time you spent in care? (CM)		20
Were you in care at the time you left school? (CM)		20
Whether caring for someone other than a child/ number of hours		20
Do you have any adopted children, step-children or foster children of whom you consider yourself to be a parent	25	
In the last 12 months, have you been in touch with your local council's social services/educational welfare services because of (CM)'s behaviour at home or at school? This includes both you getting in touch with them and them contacting you.	14, 15, 16, 17	
Caring responsibilities: Do you regularly take care of any children aged 14 or under who live here with you?/Relationship/	16, 17, 18, 19,	
Number of hours of caring responsibility/ who takes care of	14, 15	

Typical information covered



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Housing
Health (including biomarkers)
Well-being and mental health
Health-related behaviour
Training and qualifications
Basic skills
Cognitive tests
Views and expectations

Other studies

Covid-19 Sweeps: all of CLS cohorts (MCS, NS, BCS, NCDS, and 1946)

- Did you need help caring for yourself?
- Whether help received?
- Whether needed help caring for others in your household
- Whether received it

Understanding society: Caring responsibilities

- How many people do you care for?
- Who is the first person you look after or help?
- Who is the second person you care for....?
- Caring prevents employment
- Hours per week

SEARCH Closer Discovery



Explore the content of UK
longitudinal studies



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About

Search

Explore

Lists 0

Item Type

- Studies (0)
- Sweeps (0)
- Datasets (0)
- Variables (-2,282)
- Questionnaires (0)
- Questions (-185)

More...

Help

in care



Sort by:

Relevance



Item types: Variables, Questions

Query: in care

Results 1 to 50 of 2,467 (0.12 seconds)

qi_85

Has ... ever been in the care of a voluntary society?

Yes - in care now

Study: [National Child Development Study](#) / Sweep: [Age 33 Survey\(1991\)](#) / Questionnaire: [NCDS Age 33 Medical Interview](#)

qi_A9_e

Reason(s) why in care

Study: [1970 British Cohort Study](#) / Sweep: [Age 10 Survey\(1980\)](#) / Questionnaire: [BCS70 Age 10 Parental Interview](#)

SEARCH Closer Discovery

- Or questionnaires (UKDS or [CLS website](#): Our Studies; Sweeps; Documentation; Questionnaires)
- Or download the actual datasets and search the variables ([UKDS](#))

How to access the data (and help)

What is the UK Data Service?

- A comprehensive resource funded by the ESRC
- A single point of access to a wide range of secondary social science data
- Support, training and guidance
- Listen to recent webinars at <http://ukdataservice.ac.uk/news-and-events/newsitem/?id=3494>



Retrieval and access

- Web access, via UK Data Service web pages, to data and metadata
- Documentation (codebooks, questionnaires) freely available to any ESDS user (registered or unregistered)
- Data can be browsed and frequencies run by any user (registered or unregistered) using Nesstar
- Full datasets are freely available for download for the majority of our registered users
- Data supplied in a variety of formats
 - SPSS
 - Stata
 - Tab-delimited text



Accessing data - registration

- Click on the 'login' link
- Click on 'login to the UK Data Service'
- Find your organisation in the list of institutions. People outside UK Higher Education will need [UK Data Archive credentials](#)
- Proceed to the login page
- Enter your login details
- Complete the registration form as a new user
- Accept the End User Licence
- Use the download/order link for the dataset you wish to access and create a project description
- Download the data in your chosen format
- Special conditions may apply for non-EUL data



Questions and comments on the cohort studies, access, variables

Case study #1

Dr Sam Parsons

Care leavers and their children

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Project Overview

- This study is one of the first to examine the experiences of care leavers who became parents and the intergenerational impact on their children's adjustment.
- We use information from the 1970 British Cohort Study (BCS70) and the 2000/2 Millennium Cohort Study (MCS),
- In BCS70 we will also compare against the experiences of cohort members who spent time in out of home care

Project Timeline: March 2021 – February 2023

Motivation

- Persistent evidence on the increased risk for psycho-social adjustment problems in later life among children who were in OHC (Botchway et al, 2014; Roberts et al, 2017; Murray et al, 2020)
- Evidence (based on admin data) that shows individuals with OHC experience can beat the odds and develop into well adjusted adults (Brannstrom et al, 2011)
- Little knowledge about the experiences of children of care leavers, i.e., the extent of intergenerational transmission of the trauma associated with OHC
- What is known suggests children of care leavers are at a greater risk of being taken into care themselves
- We want to identify possible protective factors enabling positive adjustment

How care-experience captured in BCS70 (1)

Mother (1975 – child age 5)

Did the mother herself, as far as she can remember, ever spend more than a short time away from her parents as a child?

- Yes – fostered / in care
- Yes – other reason
- No
- Not known

How care-experience captured in BCS70 (2)



<p>Cohort member (1975 – age 5) Has the child ever been in any of the following situations?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foster parents' home• Assessment centre• Family group home• Children's home	<p>Cohort member (1980 – age 10) Has the child ever been in care (voluntary or statutory), now or in the past?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes – in care now• Yes – in care in past• No, never been in care• Not known
<p>Cohort member (1986 – age 16) Has the teenager ever been subject to any of the following orders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Residential care• Place of safety order	<p>Cohort member (2000 – age 30) Can I just check before the age of 17 did you spend any time living in any of these places?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes, in local authority children's home• Yes, with local authority foster parents• Yes, in voluntary society children's home• Yes, with voluntary society foster parents• No

How care-experience captured in MCS

Parent (2000/2 2004/5 – child age 9 months, child age 3)

Before the age of 17 did you spend any time living away from both of your parents?

If YES, Where did you mainly live during this time?

- **Local authority children's home**
- **Voluntary society children's home**
- **Children's home - not sure which type**
- **Local authority foster parents**
- **Voluntary society foster parents**
- **Foster parents - not sure which type**
- **Boarding school**
- **Living with relatives**
- **Prison/Young Offenders Institute/Borstal**
- **Some other place**

Prevalence

BCS70

- N=382 (**3.0%**) CMs had a care-experienced mother;
- N=562 (**4.4%**) had experienced care themselves;
- N=48 (**0.4%**) had a care-experienced mother *and* been in care themselves.

MCS

- N=456 (**2.4%**) CMs had a care-experienced parent
- N=304 mother; N=142 father; N=10 mother and father

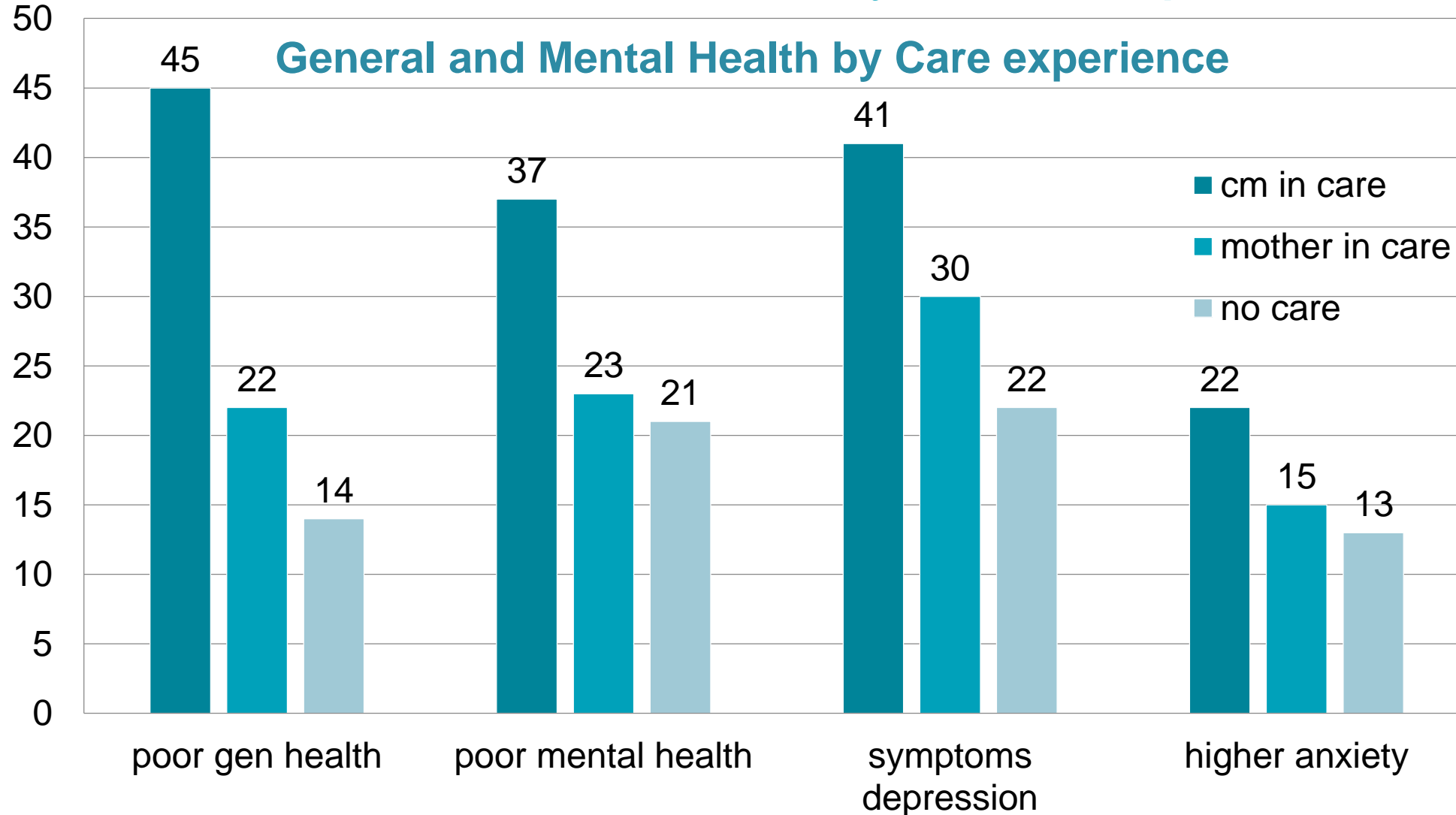
Main Research Questions

- **RQ1:** What are the social and economic resources available to parents who had care-experience as children?
- **RQ2:** To what extent does parental care-experience impact on their children's development?
 - key physical, cognitive, social and emotional developmental milestones: 0-16 years (BCS); 9 mths-17 years (MCS)
 - educational participation and attainment in education
- **RQ3:** Focusing on care-experience families, what are the factors and processes that promote positive development among children of care-experienced parents?

Additional Research: COVID-19

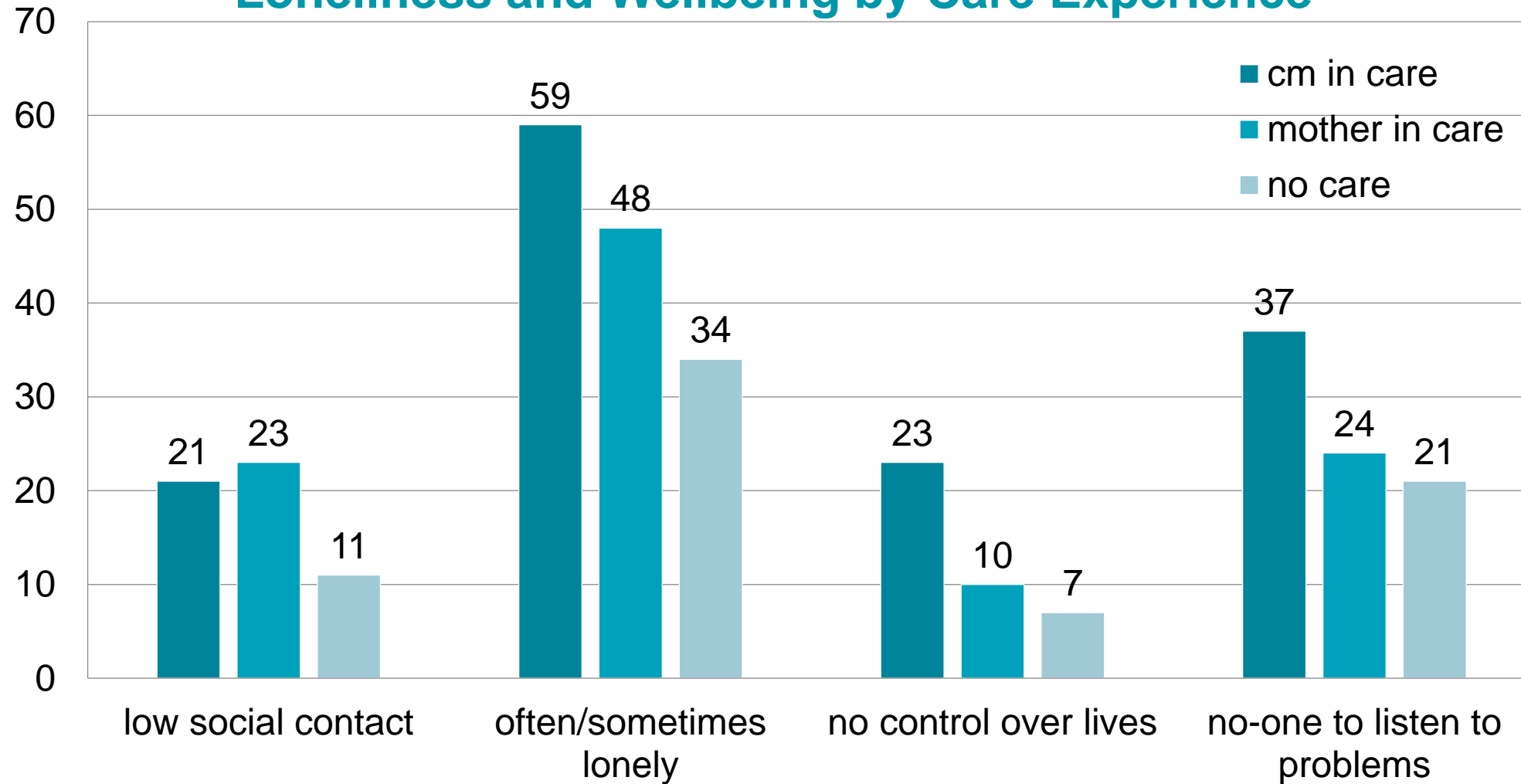
- **RQ4:** Out of Home Care Experience and Health and Well-being during the COVID-19 Pandemic: a focus on BCS70 at 50
- The study members were interviewed 3 times during the pandemic: May 2020; September 2020; February 2021. Focus here is on **September 2020**
- We compare experiences of children of care leavers, those who experienced care themselves, and the general population across a range of adult health and wellbeing outcomes during a major health pandemic

Summary Covid-19 research: health and mental health by care experience

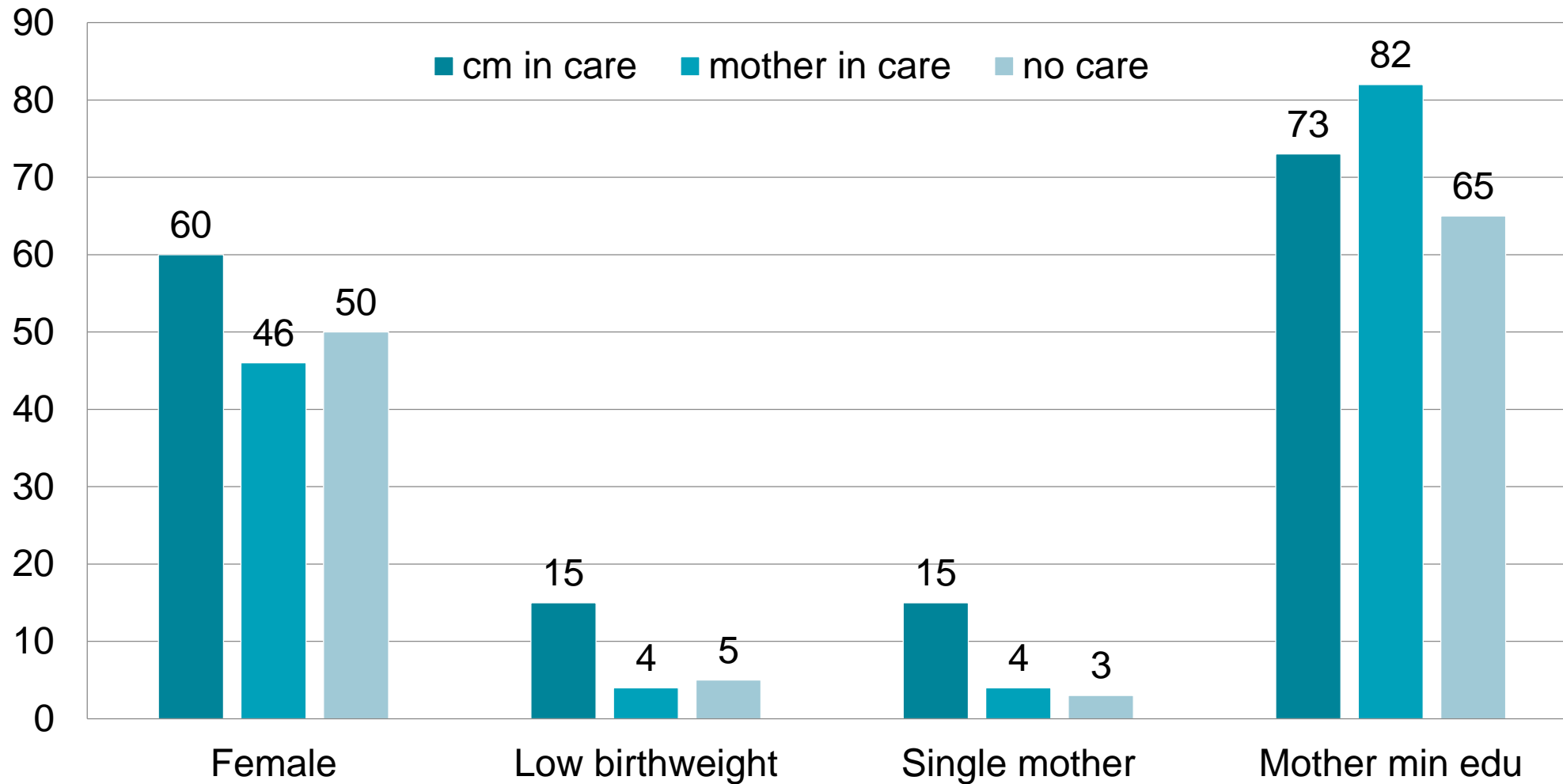


Summary Covid-19 research: social contact, loneliness & wellbeing by care experience

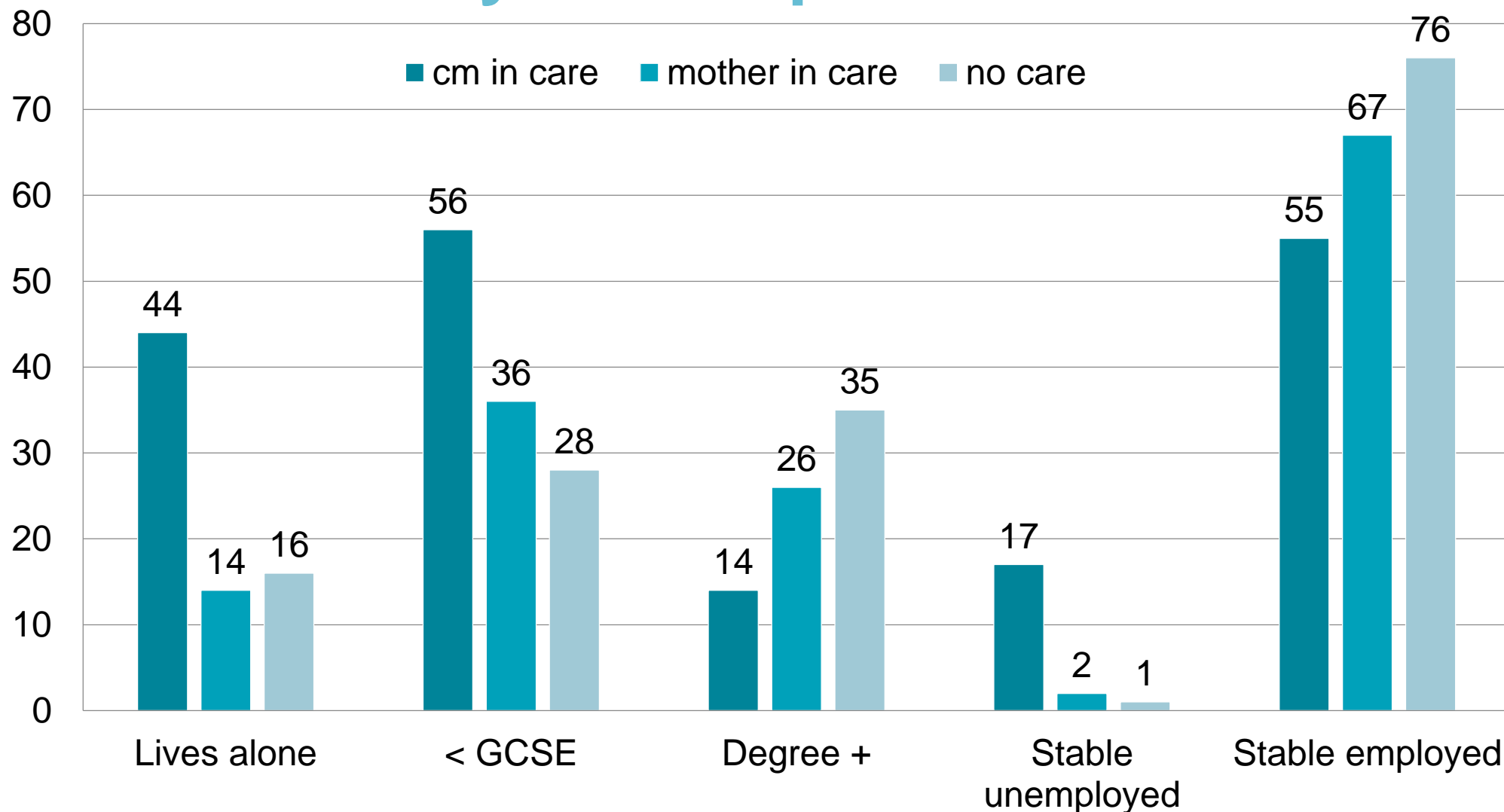
Loneliness and Wellbeing by Care Experience



Socio-demographic characteristics at birth by care experience



Own attained status in adulthood by care experience

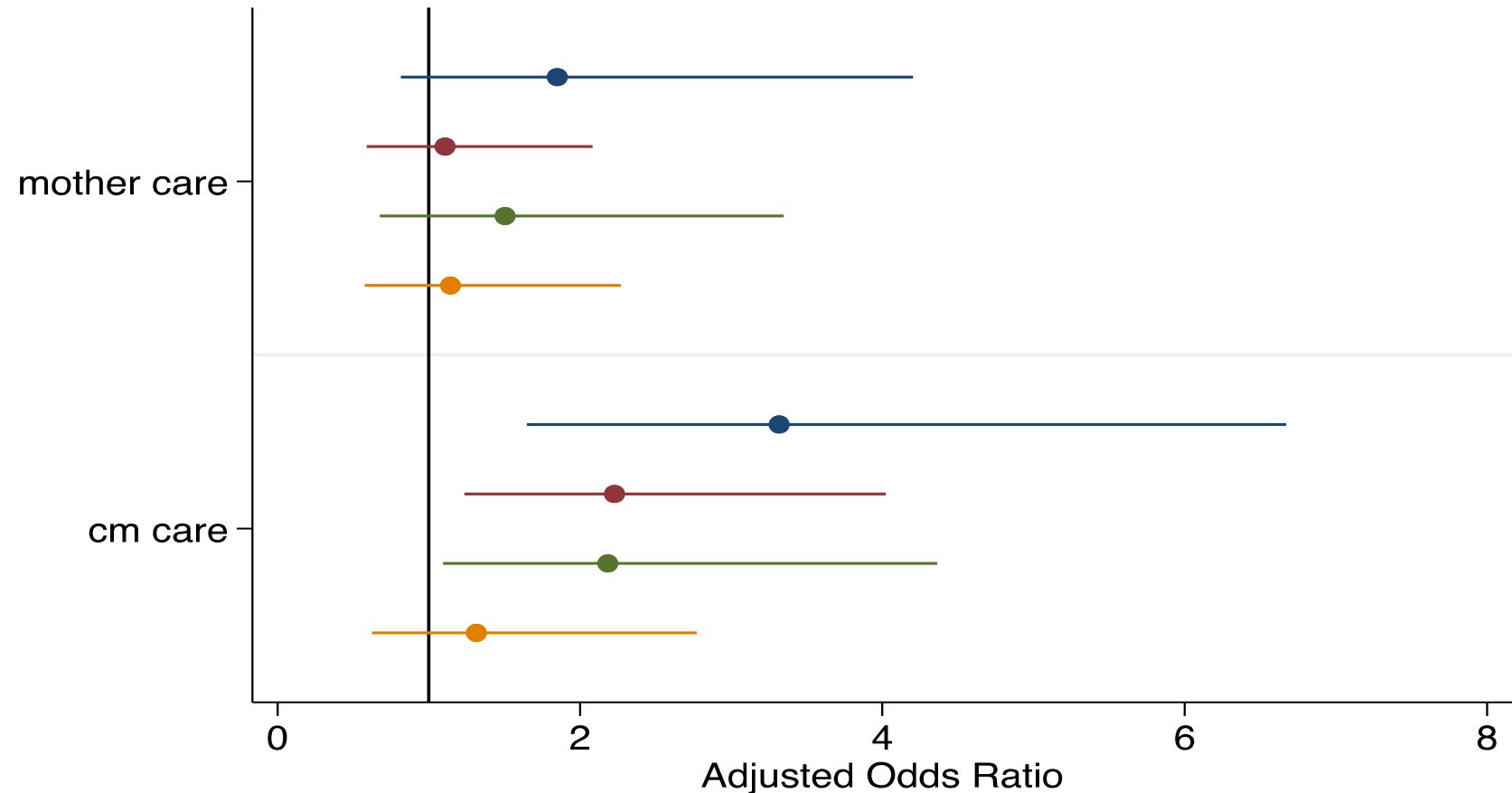


Summary Covid-19 research: Multivariate logistic regressions

We turn now to multivariate logistic regressions to show how the associations between care experience and adult health and wellbeing outcomes are attenuated when differences in **background characteristics** and **current circumstances** are accounted for.

I'll present Odds Ratios (OR): an OR greater than 1 when confidence intervals do not cross 1 indicate a statistically significant increase for those with OHC experience reporting the outcome.

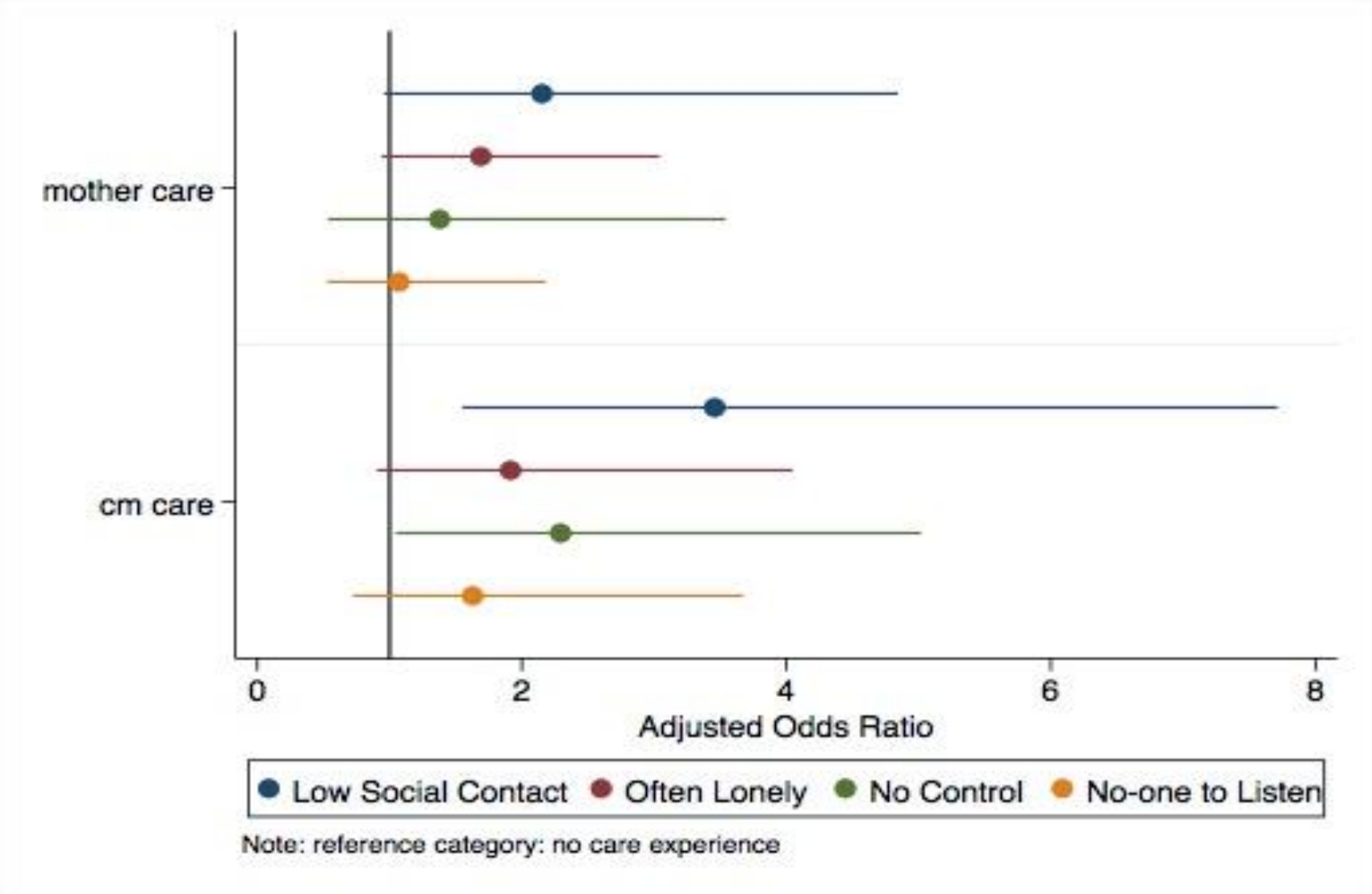
General Health & Mental Health outcomes



● Poor Gen Health ● Poor Mental Health ● Depressed ● High Anxiety

Note: reference category: no care experience

Social contact, loneliness & wellbeing



Concluding Remarks

- The findings add to the growing body of evidence on the long shadow of OHC experience which continues into the 5th decade of life among those with direct experience of OHC when they were children
- Importantly we show this shadow does not necessarily affect all – and in particular not the children of care leavers: many are as well adjusted as the next person!
- Future analysis will aim to highlight the key protective factors and processes supporting effective functioning among parents and children of care-experienced parents.

Thank you!
Questions? Comments?

Email: sam.parsons@ucl.ac.uk

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Case Study #2

Morag Henderson

About the project

- Part of a larger project funded by the Nuffield Foundation with the aim to examine children, young people and families using social work services (and other professional support services, including Educational Welfare Officers)
- Research Team: Jonathan Scourfield (PI: Cardiff), Sin Yi Cheung (Cardiff) & Elaine Sharland (Sussex)
 - We started with Next Steps (formerly Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE))
 - British Panel Household Study (BHPS)
 - Millennium Cohort Study (MCS)
 - Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC)

Research questions

1. What (structural, neighbourhood, familial and individual) characteristics predict social services contact among young people in England?
(associative differences)
2. What *effect* does social services contact have on a young person's educational attainment, aspiration, locus of control and mental health outcomes?

Data

- Next Steps
- Began in 2004 when sample members were aged between 13 and 14
- Linked to The National Pupil Database to capture GCSE results
- All models are adjusted for 654 school clusters

Next Steps Measures

- **In the last 12 months, have you been in touch with your local council's social services because of the young person's behaviour at home or at school? This includes both you getting in touch with them and them contacting you?"**
- For the purpose of this analysis social services contact was measured at Wave 2 and 3 (ever) and outcome measures examined between Wave 3 and Wave 4

Dependent Variables



- **Treatment Model**
- Ever (W2/W3) had social services contact measured at ages 14/15-15/16
- **Outcome Model**
- GCSE attainment - A benchmark for government achievement and a prerequisite to progress to further study
- Educational aspiration and confidence – Secondary effects are important for educational inequality (Boudon 1974; Jackson 2007)
- Locus of control - concerns the extent to which people believe that events result from their own actions (internal) or from factors that are external to their control (Rotter, 1954)
- Mental health (GHQ) – screening instrument in health care practice



Independent Variables

- **Treatment Model**

- Four domains in Bronfenbrenner's ecological model (adapted by Strand 2011): Structural*; Neighbourhood*; Familial*; Individual*

Outcome Model

- GCSE outcomes: parental class background, parental education, gender of the young person and prior educational attainment (Key Stage 2).
- Aspiration and confidence: parental education, home education, gender of the young person, parental aspirations for the young person and the young person's actual GCSE results are used.



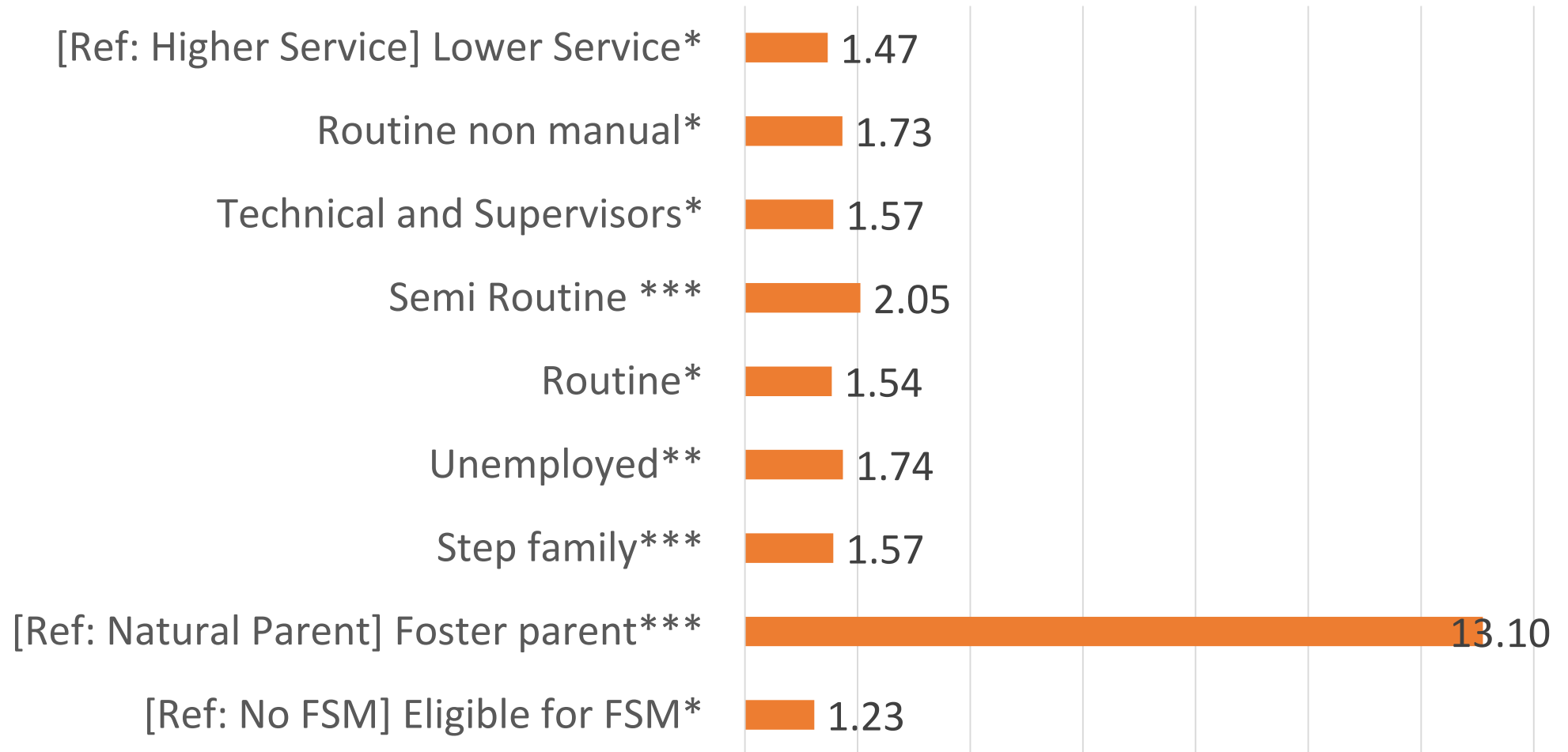
The Treatment Model

- What social factors predict social services contact among young people in England, including structural, neighbourhood, familial and individual factors characteristics?

Who has social service contact?



STRUCTURAL



Who has social service contact?



NEIGHBOURHOOD

- None of the neighbourhood characteristics are significant, over and above the structural, familial and individual characteristics.

Who has social service contact?



FAMILY

[Ref: Do not attend] Specially arranged meetings***

[Ref: Hardly ever argue] Most days***

More than once a week***

Less than once a week***

[Ref: Gets on well] Badly***

[Ref: Parents attend] Parents did not attend parents'...

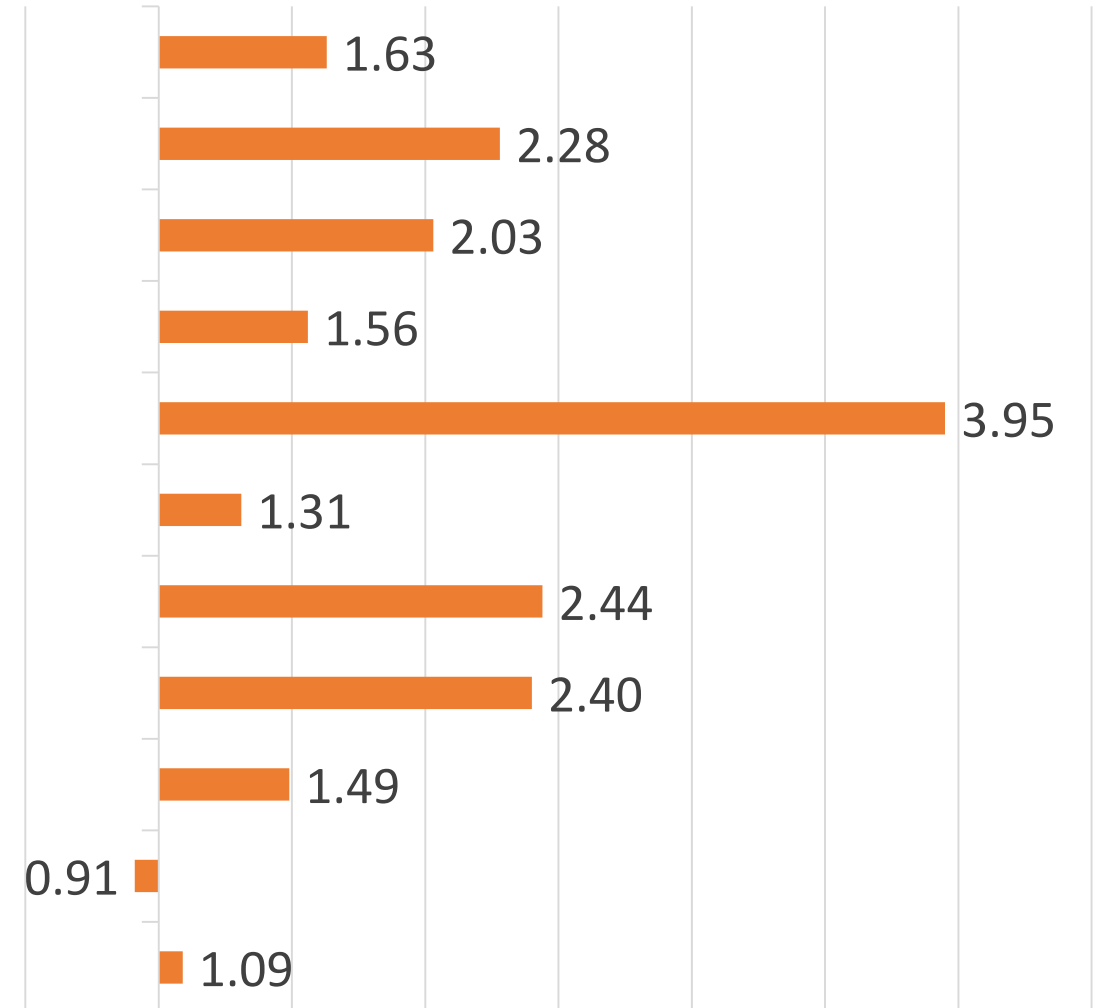
[Ref: How often speak to teachers] Once a week ***

Every two or three weeks***

At least once a term***

[Ref: No socialing] Parents socialise with YP**

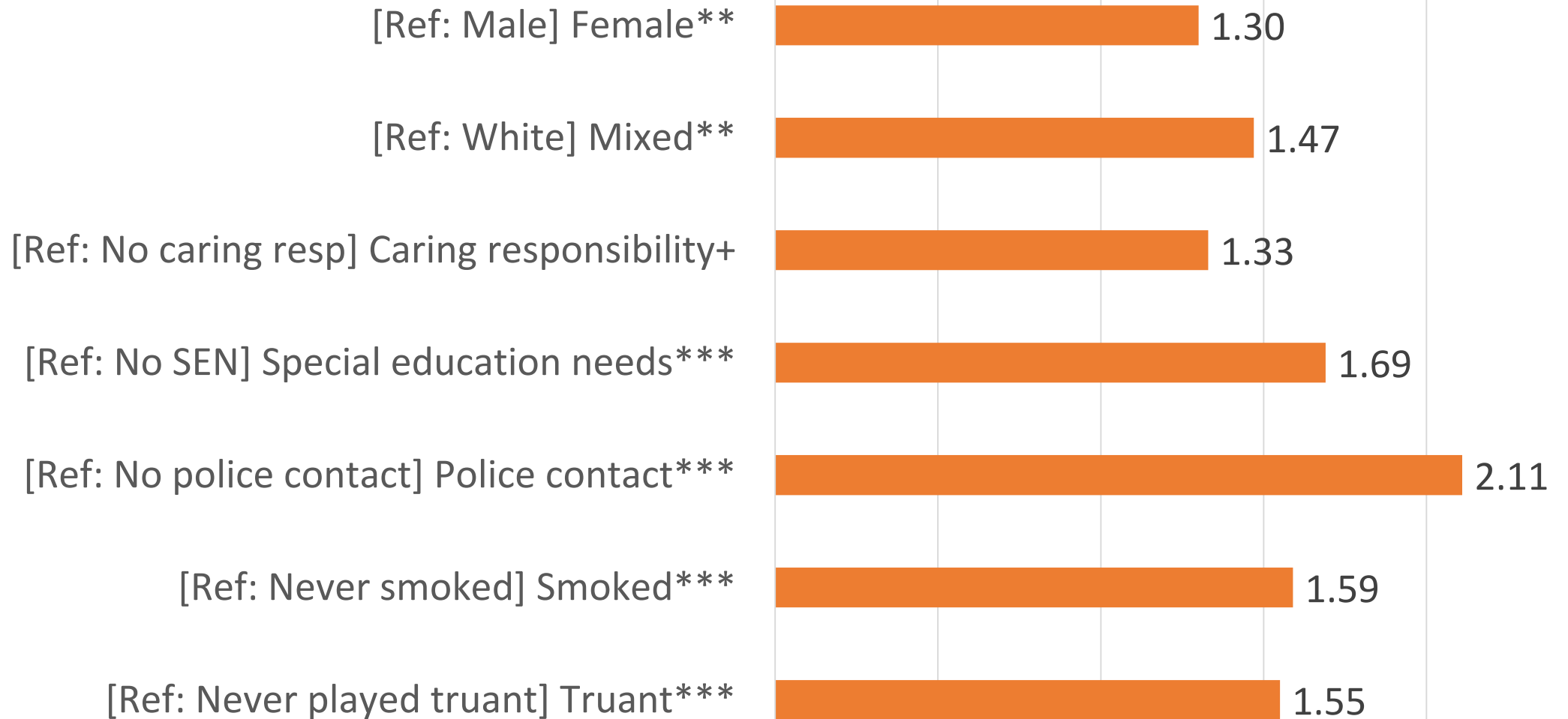
[Ref: No monitoring] Parents monitor YP*



Who has social service contact?



INDIVIDUAL





The outcome model

What '*effect*' does social services contact have on a young person's educational outcomes?

- No difference = social service contact may be acting as a proxy for something else, e.g. LA resource
- Corrective effect = Higher aspiration/educational outcomes
- Reductive effect = Lower aspiration/ educational outcomes

iPWRA: GCSE



Model 1: Linear GCSE score			Model 2: Five GCSEs A*-C (inc English & Maths)		
Ref Category: No contact with other similar services			Ref Category: No contact with other similar services		
Social Service Contact ATE	-29.12**	(9.30)	Social Service Contact ATE	0.94***	(0.02)
Social Service Contact ATET	-45.37***	(5.60)	Social Service Contact ATET	0.94***	(0.01)
Observations	11,586		Observations	11,586	

IPWRA: University aspiration



Model 3: Likely to apply to University			Model 4: Likely to be accepted if apply to University		
Ref Category: No contact with other similar services			Ref Category: No contact with other similar services		
Social Service Contact ATE	0.99	(0.02)	Social Service Contact ATE	0.93*	(0.02)
Social Service Contact ATET	0.98	(0.02)	Social Service Contact ATET	0.94*	(0.02)

IPWRA: MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES

Model 5: Mental Health		
Ref Category: No contact with other similar services		
Social Service Contact ATE	1.02	(0.03)
Social Service Contact ATET	1.03	(0.02)



Ipwra: locus of control



Model 6: I will have a hard time getting a good job	
Ref Category: No contact with other similar services	
Social Service Contact ATE	1.03
Social Service Contact ATET	1.01

Model 7: No chance in Life			Model 8: Success is a Matter of Luck		
Ref Category: No contact with other similar services			Ref Category: No contact with other similar services		
Social Service Contact ATE	1.03	(0.02)	Social Service Contact ATE	1.06*	(0.03)
Social Service Contact ATET	1.05*	(0.02)	Social Service Contact ATET	1.06**	(0.02)



Conclusions: Associations

- All else being equal, the following characteristics significantly **increases** the odds of social service contact:
- Lower class background
- Coming from a step-family
- Living with foster parents
- Free school meals eligibility (poverty?)
- Frequent of arguing with parents and reporting a poor relationship with parents
- Attending specially arranged meetings, speaking to teachers regularly and not attending parents evening
- Female
- Mixed race
- Having care responsibility at home
- Having recognised special needs
- Risky behaviours (playing truant, smoking and the police being in contact about the YP's behaviour)

Conclusions: Associations



- All else being equal, the following characteristics significantly **reduces** the odds of social service contact:
- Parents spending time with the young person (eating together regularly, going out together)



Conclusions: ATET Effects

- GCSE - Social service contact is associated with lower odds (and the GCSE scores) significantly
- UNIVERSITY CONFIDENCE AND ASPIRATION - There is no difference in the odds for the 'treated' and 'untreated' for aspiration to apply to university, however the odds of confidence in being accepted if they apply are lower for those who receive social service contact (at 5% level)
- MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES - There is no difference of mental health outcomes between those who receive social service contact and those who do not
- LOCUS OF CONTROL - Social service contact increases the odds of a young person reporting no internal locus of control

How can we explain these findings?

- Unobserved characteristics which distinguish social service recipients from the rest (e.g. adverse childhood experiences)?
- Labelling theory
- Learned helplessness
- Poor quality social work practice
- Or any beneficial effects not experienced in the short-term
- These may not be the right 'outcomes' to look at, feelings of security, trust...



Henderson, M., Scourfield, J., Cheung, S. Y., Sharland, E., & Sloan, L. (2014). [The Effects of Social Service Contact on Teenagers in England](#). *Research on Social Work Practice*.
doi:10.1177/1049731514557363

Pros and Cons of this approach

Secondary data analysis, Quantitative Analysis

Upsides

- Population level analysis; representative and reduces biases
- Replicable – robust, scientific, accessible
- Built in control groups
- Making use of available resource – more efficient and less costly
- Complex methods (!)

Downsides

- Attrition and missing data – although we use weights and missing data strategies, we may not be able to keep the most vulnerable populations or have responses to the most sensitive question
- Not able to tailor the data to your exact needs
- Complex methods (!)

Questions & comments

Thanks to our funders and host institution



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