

Of course people aren't saving for care

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By chance I pick this headline from the Aberdeen Evening Express: [it is typical of many published on the last day or so:](#)

Just over one in 10 adults over 55 have set aside money to cover the costs of any future care needs, the consumer rights group Which? has warned.

A survey commissioned by the organisation found only 12% were saving in case they needed to pay for care in later years.

Well of course they aren't. It's astonishing that any might be. Why? Just suppose the question had been changed to 'Are you saving for your future cancer needs?' and see what the answer would have been. The questions aren't dissimilar after all: both might well be about end-of-life provision.

First, people would say they don't think they will get cancer. And on balance of probabilities they are right.

Then they might say that they think the state should supply in this situation, and again, they are on balance of probabilities right: a lot of people still do have their care paid for by the state, albeit it is not the best available. Means testing does exist for care and some are confident that they will qualify.

Third, they will simply say they have other priorities. For many that will still be providing for a parent in care or providing for children. Their own long term is just too distant to worry about now.

Fourth, they will be saving for a pension instead, and why not?

Fifth, they accept that eventually the sale of a home will have to provide if they need care. The idea that we are all obsessed with passing on the family home to be split between next generations who won't want it is a Daily Express myth.

So, of course, people aren't saving for care. It's irrational and impractical to do so. In

which case the idea that it should be encouraged by tax exemptions is just another way to provide tax breaks for those already well off.

There is a case for simplifying the tax system. Complicating it in socially absurd ways, as any such scheme would be, makes no sense at all. This is an idea that should have been scrapped before ever reaching the pages of a press release.