

Evaluation of Brighton and Hove's Equipment and Adaptations service

April 2017

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1. Executive summary

Extensive feedback from service users indicated an effective service that performed well in meeting client's needs and made a positive difference to people's lives. Satisfaction levels for the overall service were very high with positive feedback on the various aspects of the service including assessment, the suitability of equipment selected, and delivery and installation. Performance indicators were generally slightly improved on findings from a similar user survey conducted in 2010. Although the overall picture was positive, some areas of concern were identified regarding delays experienced in delivery and installation, uneven performance on aftercare and incidence of users abandoning equipment due to problems.

Overall service satisfaction

97% satisfaction with service with virtually all service users reporting that the equipment or adaptation received had improved their quality of life.

Assessment

Users were very positive about how their needs had been discussed with them and most felt that they had been involved in the choice of equipment or adaptation where it was appropriate.

Delivery and installation

83% of users said they had not experienced problems as a result of the wait for equipment to be delivered or adaptations to home to be done. However, minor problems were experienced for a small but significant number (14%) and serious problems for 3%.

Satisfaction levels were high, 95%, regarding the installation and explanation of equipment and adaptations. Only small numbers, 3%, reported that when explanations were necessary they were absent or poor.

Aftercare

Communication was sometimes poor with users after equipment had been delivered. A third of users (33%) reported that they had not received a follow-up check since receiving the equipment or adaptation. Also, small but not insignificant numbers (6%) said that they were no longer using equipment because they had had a problem using it.

Impact on life

Almost all users (97%) felt the equipment had improved the quality of their life. Many reported that the equipment had given them greater independence by allowing them to do routine tasks on their own. This outcome, however, did not necessarily mean they needed less help. Only a third of users (34%) reported that the equipment had led to less need for help from others.

2. Introduction

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove undertook an evaluation of Brighton and Hove's Equipment and Adaptations Service that is funded by Brighton & Hove City Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group. Previously delivered by Sussex Community Trust, the service has been delivered by NRS healthcare since October 2015.

The service aims to help individuals living with long term physical disabilities or illnesses to live as independently as possible at home. Health and Adult Social Care professionals assess the needs of eligible adults and recommend appropriate equipment and minor home adaptations with the intention of helping them live safely and independently at home. The service provider, NRS, provides the equipment, administers the adaptation and provides appropriate aftercare.

The evaluation aimed to assess the effectiveness of the service in helping users live independently at home. To this end, the evaluation considered the user's perspective on the conduct of the assessment, the delivery and installation of equipment, the quality of aftercare and the impact made on the quality of life. Drawing on different sources of data, the evaluation aimed to develop a detailed picture of how well the service meets individual's needs and what factors contribute to a high quality service. The evaluation also considered how the cost effectiveness of the service could be improved.

3. Aims of evaluation

The evaluation aimed to explore:

- 1. Effectiveness of the service in providing suitable equipment and adaptations.
- 2. How well the equipment and adaptations provided served the needs of service users.
- 3. How the service could be improved to better serve the needs of service users.

The evaluation drew on quantitative and qualitative data to gain insight into the effectiveness of the service.

4. Methodology

The evaluation used a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches to assess the effectiveness of the service.

1. Questionnaire

The evaluation sought to gain quantitative insight into the service by asking users detailed questions on various aspects of the service provided. The survey followed a similar format used in a questionnaire undertaken in 2010, allowing us to compare the current performance with that of the previous service provider. Another survey with more limited questions was conducted in 2014 which was also used for comparison where the same questions were used.

The questionnaire was sent out in a letter to a random sample of 2,400 of a total of 8,080 users of the service. ¹ 581 responses were received (550 postal responses and 31 online responses) which represented more than a fifth (22%) of the sample and 7% of the total user cohort.

This high return rate meant that the survey results had a high level of statistical accuracy: with 95% certainty that percentage results were within 3.92 points of the true figure for the whole group of service users.

Details on the sample size of the survey and confidence interval produced are shown in the table below:

	Population	Responses	Confidence interval (at 95% confidence
			interval)
Service users	8,080	581	3.92

2. User interviews

We sought to gain qualitative insight into the service by conducting semi-structured interviews with service users. The interviews aimed to gain a more detailed understanding of the different aspects of the service focusing on the appropriateness of the equipment chosen, implementation and maintenance, and impact on quality of life.

Users were asked to consent to an interview in the questionnaire. Those that agreed were then randomly sampled and contacted to arrange an interview. A total of 27 semi-structured interviews were conducted in the homes of service users.

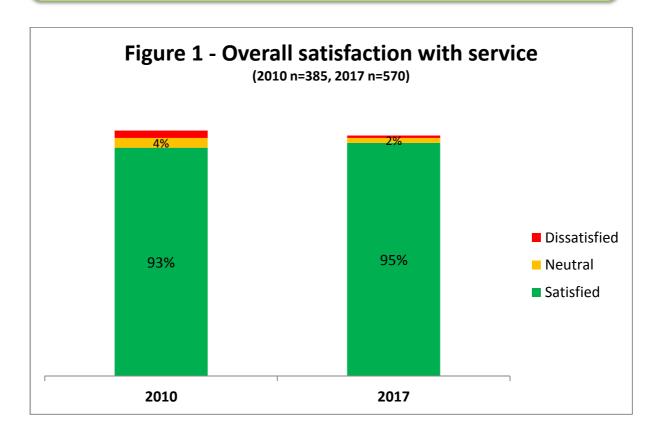
¹ The questionnaire was sent to 2,600 users. Of these about 100 were mistakenly sent to service users who were recently deceased and a further 100 were no longer at the address held.

5. Overview of service

Users reported high levels of satisfaction with the service with 95% saying they were satisfied and only very small numbers reporting dissatisfaction. This satisfaction level was slightly higher than results for 2010 (Figure 1).



83% of users were 'extremely' or 'very' satisfied



Users felt they had been treated well by the service and greatly benefitted from the equipment they had received. Nearly all (97%) users felt that the equipment had improved their quality of life with particular impact on being able to look after personal care needs and getting around the home. A third of users (34%) reported that the equipment received had reduced the amount of help needed from others.

Users were very positive about how their needs had been discussed (98% satisfaction) and most felt that they had been involved in the choice of equipment or adaptation where it was appropriate.

83% of users reported they had not experienced problems as a result of the wait for equipment to be delivered or adaptations to home to be done. However, minor problems were experienced for a small but significant number (14%) and serious problems for 3%.

Satisfaction levels were high, 95%, regarding the installation and explanation of equipment and adaptations. Only small numbers, 3%, reported that when explanations were necessary they were absent or poor.

Feedback from users suggested there were some problems with aftercare. A third of users (33%) reported that they had not received any follow-up check since receiving the equipment or adaptation. Also, some users (6%) said that they were no longer using equipment because they had a problem using it. A lack of knowledge of what to do when they encountered problems or no longer needed the equipment, led to poor outcomes for a small but not insignificant number of users.

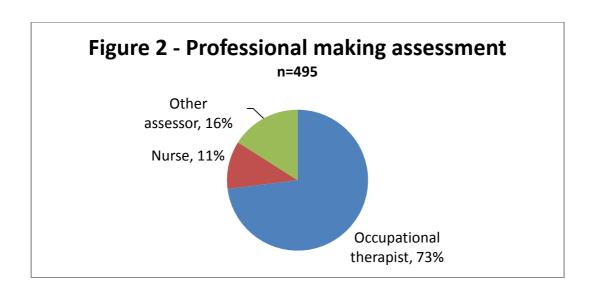
6. Assessment

For the vast majority of people, the assessment stage of the service was done efficiently and courteously. Most commonly, the assessment was done by an occupational therapist (OT) but they were also done on occasion by other health professionals such as nurses and physiotherapists.

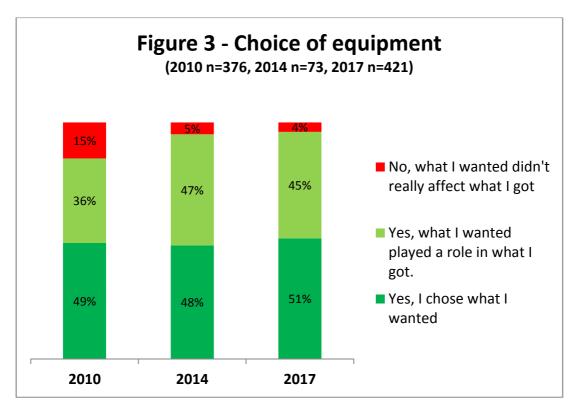
Most assessments (71%) were done at the individual's home but a significant number were done over the telephone (21%) or at the hospital (18%). Analysis showed a strong relationship between conducting an assessment in person (at home or at hospital) and satisfaction with the overall service: 8% of users were dissatisfied when an assessment was done over the phone compared to 1% when done in person.

The lady was really nice and did a really good job of assessing my needs... I felt reassured that the equipment would really make a difference.

Service user



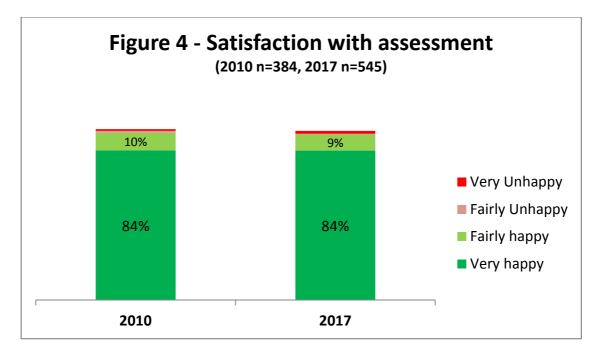
The service aims to give individuals a choice about equipment where appropriate and feedback suggested that this was taking place in most cases. In only 4% of cases did users report that what they wanted didn't affect what was received. This was an improvement in performance compared to 2010 and very similar to the performance recorded in 2014 (Figure 3). Data analysis showed a correlation between users having a choice about equipment and overall satisfaction with the service. Of dissatisfied users, 47% felt there was little or no choice in the type of equipment that could be chosen, while 72% who were satisfied had some influence over the decision made.



We spent a while discussing my options for equipment. She wanted me to be happy with what I got. I definitely felt involved in the decision.

Service user

Very nearly all users were satisfied with the assessment they received with only 2% reporting they were unsatisfied. This finding was identical to the satisfaction figures from 2010.



7. Delivery and installation

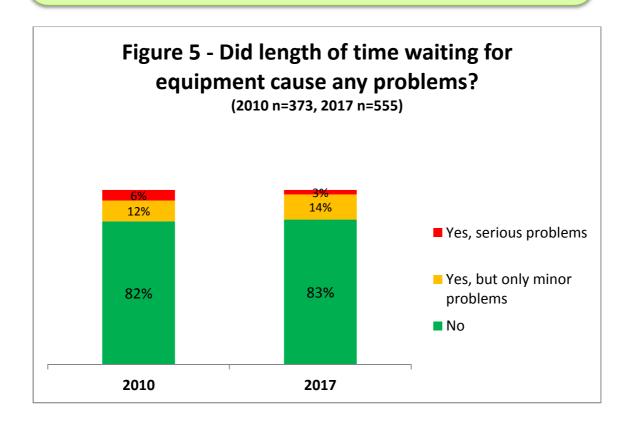
Most recipients of equipment are living at home and need to receive the equipment or adaptation chosen as quickly as possible to avoid problems. The service aims to minimise inconvenience by delivering and installing equipment quickly after the assessment is completed. In the vast majority of cases, 83%, the waiting time experienced did not cause any problems. Delays were experienced for a small but not insignificant minority (17%) with 3% experiencing serious problems as a result of the delay. This level of 'problem' delays is identical to the level recorded in 2010 (Figure 5).

The equipment was delivered a couple of days after the assessment. I couldn't have had it faster!

Service user

Although performance in this area is generally good, the importance of reducing discomfort for service users should encourage the provider to consider how the incidence of delays to delivery and installation can be reduced.

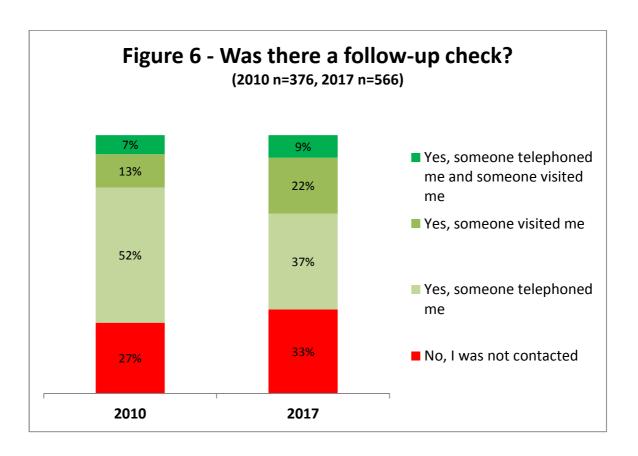
17% experienced problems caused by delays in delivery and installation



8. Aftercare

The service aims to help people with disabilities and long term illnesses living independently at home. Depending on the nature of the equipment provided, the service aims to provide support to maintain equipment where needed. Support usually takes the form of a follow-up check by staff to resolve any problems being experienced.

Results showed a majority of users (68%) did receive a follow-up check. However, a significant minority (33%) did not receive any contact. This number was a slight increase from the figure of 27% in 2010 (Figure 6). Data analysis showed a strong correlation between receiving a follow-up check and overall customer satisfaction. Only 33% of dissatisfied users received aftercare service whereas 75% of satisfied users received either a visit or a phone call.



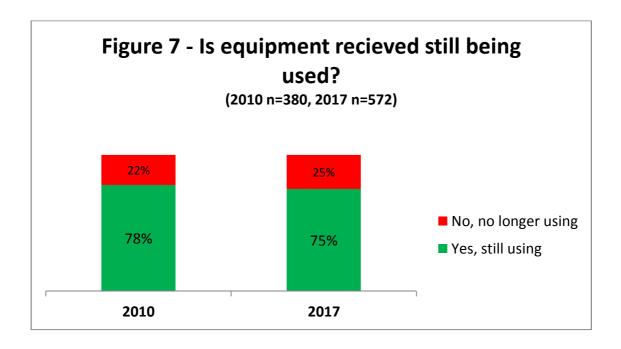
9. Use of equipment

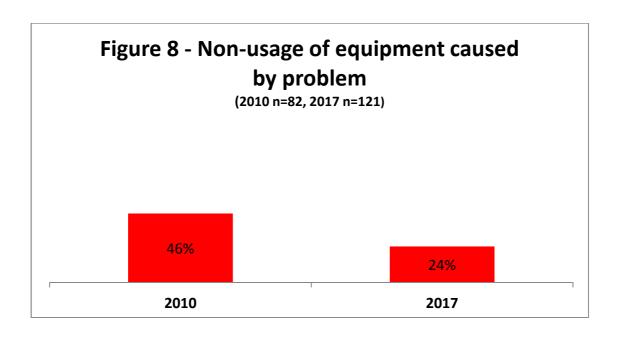
The equipment provided by the service is sometimes used indefinitely, or, if circumstances change for the individual, for a shorter period. A quarter of users reported they no longer used the equipment they had received with about half (56%) of those saying they no longer had need for it.

Of more concern are those users who stop using equipment because of some kind of problem e.g. it was found not to help, it was difficult to use, it was unsafe, or it got broken or damaged. An effective service would aim to minimise this type of occurrence by providing support which can remedy issues as and when they arise.

About a quarter (24%) of users who had stopped using equipment reported that they had done so because of some kind of problem. Although this figure was significantly lower than the level in 2010 (46%), it was still high enough to be a cause for concern. At 6% for the total cohort it would represent 485 users who had received equipment across Brighton and Hove.

6% stopped using the equipment because of a problem





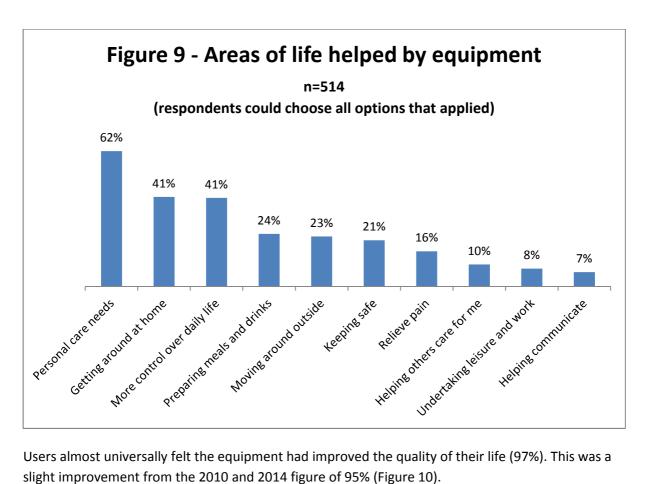
10. Impact on life

Users were generally extremely positive about the impact their equipment had had on their life. In many cases it had made the difference of being able to do routine daily tasks on their own. Equipment allowed them to perform essential tasks like washing themselves, getting around the home and shopping. Being able to do these things significantly enhanced the quality of their life and gave them a sense of dignity and self respect. Users were extremely grateful for the difference on their lives the equipment made.

Having the mobility support has made such a difference to my life! I just wouldn't be able to get around without it.

Service user

As would be expected a large number of users reported that equipment helped them with personal care needs (62%), getting around the home (41%) and gave them generally more control over daily life (41%). Equipment also helped with other areas of life including outside mobility (23%), safety (21%) and pain relief (16%) (Figure 9).

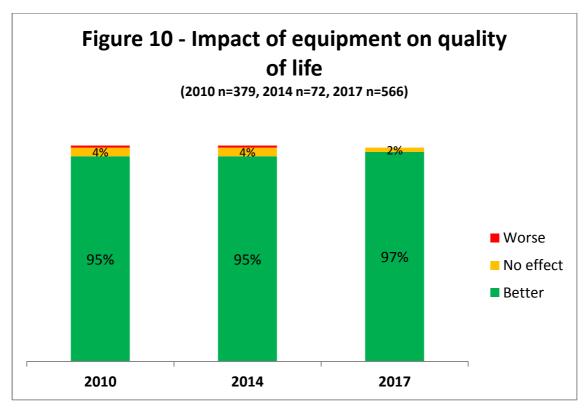


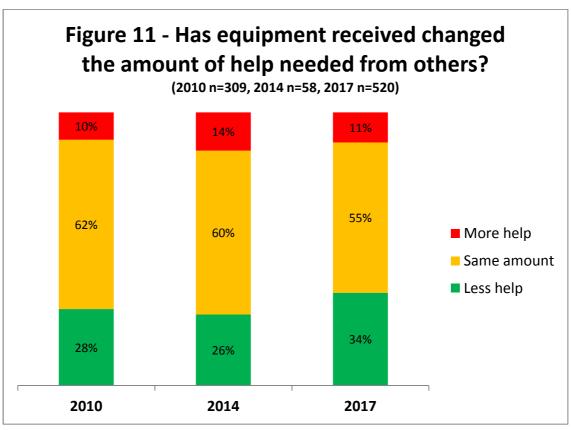
Users almost universally felt the equipment had improved the quality of their life (97%). This was a slight improvement from the 2010 and 2014 figure of 95% (Figure 10).

Having the equipment has made me able to stay at home and take care of my needs. Without it I'd be in a care home.

Service user

A third of users (34%) reported that the equipment meant that they needed less help from others (Figure 11). This was a slight improvement on the 2014 figure of 26% and the 2010 figure of 28%. Of some concern was the finding that one in 10 (11%) of users reported that they required more help as a result of the equipment received. It is not clear whether respondents meant that the equipment itself had caused the need for more help or whether personal circumstances had been the cause.

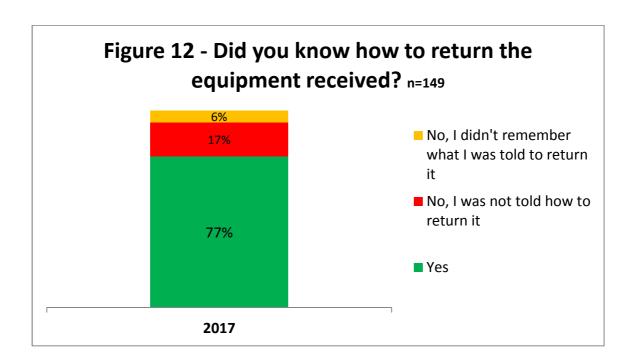




11. Returning equipment

Users who no longer used the equipment provided were asked whether they had known how to return it. Although the majority said that they did (77%) a significant minority (34%) said they were either not told or didn't remember how to return it. Users failing to return equipment is an obvious weakness in a system that relies on recycling equipment and is likely to have significant cost implications. Whether users are not being told how to do it by staff or are forgetting the information, it is important that this is rectified as much as possible. Improved communications at the point of delivery or installation and at the follow-up check could be one means of addressing this problem.

34% did not know how to return equipment they no longer needed



12. Conclusion

The evaluation demonstrated that the Equipment and Adaptations service was effective at meeting users' needs and made a significant difference to people's lives. Satisfaction levels for the overall service were very high with positive feedback on the various aspects of the service including assessment, the suitability of equipment selected, and delivery and installation.

Improved performance in key areas

Performance indicators were generally slightly improved on findings from similar user surveys conducted in 2010 and 2014. Significant improvement was demonstrated in the extent to which users were allowed to choose equipment and in the incidence of non-usage because of problems encountered with the equipment. These improvements are particularly welcome because strong performance in these areas is strongly correlated with user satisfaction with service. The only comparison area where the new provider performed worse than their predecessor was in aftercare, where a third of users reported not receiving any follow-up contact compared to 27% in 2010.

Good customer relations

Feedback on various aspects of customer service was particularly strong with widespread mention from users of the professionalism and courteousness of staff and health professionals. Users were generally very confident that their needs had been properly assessed and the right equipment or adaptation had been selected for them. A key factor in ensuring the assessment was a positive experience for users was allowing them an opportunity to choose what they wanted. Nearly all users (96%) felt they had had some influence in the decision and this experience contributed to satisfaction about the service as a whole. Almost half (47%) of dissatisfied users felt they had had little or no choice in what was chosen.

Delivery and installation delays

Although the delivery and installation process is usually efficient with the service ensuring the timely delivery of equipment, some users are experiencing delays which is causing significant hardship. About 17% of users reported experiencing problems as a result of the length of time waiting for equipment. This figure was 18% in 2010 which suggests it is has been a persistent problem for some years. The hardship that was widely reported by users when they experienced delays is a reminder that the service should seek to remedy this situation and minimise delays as far as possible.

Uneven aftercare

One of the weakest areas of performance for the service was the incidence of follow-up checks. A third of users reported not receiving any contact after receiving the equipment which was slightly higher than the 27% reported in 2010. Dissatisfaction with the service overall was strongly correlated to the absence of follow-up. It was also correlated to occasions when equipment was abandoned because of a problem experienced. A quarter (24%) of cases when equipment was no longer used were attributed to a 'problem' e.g. it was found not to help, it was difficult to use, it was unsafe, or it got broken or damaged.

Communication could be improved to minimise this type of occurrence and support provided to remedy issues as and when they arise.

Improved quality of life but only some users requiring less help

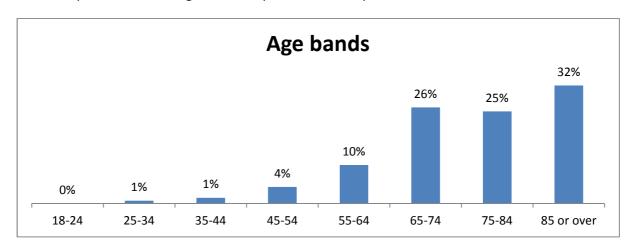
Almost all users felt the equipment had significantly improved quality of life. Many reported that the equipment had given them greater independence by allowing them to do routine tasks on their own. This outcome, however, did not necessarily mean they needed less help. Only a third of users (34%) reported that the equipment had led to less need for help from others.

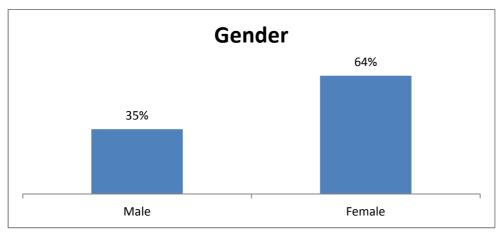
13. Recommendations

- The service maintains strong customer relations taking time to understand user's needs and working with them closely to identify appropriate equipment.
- The service allows user's choices where appropriate in selecting equipment.
- Increased attention to efficient and timely delivery aiming to minimise problems experienced by users waiting for equipment.
- A more consistent aftercare service ensuring all users receive a follow-up check to monitor use of equipment.
- Frequent and clear communication to users and carers about how to return equipment when no longer needed.

Appendix

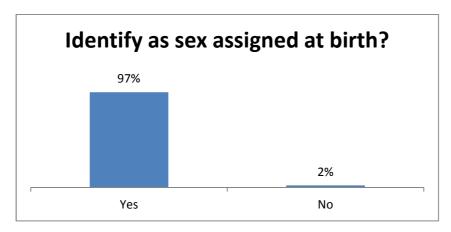
1. Equalities monitoring data from questionnaire respondents

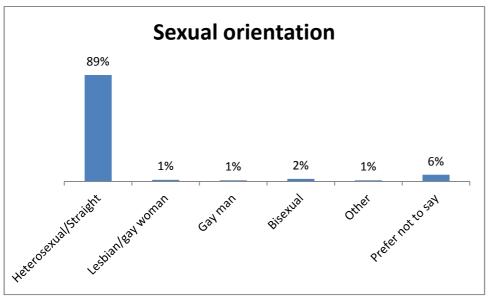


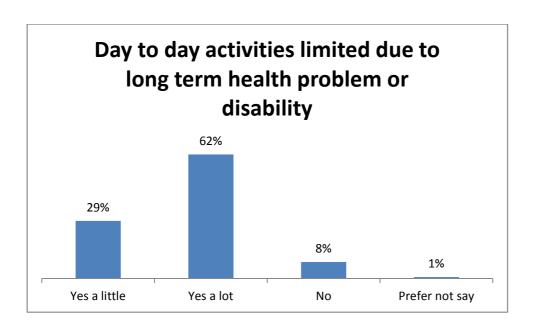


Ethnic origin		
White	English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	90%
	Irish	2%
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0%
	Any other White background	1%
Asian or Asian British	Bangladeshi	0%
	Indian	0%
	Pakistani	0%
	Chinese	0%
	Any other Asian background	1%
Black or Black British	African	2%
	Caribbean	1%
	Any other Black background	0%
Mixed	Asian & White	0%

	Black African & White	0%
	Black Caribbean & White	0%
	Any other mixed background	0%
Other Ethnic Group	Arab	1%
	Any other ethnic	1%
Prefer not to say		1%







2. Equipment review service user interview schedule

Introduction

We are doing research on the Equipment and Adaptations service to see how well the service is meeting people's needs.

We are interested in your experience of the service. Please be honest and truthful in your answers. Your information will be used to help improve the service.

Assessment

Someone from the service, e.g. occupational therapist or nurse, discussed your needs and what equipment/adaptation would help you.

Describe how this assessment took place. How well did it work in identifying the right equipment for your needs?

What equipment was decided would be right for you?

Getting the equipment/adaptation

After the assessment, how long did you wait to get the equipment? Did the wait, if any, cause any problems for you? Was there any communication with you during this period?

Describe how the installation of the equipment went. Was information provided about how to use the equipment and who to contact for further support?

Were you told how to return the equipment after you had finished using it?

After installation, was there any follow-up to check everything was OK? Please describe.

Returning equipment

If you have stopped using any of the equipment/adaptations, did you return it? Please explain.

Impact of equipment for you

How helpful was the equipment you used? Did it improve your quality of life? Did it help you be more independent in any way? Did it make a difference to the personal support you needed?

Overall impressions

How well do you think the service served your needs? What was it particularly good at/poor at? How could the service be improved?

Section 1: Your most recent piece of equipment or minor adaptation to your home

Although you may have had equipment or a minor adaptation to your home previously, please answer in regards to your *most recent* experience of the service.

Q1	Overall, how shome that you				equipment /	minor adapt	ation to your
	Extremely Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Quite Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Quite Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Extremely Dissatisfied
Q2	How were you	ur equipmen	t / minor ad	aptation need	ls discussed	with you?	
	Please select	all that app	ly				
	I spoke to sor I had an asse I went to a Dis	neone on the ssment at the sability Living	telephone hospital Centre				
Q3	Who made th	e 20000me	ent of vour n	appds?			
Q0	Occupational Nurse Other assess	therapist					
	Please speci	fy who 'Othe	r' assessor w	/as			
Q4	How happy a	re you with t	he way thos	se who discus	sed your nee	eds treated y	ou?
	I was very hap I was fairly ha I was fairly un	opy with the v ppy with the happy with th	way they trea way they trea ne way they t	ated mereated me			

Q5	Did you feel that you had a choice about what equipment or minor adaptations to your home you had?
	Yes, I chose what I wanted.
	Yes, what I wanted played a role in what I got.
	No, what I wanted didn't really affect what I got.
	No, there wasn't any real choice
	I didn't need a choice
26	What were you given as a result of the assessment of your needs?
	Please select all that apply
	A single piece of equipment
	A number of pieces of equipment
	A minor adaptation to your home
	Advice
7	What information was given about the equipment?
Q8	Did the length of time waiting for your equipment / minor adaptation to your home cause you any problems?
	No
	Yes, but only minor problems.
	Yes, serious problems.
	Please explain further if problems were experienced.
Q 9	Were you shown how to use the equipment / minor adaptation to your home?
	No, but I did not need to be shown.
	No, and I think I should have been shown.
	Yes, but not as well as I should have been shown
	Yes I was shown, but later on I was unsure of how to use it
	Yes, it was set up and demonstrated clearly and helpfully

Q10	Did anyone contact you afterwards to check everything was OK?
	No, I was not contacted. Yes, someone telephoned me. Yes, someone visited me. Yes, someone telephoned me and someone visited me. Don't know/ Can't remember
Q11	Have you stopped using any of the equipment or minor adaptations you recently received?
	Select all that apply
	No, I use all of the equipment I was given [skip to Q13]. Yes, I no longer needed it
Q12	Did you know how to return it?
	Yes
Section 2	2: The Impact of your Equipment or Minor Adaptation
you use	ns in this section look at the impact all the minor adaptations to your home and equipment have on your life. Some of the questions ask directly about the impact while others ask our life more generally.
Q13	Please read the following statement and then select the answer which comes closest to your situation?
	How has the equipment/minor adaptation affected the quality of your life?
	It has made it It has made it a It has not had any It has made it a It has made it a lot much better little better effect little worse

	you with more than one area of your life).
	Please select all that apply
	Getting around within your home (such as small portable ramp, grab rails)
	Helping you communicate and keep in touch with other people (such as mobility aids, sound magnifier, an adapted telephone)
	Helping keep you safe (such as alarms, fall detectors)
	Helping others care for you (such as transfer boards, shower chair on wheels)
	Helping you have more control over your daily life (this could be any piece of equipment) Helping you undertake leisure and work activities (such as talking books, screen readers and mobility aids)
Q15	Has having the equipment / minor adaptation to your home changed the amount of help you need from others?
	Not applicable as I do not need any help from others
	I now need less help from others
	I now need more help from others.
Sectio	n 3: About Yourself
	nswers to the next group of questions ask you about yourself. This information will be used nitoring purposes only.
Q16	What is your age?
	18-24
	25-34
	35-44
	45-54
	55-64
	65-74
	75-84
	85 or over

We would like to know what areas of your life are helped by equipment or minor adaptations to your home? (A single piece of equipment or minor adaptation may help

Q14

Q17	What gender are you?	
	Male]
	Female	
	Other]
	Prefer not to say	
Q18	Do you identify as the sex you were assigned at birth?	
	For people who are transgender, the sex they were assigned at birth is <u>not</u> the same as their own sense of their sex.	
	Yes]
	No	_
	Prefer not to say]
Q19	What is your ethnic origin?	
	White	
	English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	
	Irish	
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	
	Any other White background]
	Asian or Asian British	
	Bangladeshi	
	Indian	
	Pakistani	
	Chinese	
	Any other Asian background]
	Black or Black British	
	African	
	Caribbean	
	Any other Black background]
	Mixed	
	Asian & White	7
	Black African & White	j
	Black Caribbean & White]
	Any other mixed background]
	Other Ethnic Group	
	Arab	7
	Any other ethnic group	j

	Prefer not to say	
Q25	What is your sexual orientation?	
	Heterosexual/Straight	
	Lesbian/Gay woman	🔲
	Gay man	
	Bisexual	
	Other	
	Prefer not to say	
Q26	Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability whice lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?	h has
	Yes a little	
	Yes a lot	
	No (skip next question)	🗍
	Prefer not to say	=
Q27	Please state the type of impairment?	
	Please tick all that apply	
	Physical Impairment Sensory Impairment	🔲
	Learning Disability/DifficultyLong-standing illness	=
	Mental Health condition	=
	Autistic Specturm	
	Other Development Condition	
	Other	
All	I completed surveys qualify to be entered in a prize draw to win a £50 Amazon vouche	e <mark>r.</mark>
	One winner will be picked at random and contacted by phone and email.	
Ple	ease indicate here if you wish to be entered in the prize draw.	
	add maldate here if you wente be entered in the phize draw.	
	watch would like to interview users of the equipment service to get a detailed perspec performance of the service.	tive
-	•	
Ple	ease indicate here if you are willing to do a 30 minute interview.	

interviewed:
name
phone number
email
Prize draw terms and conditions: Only one entry per person. Incomplete surveys will not be entered into the draw. One winner will be drawn at random from qualified survey entrants. The judge's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. The winner will be notified via the details provided by the

Please provide your contact details if you are entering the prize draw or have agreed to be

Thank you for completing the survey!

survey respondent. To claim the prize the contacted person must respond to the notification within 14

Please return by post in the FREEPOST envelope provided.