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**“Health outcomes for informal carers in England and Wales – A longitudinal study using nationally representative census data for England and Wales”**

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**Abstract**

Cross-sectional analyses of 2001 and 2011 Census data suggest an association between worse

self-reported health and increasing hours of informal (unpaid) care. Research on health among informal carers has identified caring and health interactions as often being more positive than portrayed leading to arguments that studies require a more nuanced approach. The current study asks ‘how does poorer self-rated health at the 2011 Census relate to carer roles past (2001), present (2011) and transitions between 2001 and 2011?’ Using Office for National Statistics Longitudinal Study members at 2001 and 2011 we identify transitions in caring roles (2001-2011) and use baseline health status (2001) as a control. A binary logistic regression model is specified where the outcome measure is bad or very bad health at the 2011 Census. Results show (1) those providing informal care at 2011 exhibit lower odds of poor health than those who did not provide care in both 2001 and 2011 and (2) light informal carers (1-19 hours of care per week) at 2001 no longer caring at 2011 show no difference in odds of reporting poor health compared to non-carers (2001 and 2011). Results for heavy informal carers (20+ hours of care per week) show (1) heavy informal carers at 2001 not caring at 2011 show higher odds of reporting poor health compared to non-carers (2001 and 2011) and (2) heavy carers at 2001 and 2011 are less likely to report poor health at 2011 compared to non-carers (2001 and 2011).