

4.13.1 People living with a limiting long-term illness, living alone

Outline

Living with a long-lasting health condition (also called a chronic illness) presents a person with new challenges. There are two types of illnesses: *acute* and *chronic*. Acute illnesses (like a cold or the flu) are usually over relatively quickly. Chronic illnesses are long-lasting health conditions

Having a chronic condition doesn't necessarily mean an illness is critical or dangerous — although some chronic illnesses can be life threatening; chronic illnesses can include conditions like heart disease, asthma, arthritis, and diabetes. Although the symptoms of a chronic illness might go away with medical care, usually a person still has the underlying condition.

Most people who have a chronic illness don't think of themselves as "having a chronic illness." They think of themselves as having a specific condition — such as asthma, or arthritis, or diabetes. If you're living with a chronic illness, you may feel affected not just physically, but also emotionally, socially, and sometimes financially. The way a person might be affected by a chronic illness depends on the particular illness and how it affects the body, how severe it is, and the kinds of treatments that might be involved.

Data Description

The POPPI system provides population prevalence rates for the 65 and over population based on the ONS population projections and the prevalence of people living with a limiting long-term illness research. In order to produce the Northamptonshire district forecasts the locally calculated Northamptonshire Population Model has been applied to the prediction rates.

Key Issues

- In 2008 Northamptonshire was estimated to have had approximately 44,800 people aged 65 or over with a limiting long-term illness, which is the highest number across its statistical neighbours. This population is estimated to increase by 25.8% (11,573) by 2015 to around 56,400. The largest increase will be in the 65-74 age group with this category experiencing a 36.8% increase (7,321).
- All Northamptonshire districts are estimated to experience increases in the number of older people with a limiting long-term illness between 2008 and 2015 with Daventry recording the largest relative increase of 34.8% which is notably above the other districts. Northampton is predicted to experience the largest absolute increases of 3,117 people which is over 1,000 greater than any other district.
- Of the older people in Northamptonshire with a limiting long-term illness it is estimated that in 2008 almost 17,600 (39.2%) of these people lived alone, which is the highest number across its statistical neighbours. 69.6% of this group is aged 75 or over. This population is estimated to increase by 22.6% (3,980) by 2015 to around 21,600. 53.0% (2,111) of this increase will be in the 75 and over age group.
- All Northamptonshire districts are estimated to experience increases in the number of older people with a long-term illness living alone between 2008 and 2015, similar to the trends detailed above, with Daventry recording the largest relative increase of 29.3% (533 people). Northampton is predicted to experience the largest absolute increase of 889 people.

Consequences

Older people living alone with a long-term illness are at risk from a number of factors, which may include difficulty with caring and maintaining safe patterns of living, health crisis or breakdown, social isolation leading to emotional distress, or the possibility of financial distress. Their ability to find and access services may be compromised due to their isolation or condition. The risk that they may only access services at a point of crisis may result in the need for higher long-term support. It is therefore important that planners take account of the needs of this group as they have the potential to respond

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to low levels of support, but also those at risk of a health crisis if they are unable to maintain safe living at home.

Key Documents

Office for National Statistics. 2001. Table UV22 Limiting Long-term Illness (Online). Available from: <http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/datasetList.do?JSAllowed=true&Function=%24ph=60&CurrentPageId=60&step=1&CurrentTreeIndex=-1&searchString=&datasetFamilyId=101&Next.x=14&Next.y=5>

Projecting Older People Population Information System. 2009. *POPPI webpages* (Online). Available from: <http://www.poppi.org.uk/>.

65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85+
38.5%	44.2%	53.1%	60.9%	71.6%

Table 4.13.1.1 People aged 65 and over with a limiting long-term illness prevalence estimates, Source: POPPI

65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85+
22.3%	28.7%	37.4%	46.8%	58.5%

Table 4.13.1.2 People aged 65 and over with a limiting long-term illness living alone prevalence estimates, Source: POPPI

2008	2010	2015	2020	2025
44,846	47,400	56,419	64,386	74,168

Table 4.13.1.3 People aged 65 and over predicted to have a limiting long-term illness, Northamptonshire, Source: POPPI

2008	2010	2015	2020	2025
17,597	18,481	21,577	25,315	29,782

Table 4.13.1.4 People aged 65 and over predicted to have a limiting long-term illness and be living alone, Northamptonshire, Source: POPPI

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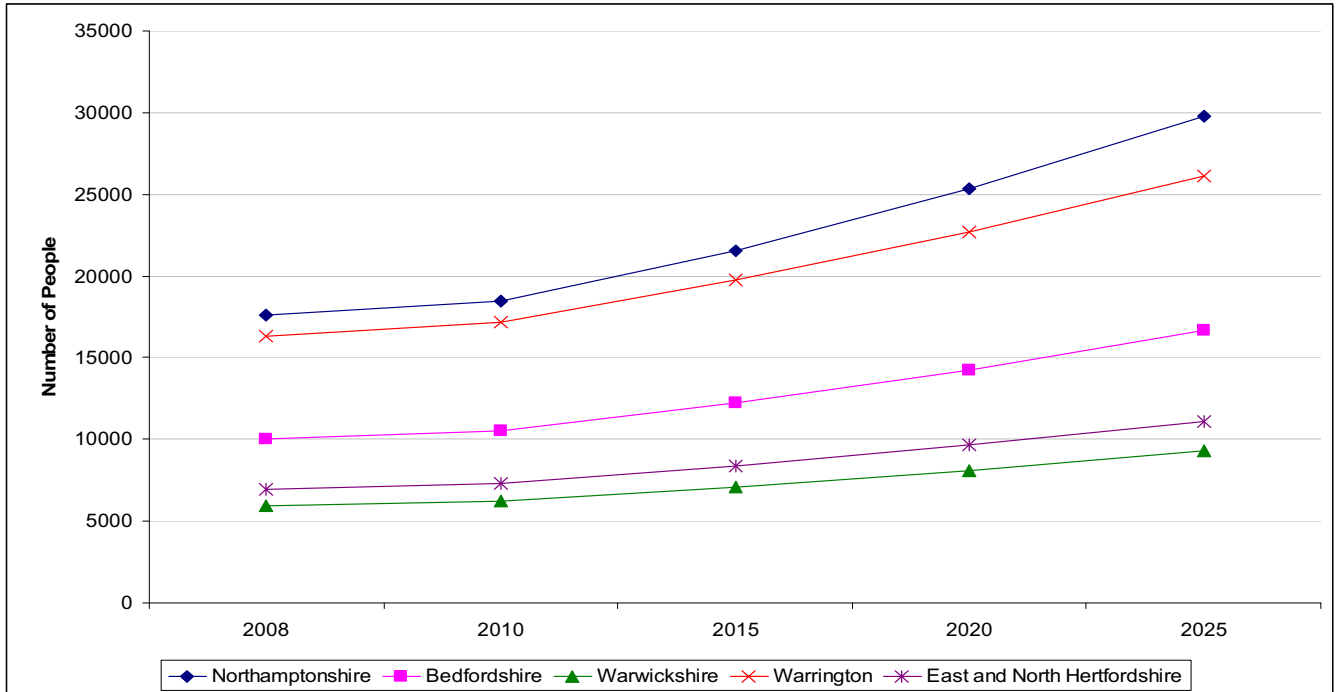


Figure 4.13.1.1 Total Population aged 65 and over predicted to have a long-term illness and be living alone – Northamptonshire and Most Similar PCTs - 2008 to 2025, Source: POPPI

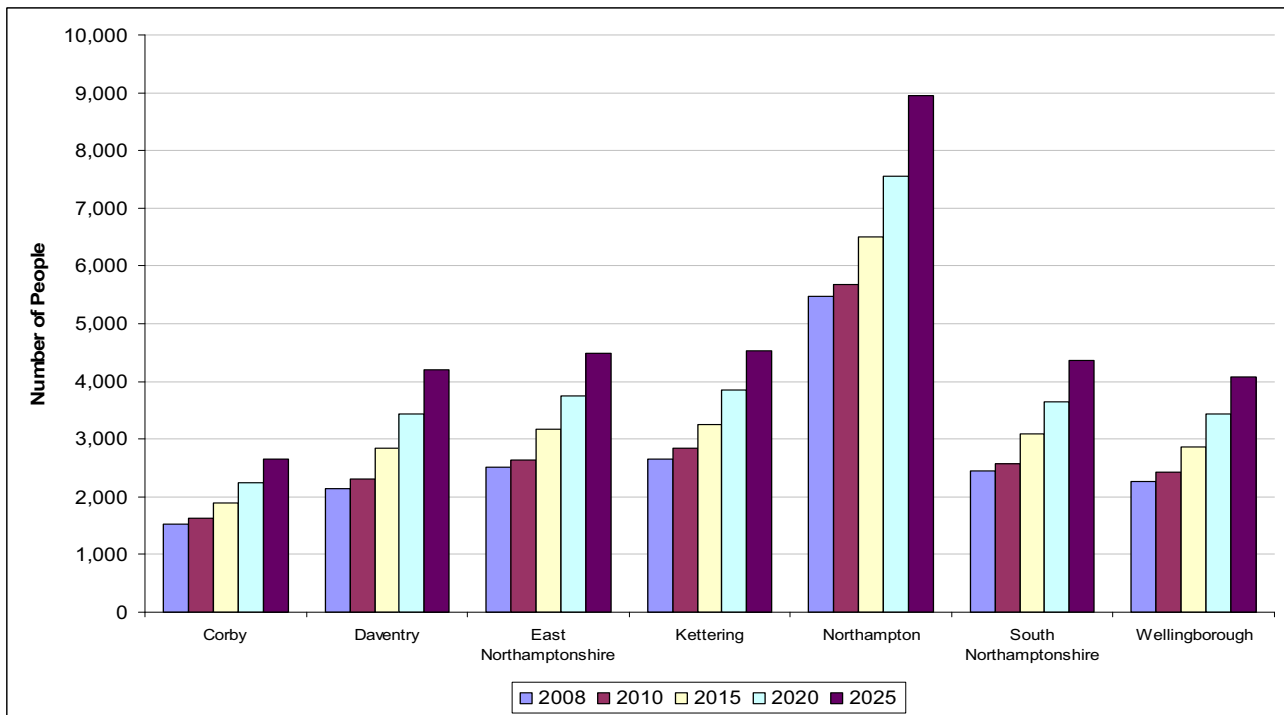


Figure 4.13.1.2 Total Population aged 65 and over predicted to have a long-term illness and be living alone – Northamptonshire Districts - 2008 to 2025, Source: POPPI