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Spatial microsimulation modelling of care needs, costs and the capacity for self-provision: detailed regional projections for older Australians to 2020

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Abstract

Government is starting to address the policy challenges associated with population ageing and the future care needs of the ageing baby boomers. 'CareMod' is a spatial microsimulation model that is being constructed as a strategic planning and decision-support tool for forecasting the future demand for care by older Australians; the likely cost of aged care support; and the financial capacity of older Australians to bear a greater share of these costs. The aim of this paper is to outline the technical development of CareMod, particularly, the 'regionalisation' methodology that underpins the generation of small area estimates that can be used to help inform and assist with possible responses to these increasingly pressing social issues.

CareMod's base input dataset is derived from the ABS 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC). Small areas estimates are produced by reweighting the SDAC confidentialised unit record file (CURF) to create 'synthetic' datasets for each SLA in NSW. The SDAC is reweighted against a range of benchmarks using data from the 2001 census. Benchmarks are based on a selection of linkage variables common to both the SDAC and census that adequately represent the socio-demographic attributes of each SLA population and address the main issues of concern, namely, the drivers of the need for care and the income and assets of older Australians.

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