

Driving positive ageing at home: Older Adults' Engagement with ALONE Support Services

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Background

- By 2050 approximately 1.6 million Irish people will be aged 65+ (CSO, 2022)
- Urgent need to develop medical and non-medical infrastructure and services that can meet the needs of this growing age group (Department of Health, 2013)
- ALONE aims to transform ageing in Ireland, by supporting older adults to age within their own homes and communities positively and securely
- Substantial gap in understanding needs of older people engaging with social care services

Research Aims

Demographic Characteristics	Clinical Needs	Service Implications
What are the demographic characteristics of older people who seek support from ALONE?	What are the clinical characteristics of those being served?	What are the implications of these findings for service delivery?

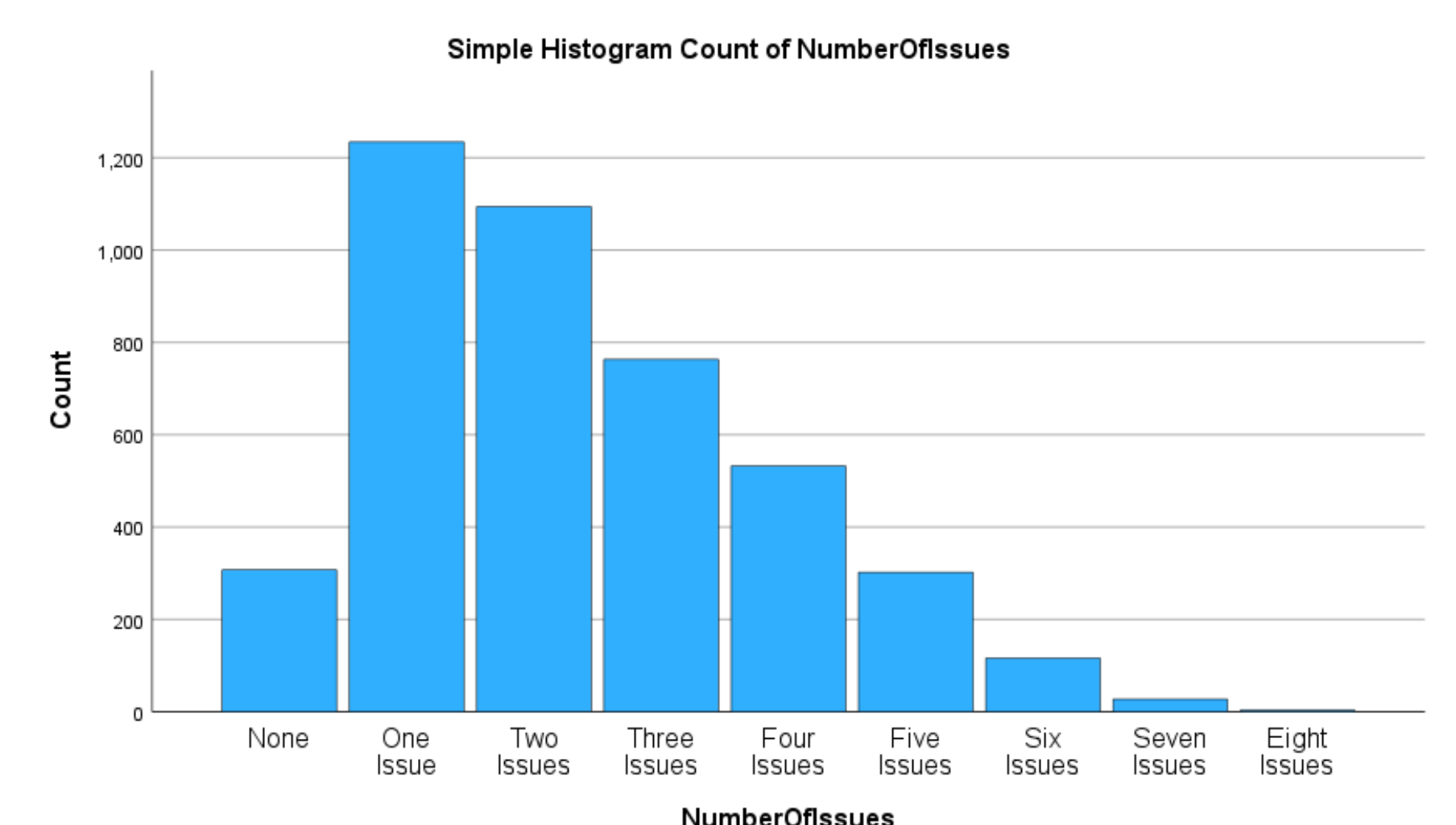
Methods

- Information about all older people who engage with ALONE captured on Management Information System
- Data from $N = 4,378$ older adults who completed assessment of needs with ALONE between 1st Sept 2022 – 9th June 2023 analysed using SPSS version 27

- 38% male ($n = 1,652$), 62% female ($n = 2,705$)
- 42% of sample aged 76-85 years
- 71% homeowners, 60% living alone
- 60% referred by external agency (e.g., HSE/GP)
- 62% indicated loneliness, 5% long-term isolation
- 35% in receipt of home help

Key Findings

- 28% reported one main presenting issue (housing, personal care, physical health, mobility, mental health, financial/legal, social isolation, safeguarding)
- Linear regression indicated age ($\beta = -.072$), home ownership ($\beta = -.262$), home help ($\beta = .285$), and loneliness ($\beta = .636$) were associated with the number of overall issues reported. Model explained 6.5% of variance, $F(9, 2394) = 18.52$ $p < .001$.
- Series of logistic regressions were conducted to examine which demographic/clinical characteristics predicted individual issues
 - Mental health needs emerged as significant predictor for six out of seven models
 - Other predictors included loneliness (mobility, mental health issues), having hobbies (mental health, financial/legal issues), and home help status (personal care)



Conclusions

- Confirmed high level of need among older people for social care services
- Higher level of need among older adults who are younger, report loneliness, are in receipt of home care, and who do not own home
- Mental health issues a significant predictor of other needs
- Findings support need for personalized, holistic social care nationally

References

- Central Statistics Office (2022). *Press Statement Older Persons Information Hub 2022*. Available at <https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/pressreleases/>
- Department of Health (2013). *National Positive Ageing Strategy*. Department of Health, Dublin; 2012. Available at: http://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/National_Positive_Ageing_Strategy_English.pdf . Accessed 15 March 2023