

Adaptations, six months on

A report reviewing the experiences of Manchester citizens after receipt of an adaptation in their home



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1. Introduction

1.1 This report aims to present the key findings, conclusions and recommendations from interviews gathering the opinions of and feedback from Manchester citizens regarding their experience living with adaptations in their home.

1.2 NHS England define home adaptations as ‘changes you can make to your home. These make it safer and easier to move around and do every day tasks’¹.

1.3 In Manchester, Manchester City Council provide both minor and major adaptations to citizens of Manchester to help them live independently. Minor adaptations include lever taps, grab rails, half-steps and entrances, and small ramps. Major adaptations include wider doorways, ramps, downstairs bathrooms, suitable heating systems, wet rooms, and controls for lighting².

1.4 Adaptations are a form of supported living, which itself refers to schemes that provide personal care to people as part of the support that they need to live in their own homes³.

1.5 After contacting the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), we have been informed there is no guidance available when it comes to the time tale between assessment and social care adaptations in the home.

2. Background and Rationale

2.1 Healthwatch Manchester (HWM) enjoys a productive and collaborative partnership through its commissioning arrangements with Manchester City Council (MCC).

2.2 As the independent health and social care champion for Manchester citizens, HWM is at times the go to organisation when a review of a particular service is required. As part of its commissioning arrangements, MCC can direct up to two areas of work by HWM each year.

2.3 In March 2024, social care commissioning met with Healthwatch Manchester in order to explore the impact of adaptations on the wellbeing of Manchester citizens. At this meeting it was decided that a survey of ‘before and after’ adaptations would be deployed by Healthwatch Manchester to citizens in receipt of these adaptations through MCC.

2.4 Later in March 2024, the Trustee Board of HWM met to decide upon the priority areas of focus for the next year April 2024 - March 2025. At the request of MCC commissioners, the Board approved the review of adaptations in the home to be included in the HWM work plan.

2.5 In collaboration with MCC, HWM developed a survey to be completed through telephone interviews with citizens who had received an adaptation in their home at least six months prior.

¹ NHS England. Home Adaptations. [Website Link](#)

² Manchester City Council. Equipment and adaptations to help you live independently. [Website Link](#)

³ Supported living: A guide for social workers. [Website Link](#)

3. Methodology

3.1 In July 2024, HWM met with members of the Manchester Equipment & Adaptations Partnership (MEAP) to plan the project. From this meeting, HWM designed a promotional leaflet informing citizens about the project and a survey that would be used.

3.3 The survey (see Appendix) comprised a series of 30 questions regarding whether or not these adaptations had improved or changed the person's home life.

3.4 Before any adaptations can be provided, an occupational therapist must visit the home and assess whether the recipient needs any adaptations⁴. Therefore, questions about the length of this process were included in the survey.

3.5 MEAP used their database of people in Manchester who had received an adaptation within the last six months as the target group for this work. These citizens were given a leaflet and thus the option of contacting HWM to do the survey.

3.6 In total we completed 17 surveys with citizens. The findings from the surveys will be presented in a quantitative format to show a clearer and more concise picture of the citizens opinions. Despite the findings being presented in this way, we have included quotes from respondents to support our analysis.

3.7 The opportunity to take part in this review was promoted through online bulletins as well as physical leafletting. In previous recruitment drives to reviews, Healthwatch Manchester was able to offer a reimbursement for people's time. On this occasion due to budgetary constraints this was not possible.

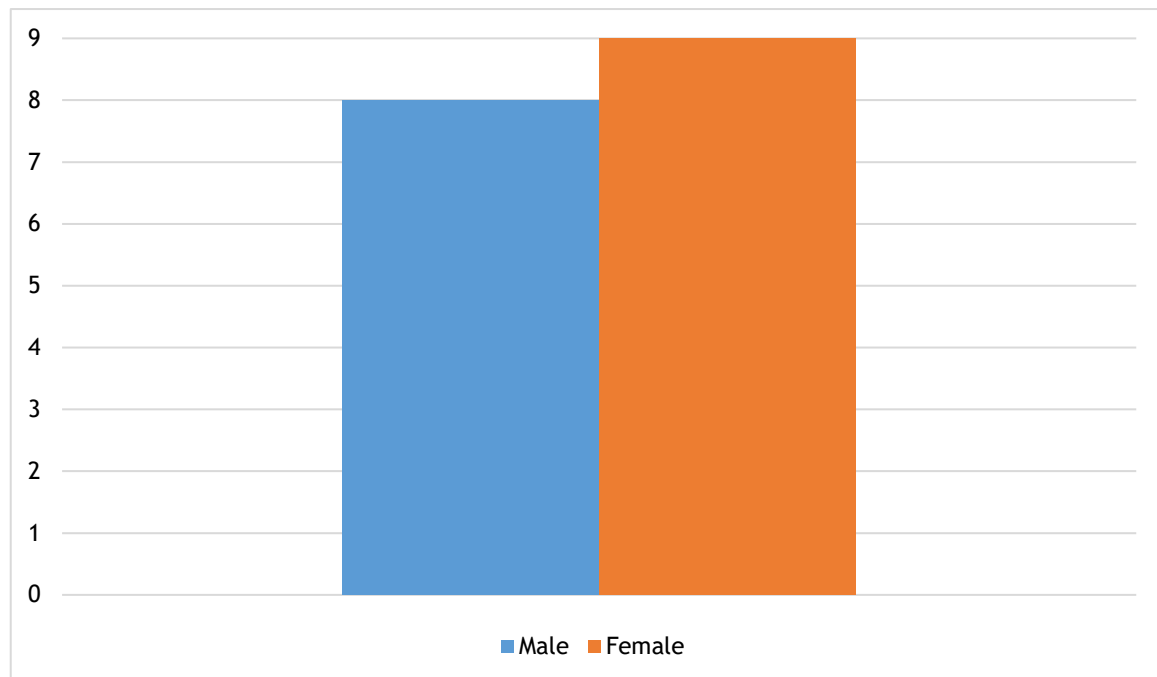
3.8 Despite repeated bulletins sent out to a wide audience, recruitment to the survey remained difficult and so a decision was made with social care commissioning to report on the smaller sample size. It should be noted that this review is a 'deep-dive' into the experiences of local citizens and is primarily a qualitative analysis.

3.9 Due to the smallness of the sample size in this review and the niche group of people involved, the demographics of the respondents do not include minority attributes such as minoritised ethnicity.

⁴ NHS England. Home Adaptations. Date Access 03/02/2025. [Website Link](#)

4. Findings

Question 1: what is your gender?

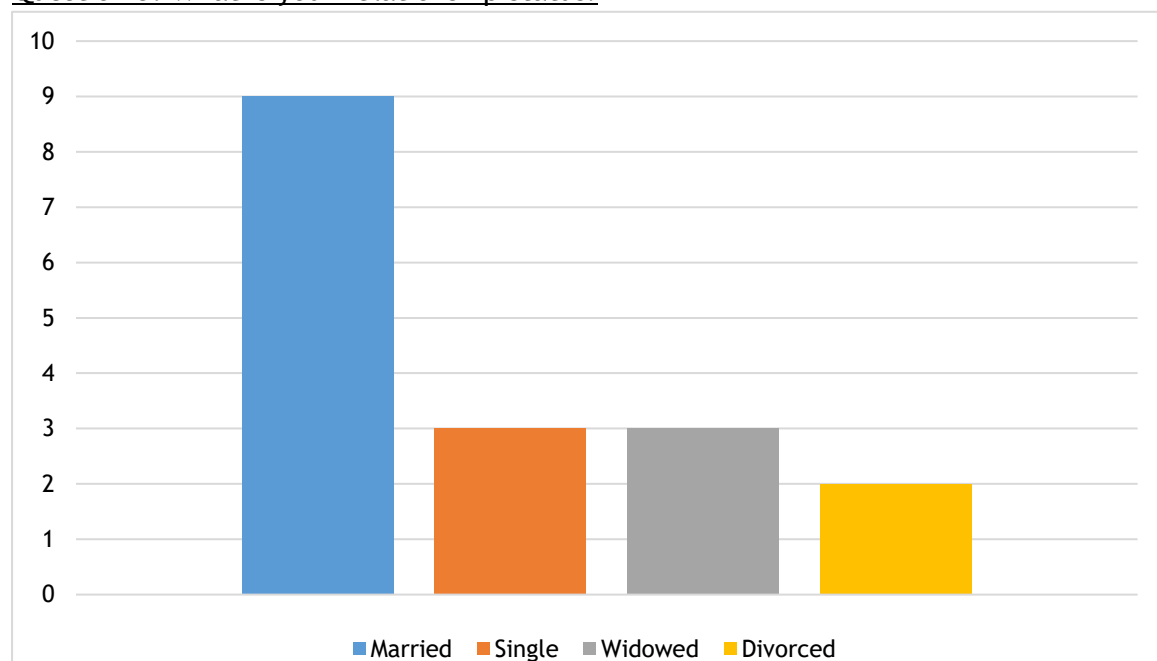


Question 1

Question 2. Is your current gender the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?

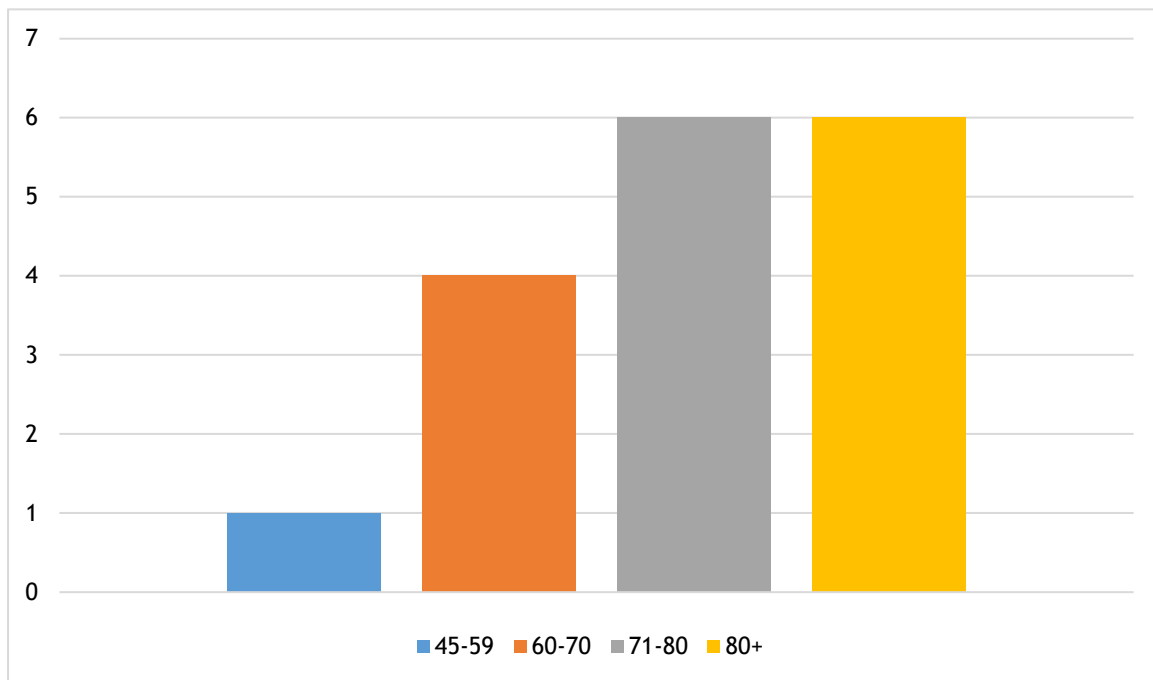
All 17 respondents answered this questions with a Yes.

Question 3. What is your relationship status?



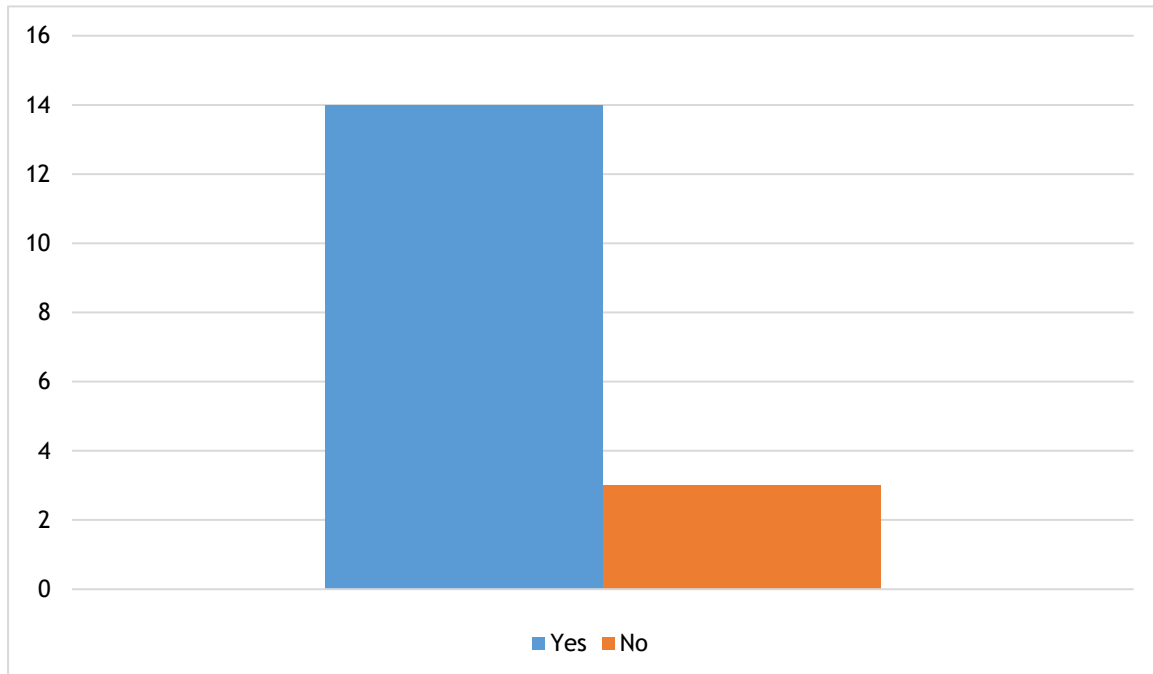
Question 3

Question 4. What is your age?



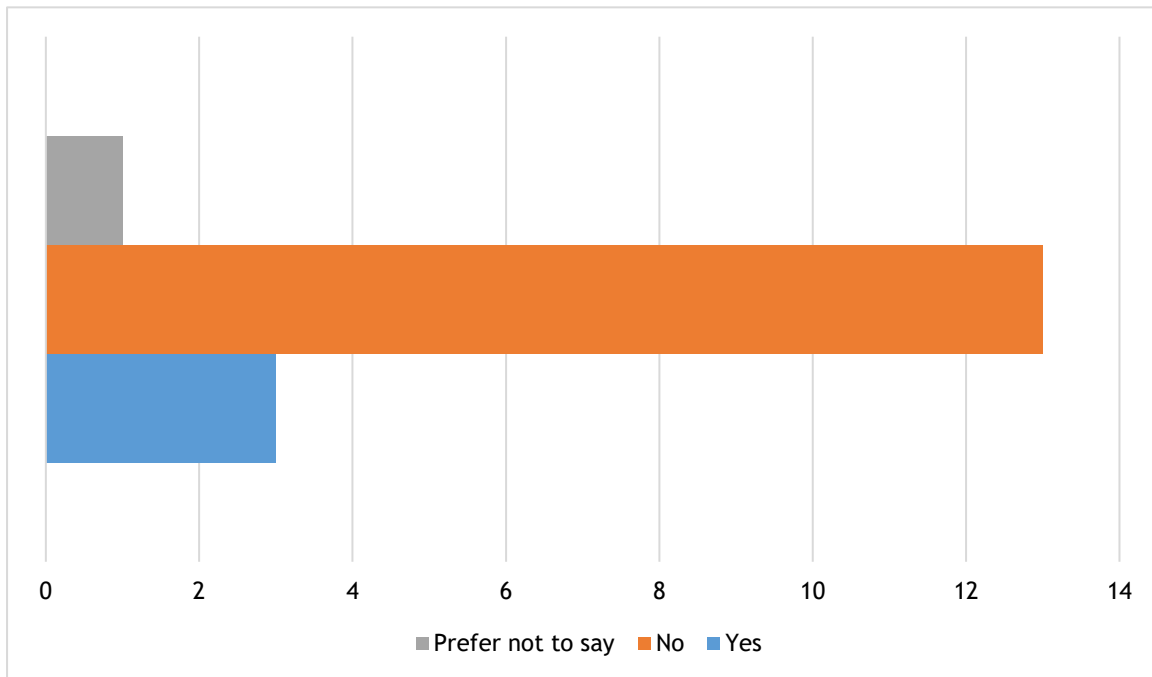
Question 4

Question 5. Do you consider yourself disabled?



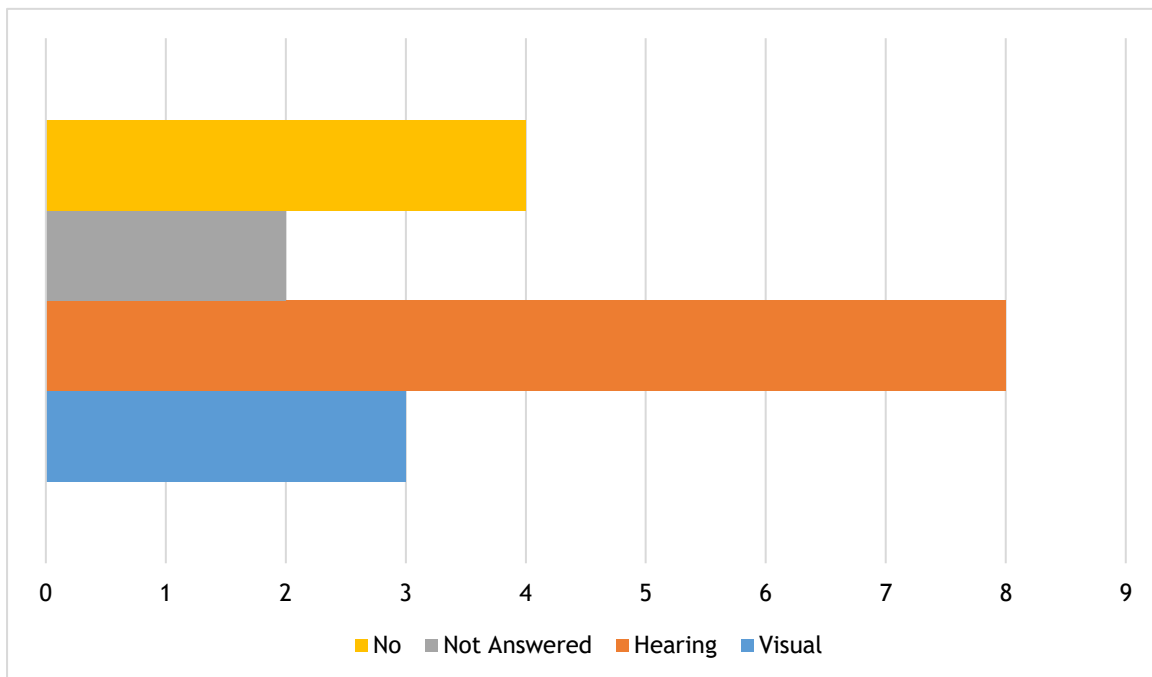
Question 5

Question 6; Would you describe yourself as neurodiverse?



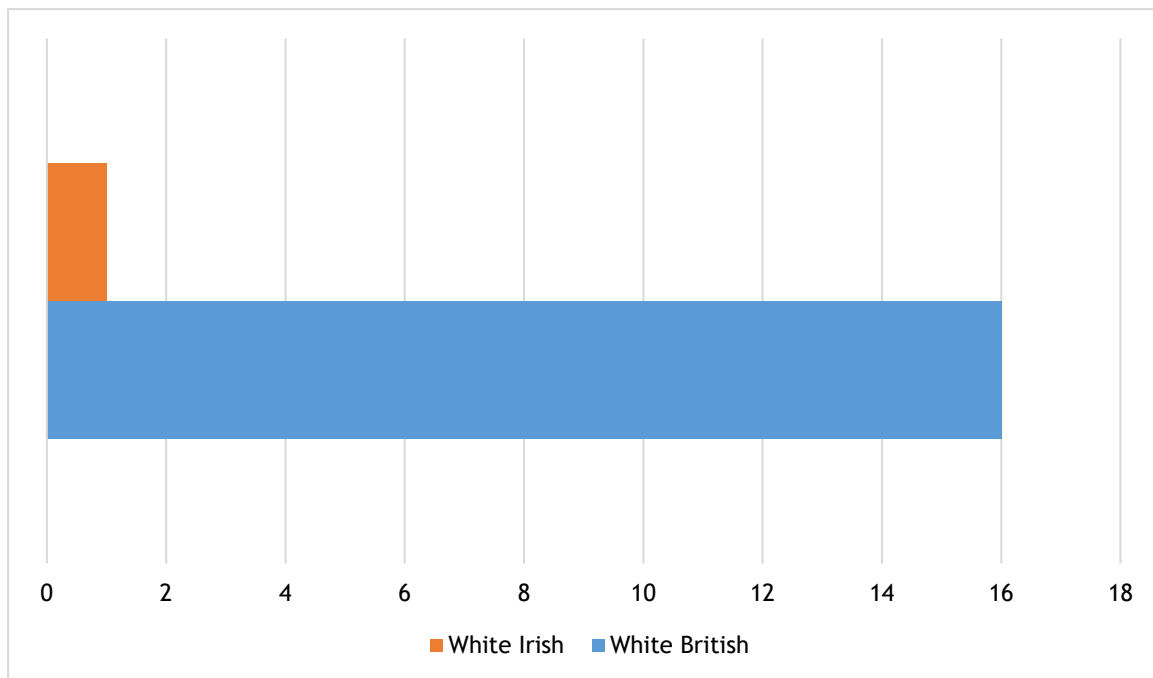
Question 6

Question 7: Do you have any sensory impairments?



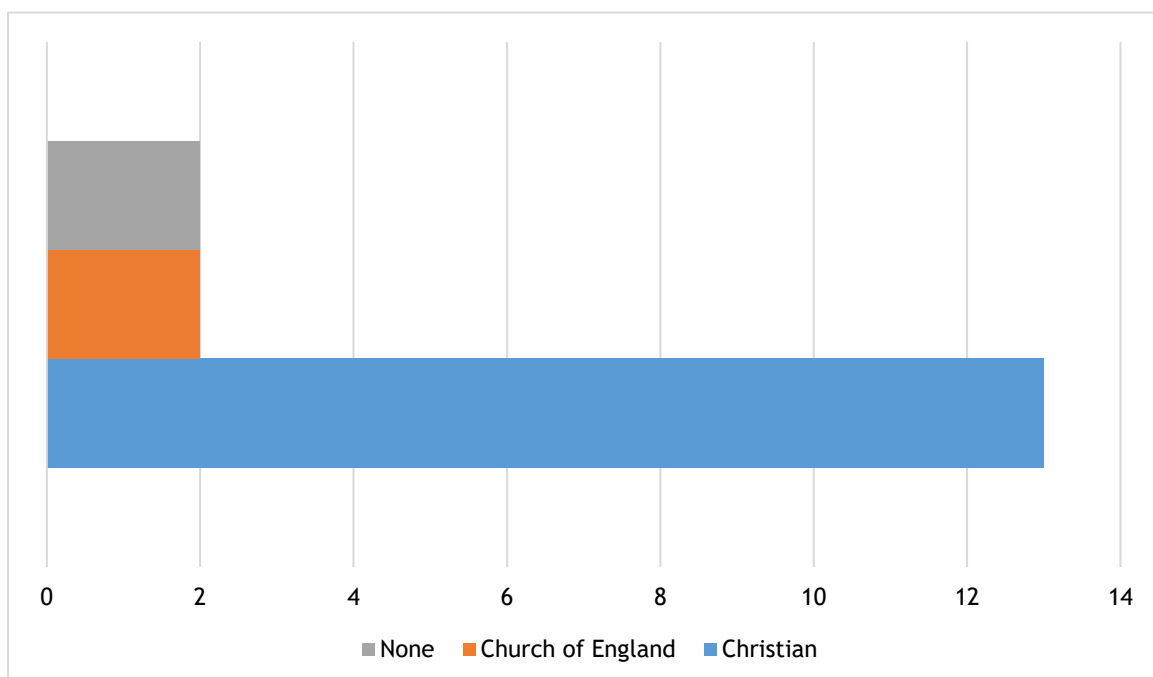
Question 7

Question 8: How would you describe your ethnicity?



Question 8

Question 9: What is your religion and/or belief?

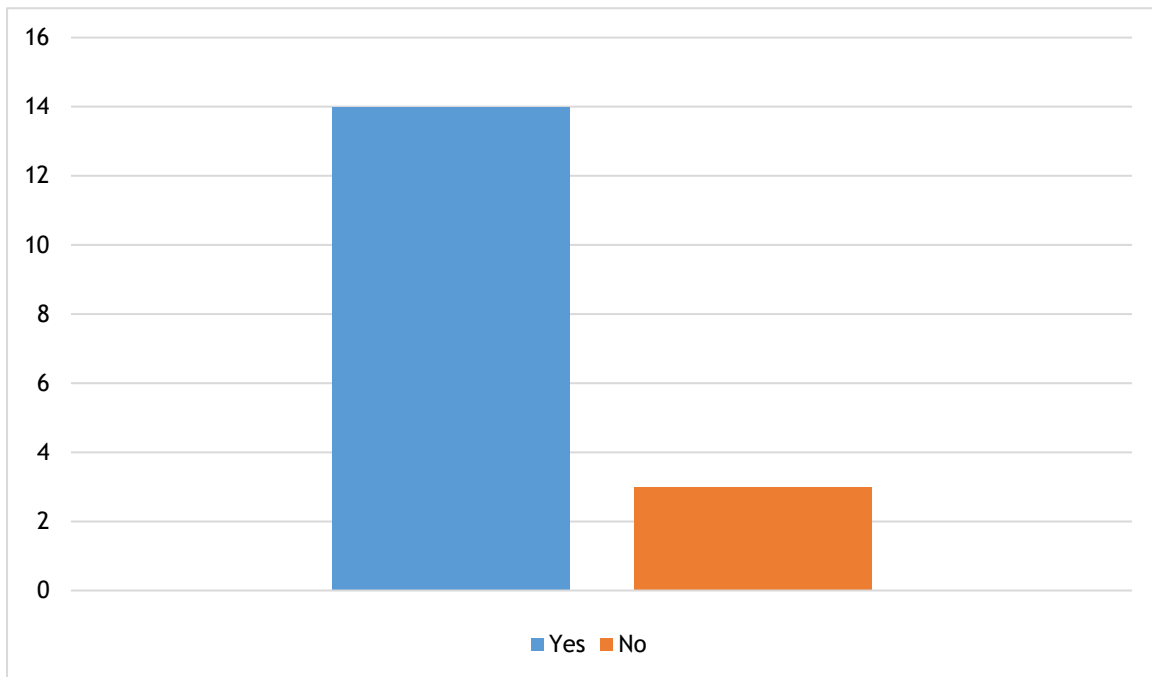


Question 9

Question 10. What is your sexual orientation?

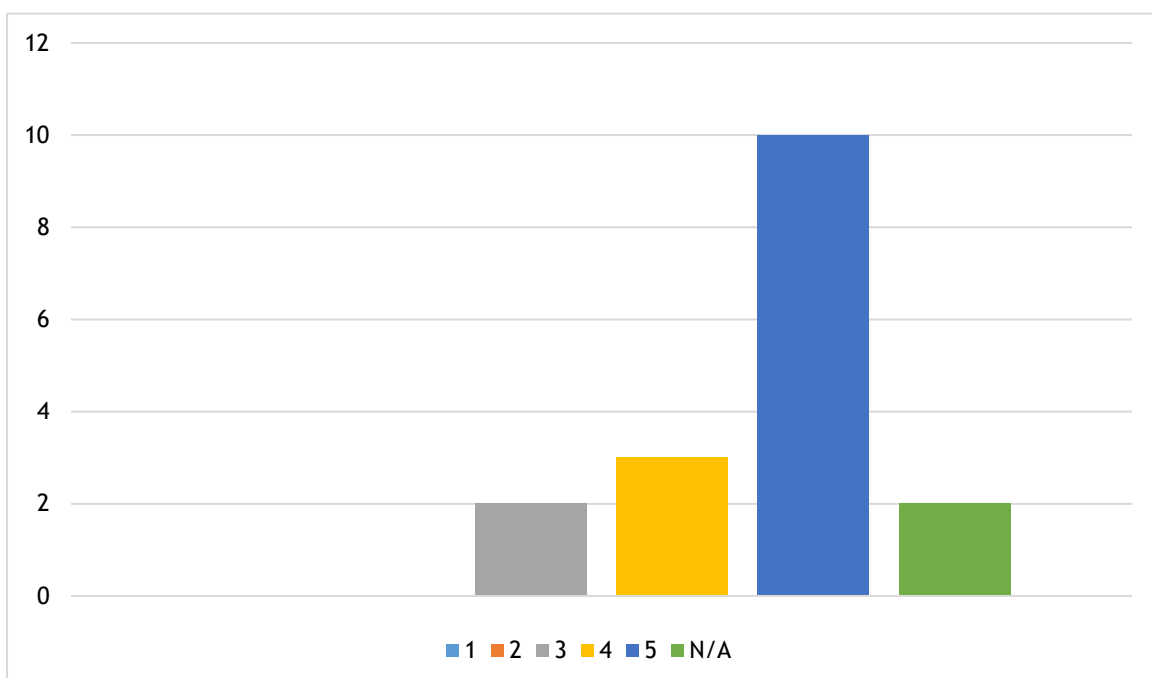
All respondents told us they were Heterosexual/Straight.

Question 11: Can you remember the assessment process where you were asked about the adaptations?



Question 11

Question 12: On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate the information you were given about the assessment process (1 = poor, 5 = excellent)?



Question 12

Question 13. Why did you give this score (for question 12)?

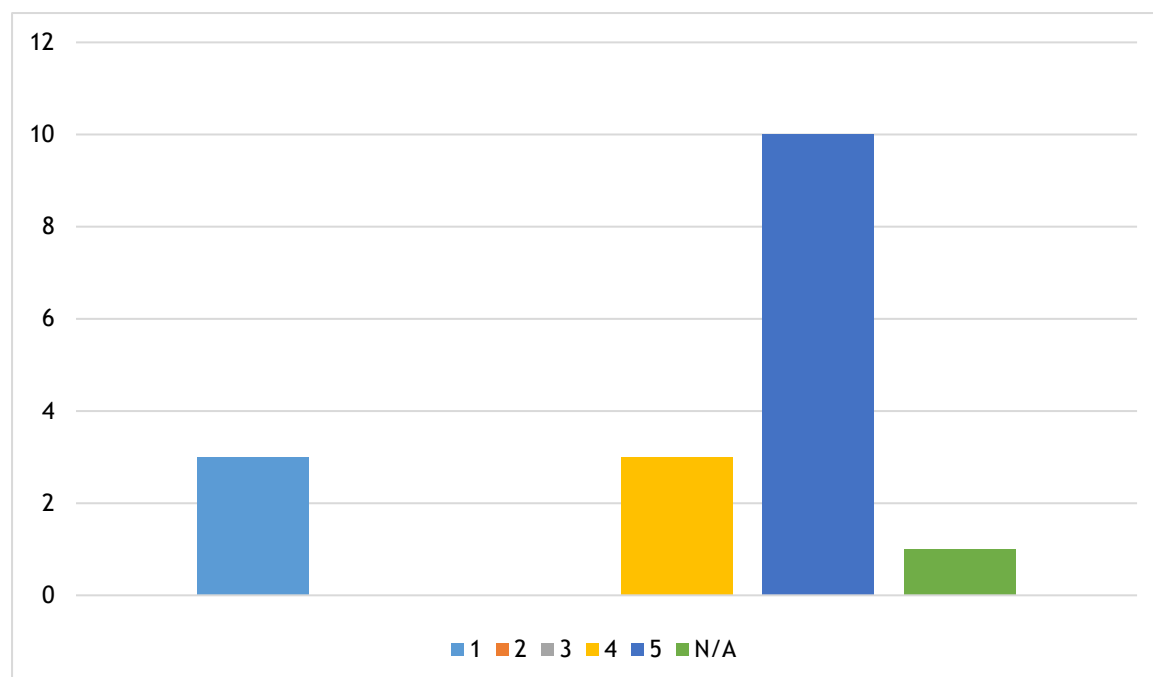
Responses to this question mainly centred around the communication between the assessor and the recipient. The majority of respondents reported that the information they were given about the assessment process was excellent, specifically mentioning that their questions were answered fully and in depth by the assessors. A quote to exemplify this is as follows:

'The man that came round was very easy going, explained everything and helped me understand the process'

A small number of respondents reported that the information given to them was insufficient. A quote to show this is as follows:

'I was quite unwell at that time, making it a bit difficult to understand. It's better to do the assessment more than once'

Question 14. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate the time between the assessment and receiving your adaptations (1 = poor, 5 = excellent)?



Question 14

Question 15. Why did you give this score (for question 14)?

The responses to this question were mostly positive, with respondents saying that they experienced a fast service between consultation and installation:

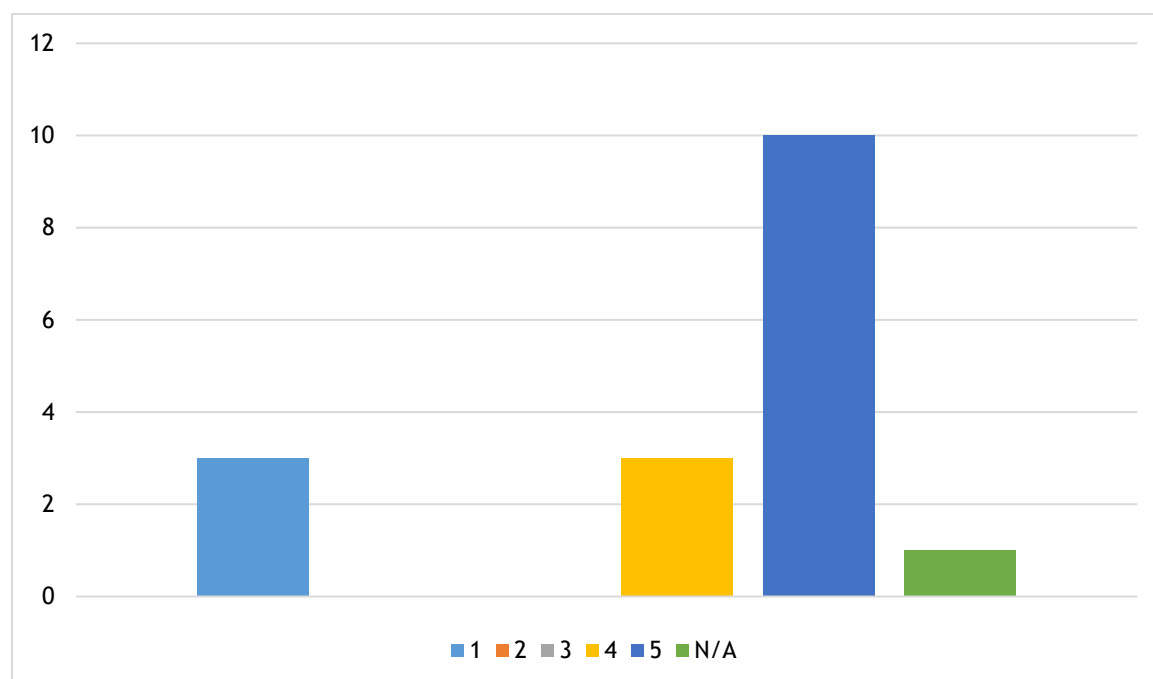
'They gave me an approximated date of around ten days, this was very quick'

Some respondents gave negative feedback, citing having to wait up to a year for their adaptation to be installed as the reason for their low score:

'it was months between final approval and the installation'

'Far too long, up to a year'

Q16. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate the overall assessment (1 = poor, 5 = excellent)?



Question 16

Question 17. Why did you give this score (for question 16)?

The majority of responses to this question were positive, with the majority of noting the positive change it has had on their lives. For example:

'The lady was very helpful. The adaptations are good. It has opened my life up and allowed me to live a better life'

On the other hand, some respondents described their experience in a much more negative light. For example:

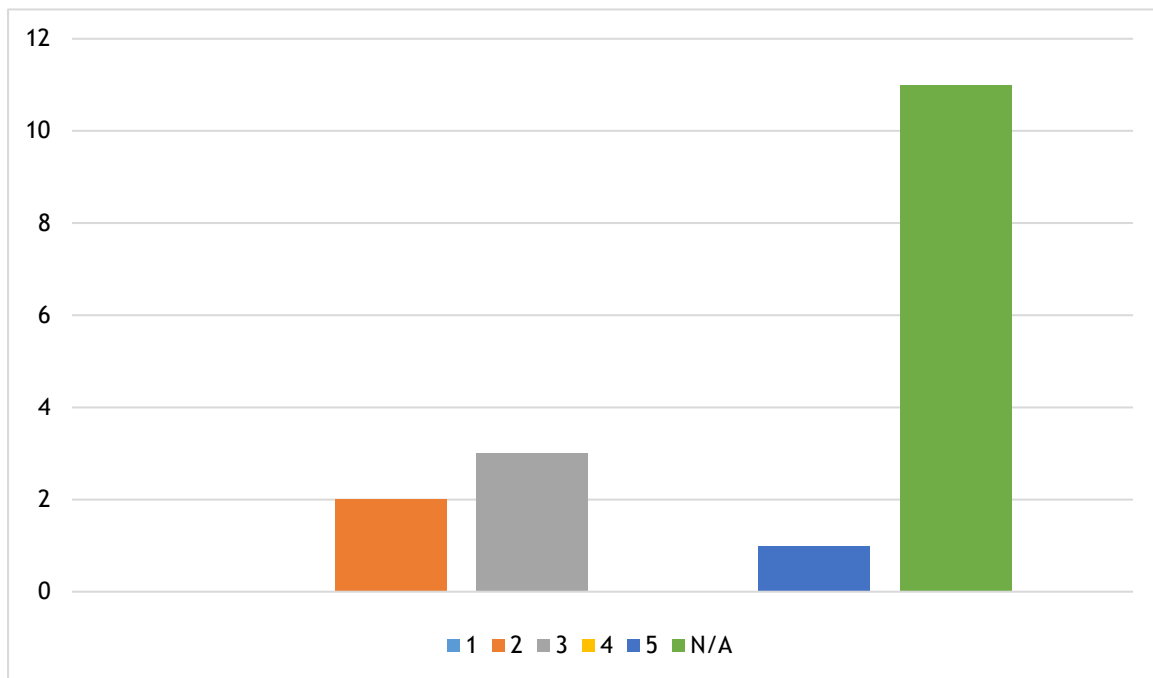
'It was sadly pathetic. I'd give it minus 5 if I could'

'It took too long time and the adaptation is not working'

Question 18. Did you receive any tech enabled care such as a pendant or wrist worn alarm, GPS tracker, enuresis sensor, smoke/carbon monoxide detector linked to a pendant/wrist worn alarm. If your answer is no, move onto Q22.

6 respondents told us they had received a form of tech enabled care.

Question 19. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate your experience before tech enabled care (1 = poor, 5 = excellent)?



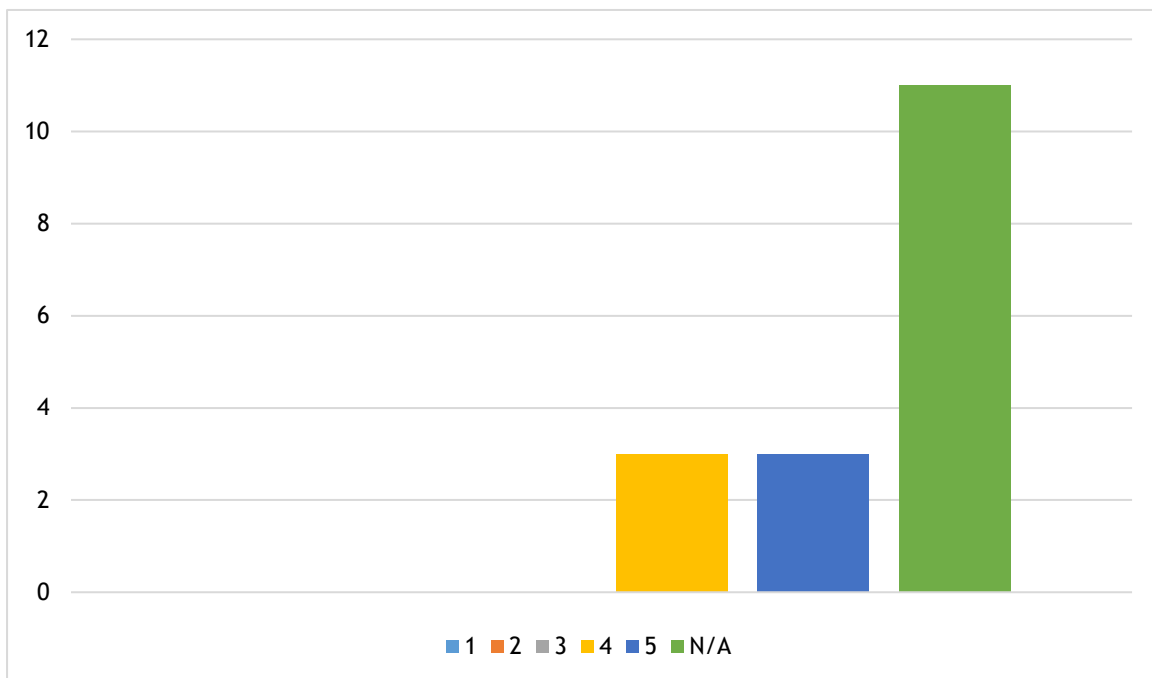
Question 19

Question 20. Why did you give this score (for question 19)?

The majority of respondents gave positive feedback when asked this question. Some respondents reported that they felt safer and calmer after receiving their tech enabled care. An example of a response is as follows:

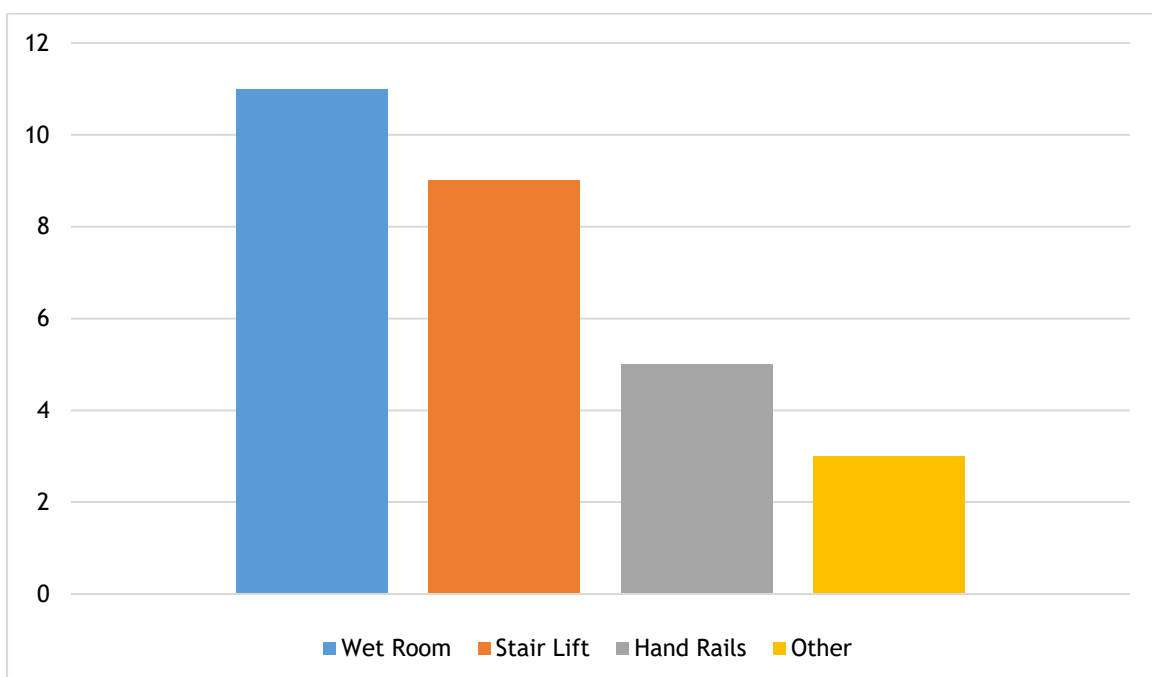
'I didn't feel unsafe before but I feel slightly safer now'

Question 21. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate your experience after receiving tech enabled care (1 = poor, 5 = excellent)?



Question 21

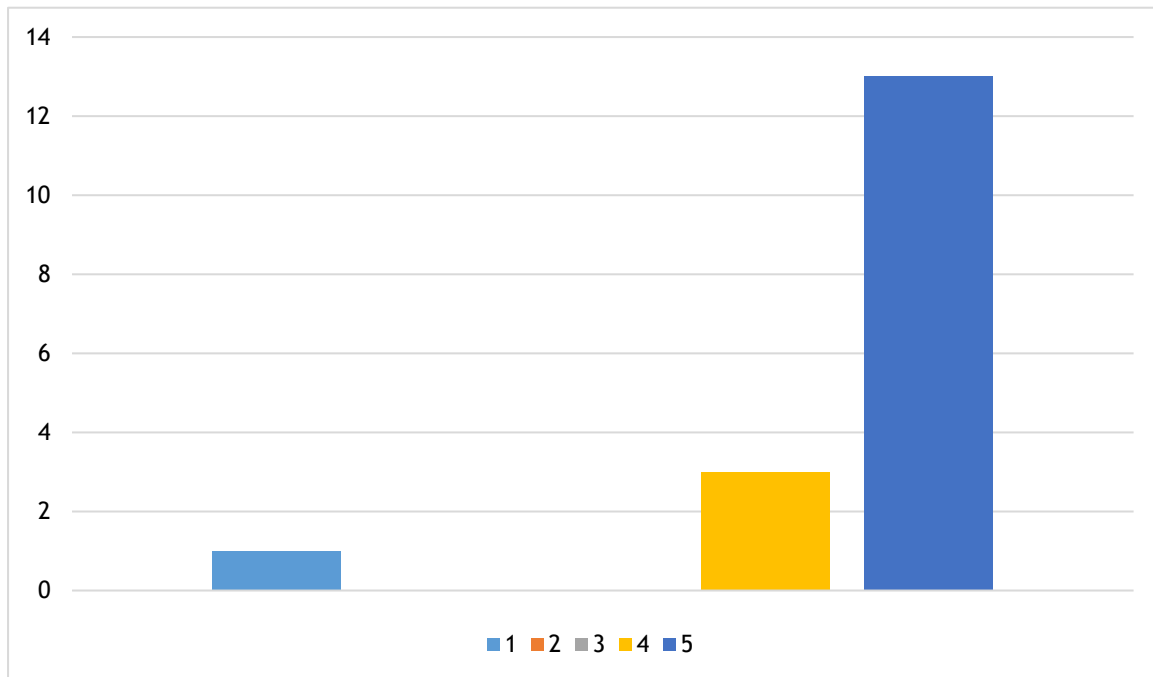
Question 22. Which adaptation have you received in your home?



Question 22

Please note, many respondents had received multiple adaptations in their home and so the total number of adaptations exceeds the total number of people interviewed.

Question 23. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate your improvements in wellbeing (1 = poor, 5 = excellent)?



Question 23

Question 24. Why did you give this score (for question 23)?

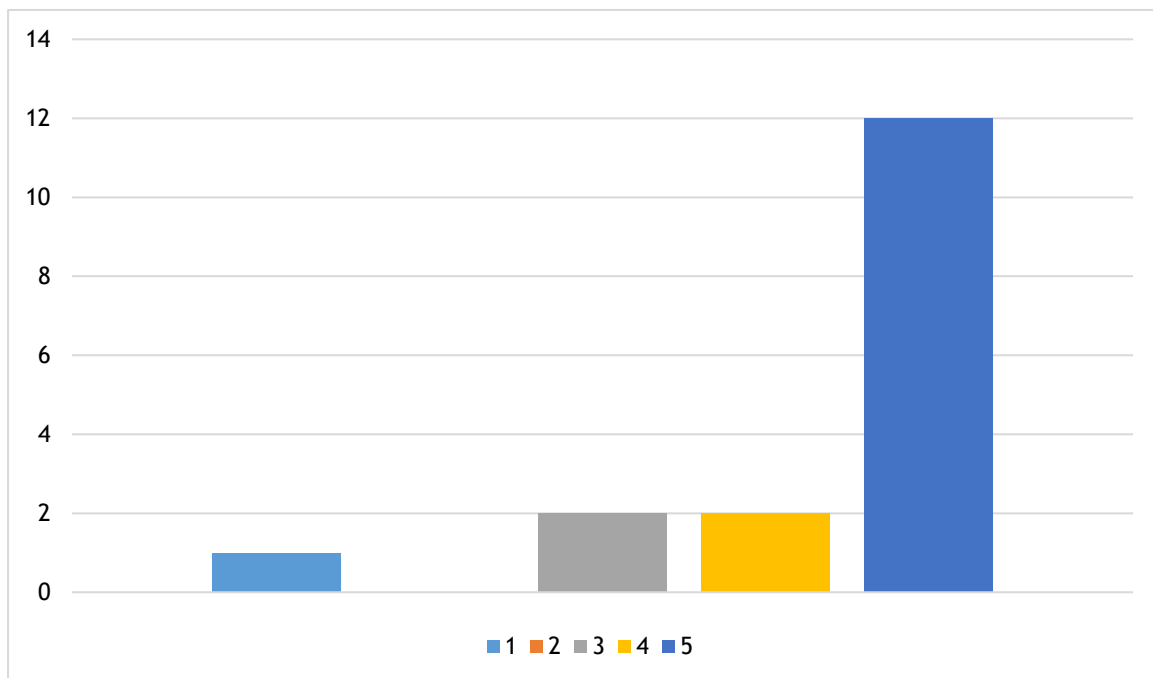
The majority of responses to this question were overwhelmingly positive. Quotes to showcase these opinions are as follows:

'(Score of) 5 without a doubt. It has made my life a lot easier'

'It's a lot easier since the change, more room to move with wheelchair'

'I'd say 6 if I could. It's been a drastic improvement'

Question 25. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate your improvements in confidence (1 = poor, 5 = excellent)?



Question 25

Question 26. Why did you give this score (for question 25)?

The majority of patients reported that the adaptations had given them the ability to do things alone and feel more confident. Quotes to show this are as follows:

'I can get upstairs without fear. I have fell in the past so this is safer'

'I used to need someone with me but now I can get a shower whenever I want'

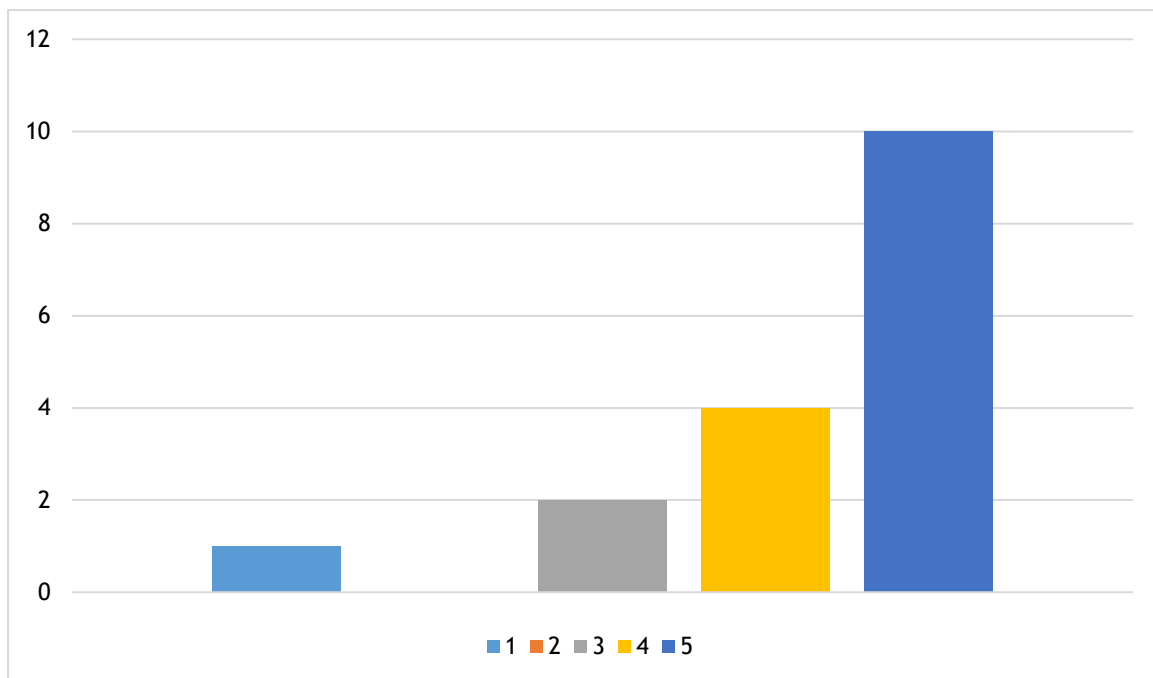
'It has given me confidence because feel safer at home'

Naturally some respondents felt as though their confidence had not been improved since their adaptation:

'I didn't have any confidence issues before the adaptation'

'The adaptation is not working'

Question 27. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate your improvements in mobility (1 = poor, 5 = excellent)?



Question 27

Question 28. Why did you give this score (for question 27)?

The majority of respondents felt as though their mobility had improved:

'I depend on it every day to live a normal life'

'In the past I'd have to wait for my family to help me but I can do it myself now'

Although some patients felt as though the adaptations had improved their mobility, they still faced challenges in other areas of their homes that hadn't been address

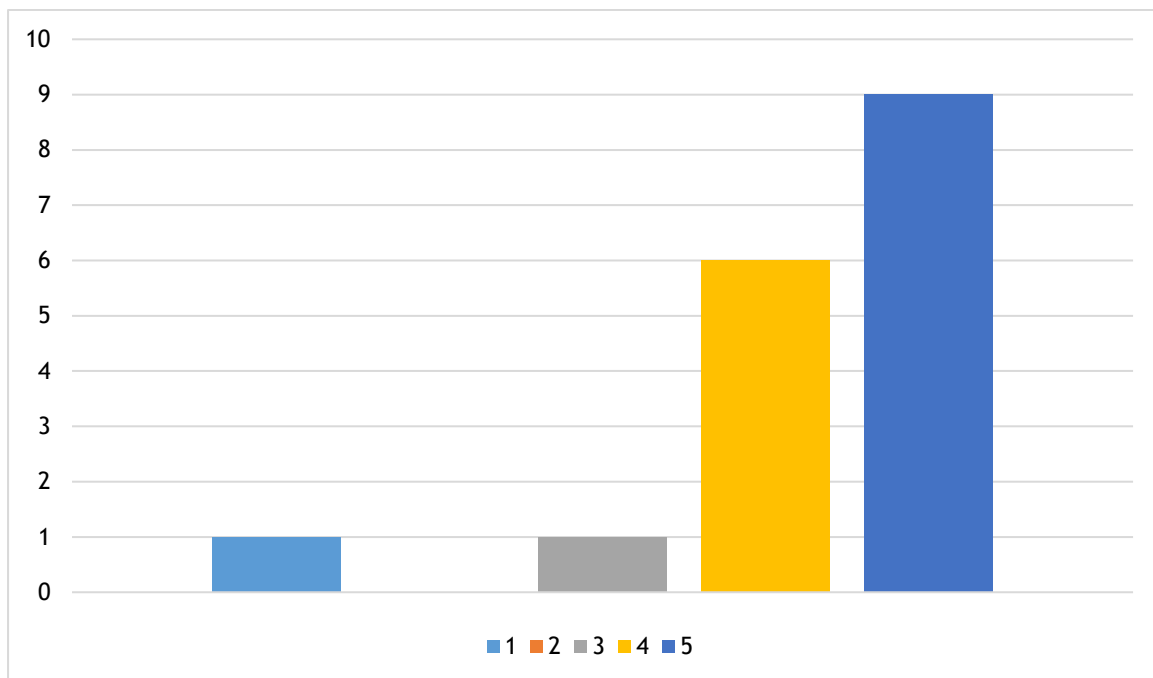
'I am happy to be moving around easier from room to room, but I still want (some things) to improve like the kitchen as it is a bit too tall to use'

Unfortunately, there were a small number of patients who saw no improvement in their mobility:

'Not much as my physical ability is still a problem, I can't cook due to my disability'

'I am still in a wheelchair so there's not been a big difference'

Question 29. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate your improvements in independence (1 = poor, 5 = excellent)?



Question 29

Question 30. Why did you give this score (for question 29)?

The majority of respondents reported improvements in their independence since receiving their adaptation. The following quote captures this sentiment:

'Apart from body aches and pains I can do things on my own, make food and little things around the house. I see my wife every day in her care home. It's very important that I can see my wife and the stair lift allows me to stay safe and then see my wife. I can't think of better friend in my house than this stair lift'

As the graph above shows, not all respondents felt as though their adaptations had led to an improvement in independence:

'My new carer is more helpful in assisting me than the adaptations have been'

5. Conclusions

5.1 The majority of recipients reported they were well informed about the assessment process.

5.2 The adaptations received by the respondents are reported by a significant majority to have led to improvements in their wellbeing, confidence, mobility and independence.

5.3 A concerning number of respondents felt disappointed with the wait time between their assessment and the installation of adaptations in their home.

6. Recommendations

6.1 The quality of information provided to recipients of adaptations should remain at the same level throughout all future adaptation installations.

6.2 This review should be repeated with the offer of reimbursement in order to increase the sample size of respondents and also its diversity.

6.3 This review should also be repeated and broadened out to include a deeper dive into tech enabled care through collaboration with suppliers across Manchester.

This report has been posted to the lead officer overseeing adaptations in the home with a request for a response, but no response has been received.

Appendix

- Q1. What is your gender?
- Q2. Is your current gender the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?
- Q3. What is your relationship status?
- Q4. What is your age?
- Q5. Do you consider yourself disabled?
- Q6. Would you describe yourself as neurodiverse?
- Q7. Do you have any sensory impairments?
- Q8. How would you describe your ethnicity?
- Q9. What is your religion/belief?
- Q10. What is your sexual orientation?
- Q11. Can you remember the assessment process where you were asked about the adaptations?
- Q12. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate the information you were given about the assessment process?
- Q13. Why did you give this score?
- Q14. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate the time between the assessment and receiving your adaptations?
- Q15. Why did you give this score?
- Q16. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate the overall assessment?
- Q17. Why did you give this score?
- Q18. Did you receive any tech enabled care such as a pendant or wrist worn alarm, GPS tracker, enuresis sensor, smoke/carbon monoxide detector linked to a pendant/wrist worn alarm. If your answer is no, move onto Q22.
- Q19. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate your experience before tech enabled care?
- Q20. Why did you give that score?
- Q21. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate your experience after receiving tech enabled care?
- Q22. Which adaptations have you received in your home?
- Q23. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate your improvements in Wellbeing?
- Q24. Why did you give this score?
- Q25. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate your improvements in Confidence?
- Q26. Why did you give this score?
- Q27. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate your improvements in Mobility?
- Q28. Why did you give this score?
- Q29. On a scale of 1 - 5, how would you rate your improvements in Independence?
- Q30. Why did you give this score?



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