

Social Care Assessment

Project Pilot Summary Report

December
2016





Introduction

Healthwatch Torbay is the independent consumer champion for health and social care in Torbay. In October 2016, this charitable organisation decided to undertake a review of the effectiveness of social care assessments carried out by Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust (TSDFT), after members of the public contacted them to raise issues with the process. The aim of social care assessments is to support a client's needs to maintain living independently at home, or support transfer to a residential/nursing care home. The issues raised by the public indicated that some service users had difficulties with the social care assessment process and there also seemed to be an inconsistent approach.

Following discussion with the Associate Director for Social Care at Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust, Healthwatch Torbay agreed to also include a section in their review on the Family and Friends Test (FFT) to try and capture more detailed information. The FFT was introduced in 2015 by NHS England to provide important feedback on service user's experience and to ascertain whether they would recommend the service they used to 'friends and family'.

Although Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust were encouraged with the FFT feedback they had already received, they wanted to obtain more qualitative information about how service users and carers viewed social work intervention.

Objectives

To gather evidence from clients who had recently received a social care assessment and share the positive and negative personal experiences with the Torbay Adult Social Care Team, to help improve the assessment process.

Methodology

In partnership with Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust (TSDFT), Healthwatch Torbay distributed a letter, questionnaire and definition of key words (**Appendix A**) to the 128 clients who had received a social care assessment during September 2016. The documents were distributed by TSDFT themselves, due to data protection regulations.

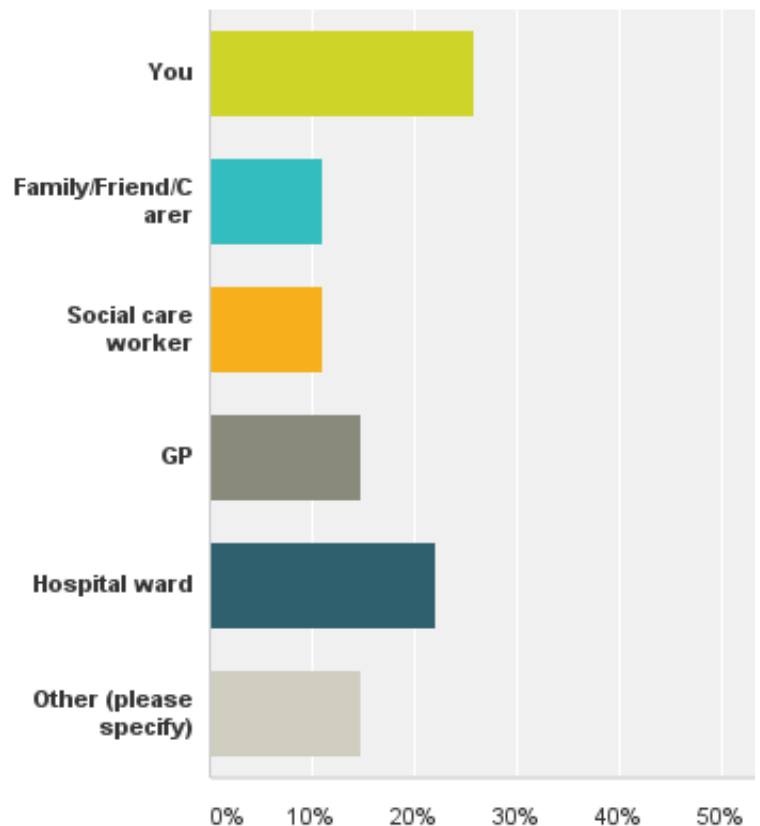
Clients, carers and their families were invited to complete and return the questionnaire directly to the Healthwatch Torbay freepost address or, alternatively, Healthwatch Torbay offered to arrange for an authorised representative from their Enter and View team to either go through the questionnaire over the phone or arrange a face-to-face visit at the client's home. Five clients required a visit at home with a further six clients completing the questionnaire over the phone.

Our findings

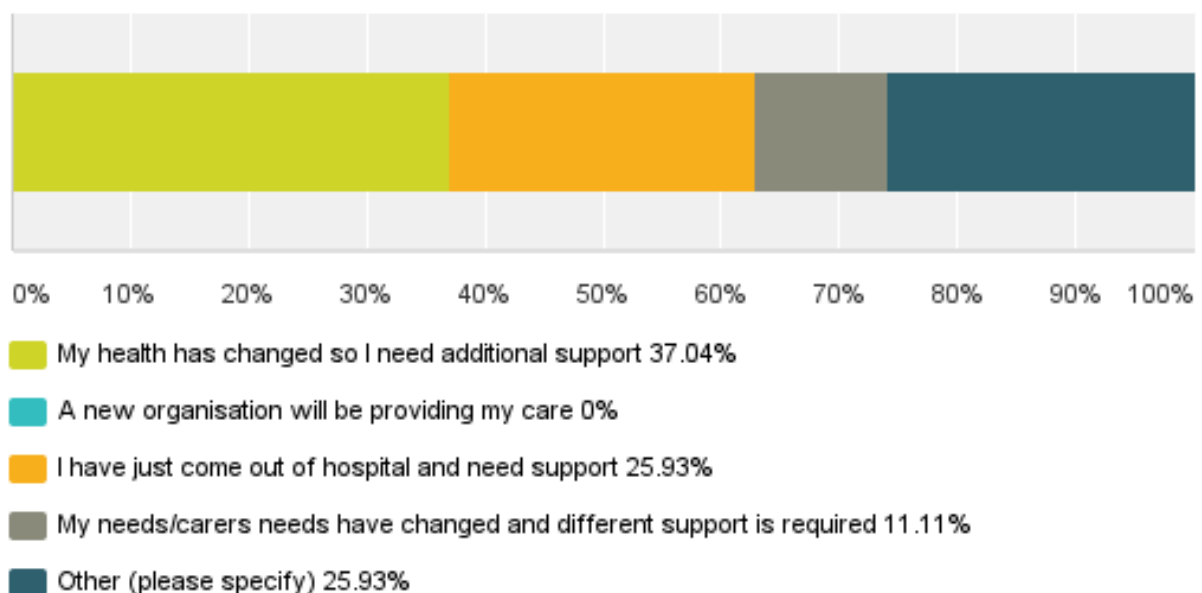
The feedback in this section was collated from the 27 clients who responded.

Question 1 - Who requested the assessment?

Other responses included Blue Badge assessor, Torbay Continuing Health care Team, and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).



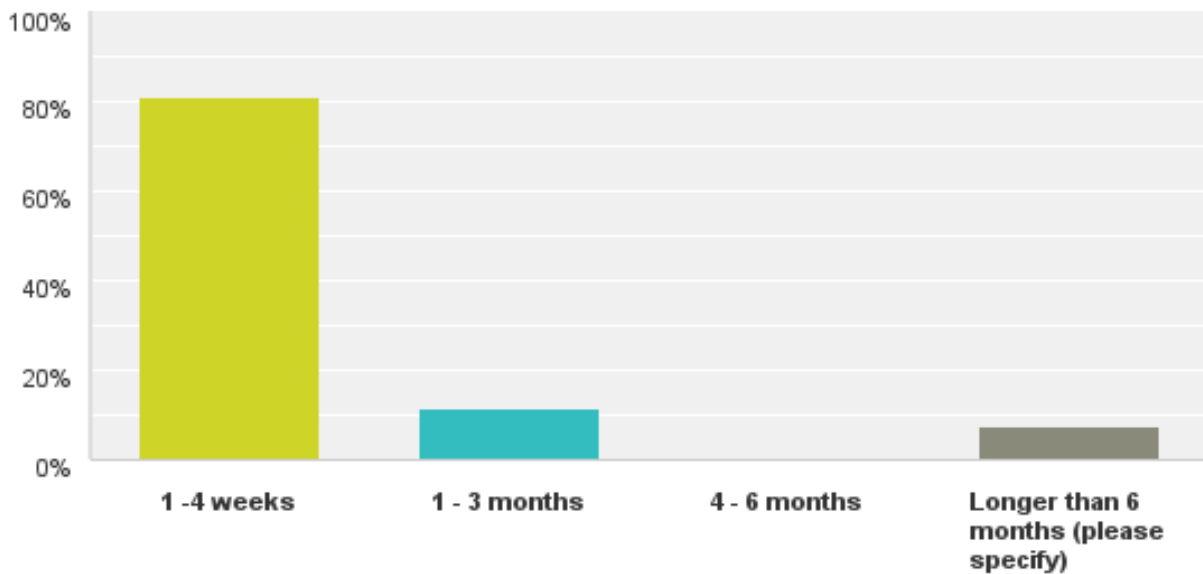
Question 2 - Why did you require an assessment?



‘Other’ responses included: “moved home”, “waiting for an operation”, “mobility deteriorated”, “change attendance allowance” and “DWP disability payments”.

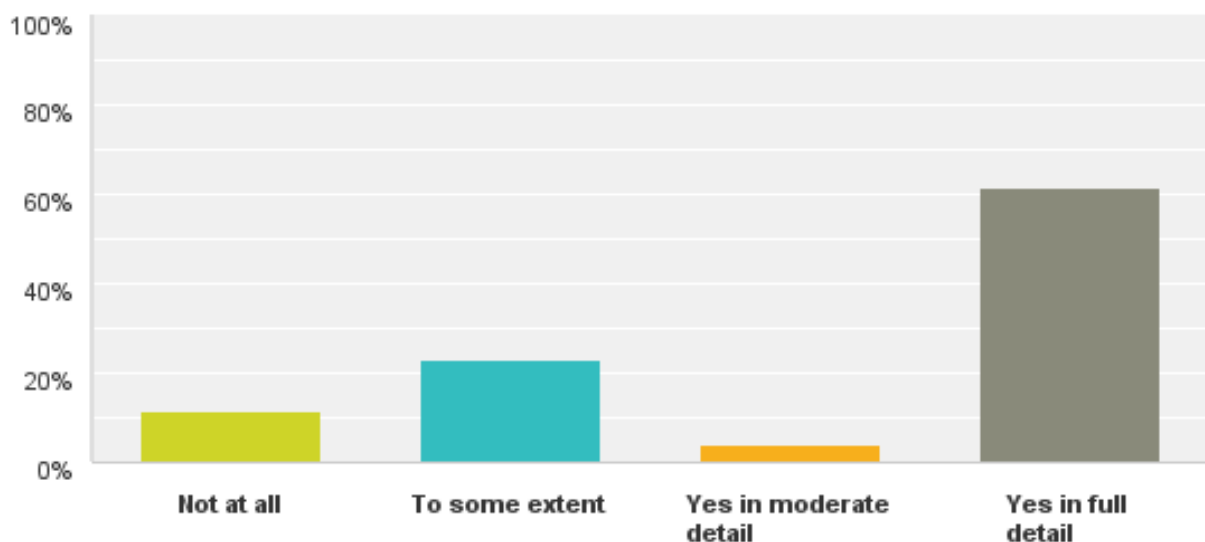
Question 3 - How long did it take for you to get an assessment?

The majority of clients, 80.77%, were seen within 1 - 4 weeks.



Question 4 - Did you discuss what was most important for you in managing your own health and wellbeing?

61.54% of clients confirmed they had discussed what was most important to them through the assessment process.

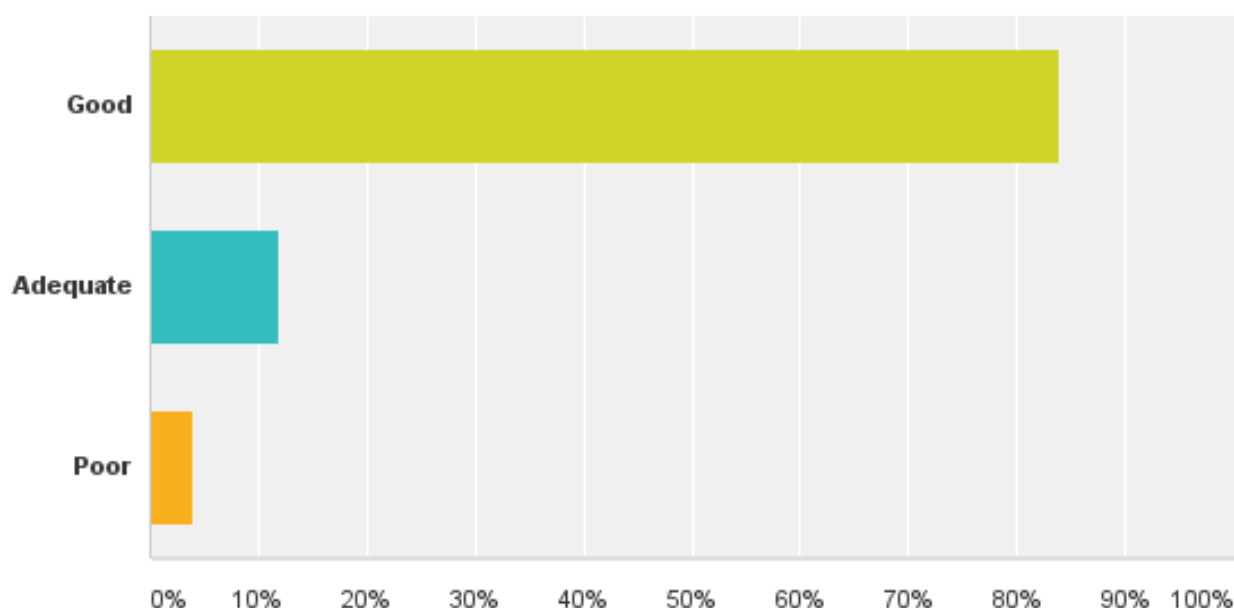


Comments included:

- *"The OT was amazing. So caring throughout. Maria was her name. Covered everything and even called afterwards"*
- *"Nothing was discussed with me "*
- *"Difficult as client had dementia and just wanted to get him home"*

Question 5 - Did you feel the quality of the assessment was good, adequate or poor?

The majority of clients, 84%, indicated the quality of the assessment was good.



Comments included:

- *“Much better than expected. I was referred on Friday, assessment took place on Monday. Fantastic service”*
- *“Everyone was so helpful, understanding my needs. Good advice given. A very caring team”*

Question 6 - Do you know who completed the assessment with you?

69% of clients provided details of the person who complete the assessment with them. This varied from OT, sensory team, nursing home staff and nursing staff in the hospital.

Question 7 - What outcomes did you want from the assessment?

This was an open question and answers include the following responses:

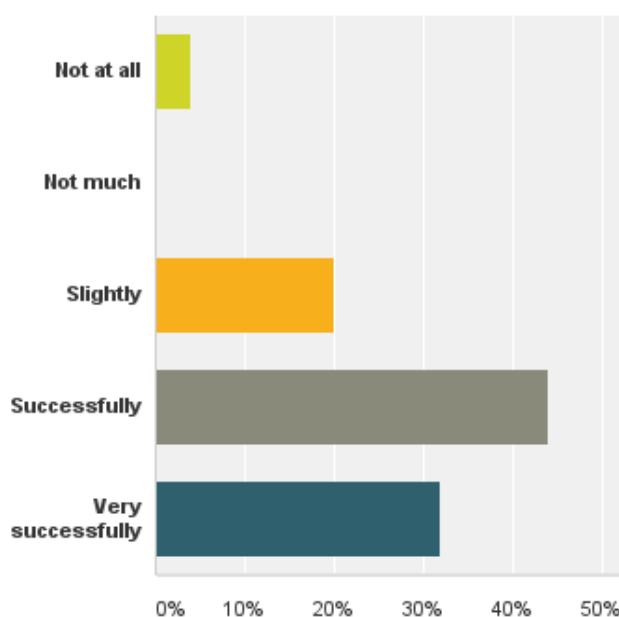
- Improved health and continuing to live independently by receiving help with everyday living needs - 11 people
 - Aid around the home - 4 people
 - Money, attendance allowance, advise and help - 3 people
 - Good care and help - 2 people
 - Not discussed at assessment - 2 people
 - Break for carers - 1 person
 - Peace of mind - 1 person
 - To be heard , understood regarding my care - 1 person
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Question 8 - Did the assessment help you to achieve these outcomes?

76% of clients felt the assessment had either successfully or very successfully achieve their desired outcome. However, four clients were either still waiting to hear or were still waiting for equipment.

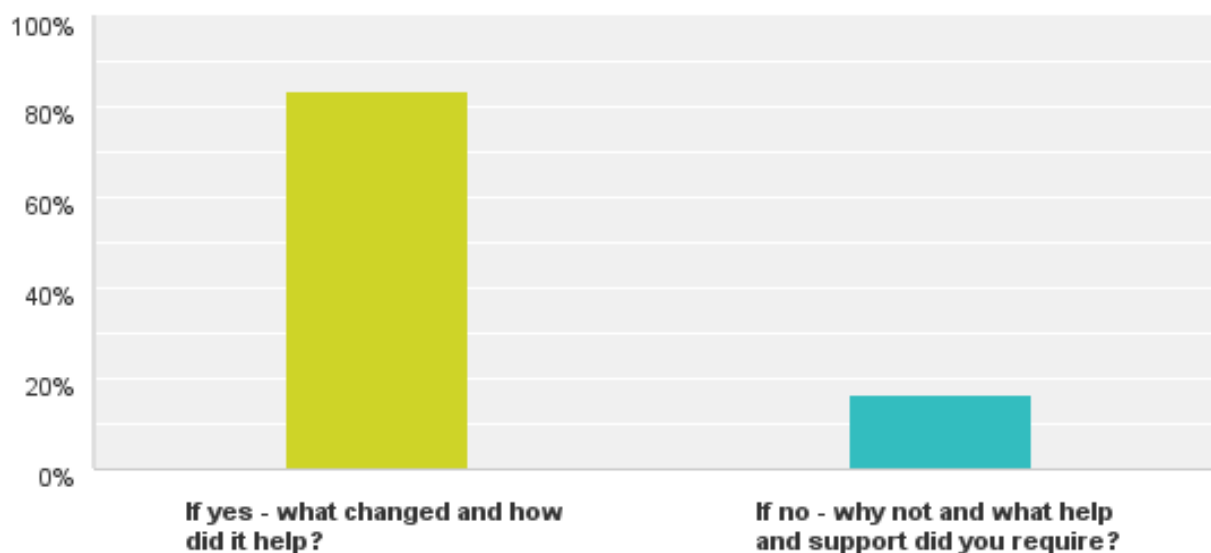
Comments included:

- *“100% improvement”*
- *“To date no answers”*
- *“Still waiting for grab rails”*



Question 9 - What was the impact of your assessment on your situation? Did anything change?

The majority of people who responded, 83.3%, felt there was a positive impact on their situation following the assessment.

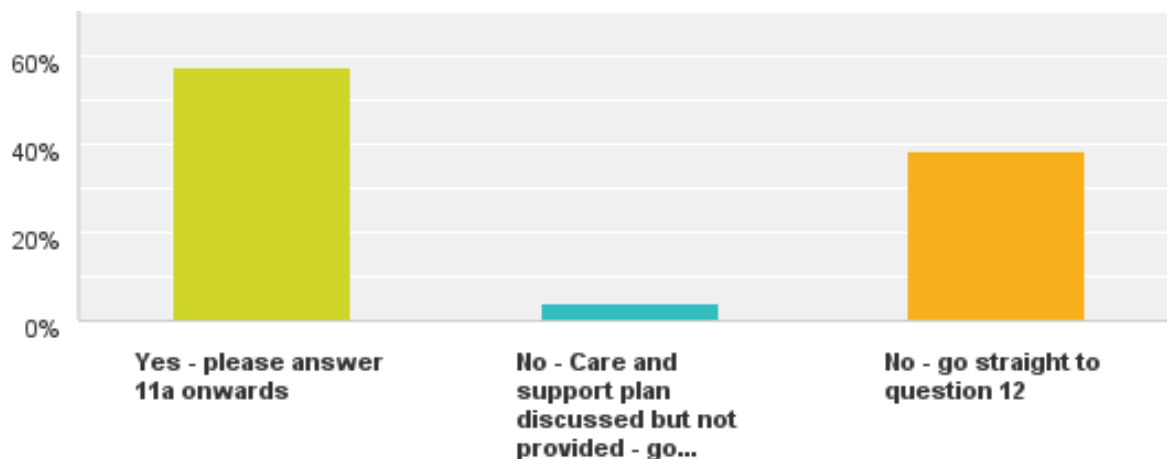


Comments included:

- *“Now receive 4 hr sitting service”*
 - *“Became very agitated while waiting for answers”*
 - *“Able to get into the bath with aids and sit when having a shower”*
 - *“None. No change”*
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Question 10 - Following your assessment, were you provided with a care and support plan?

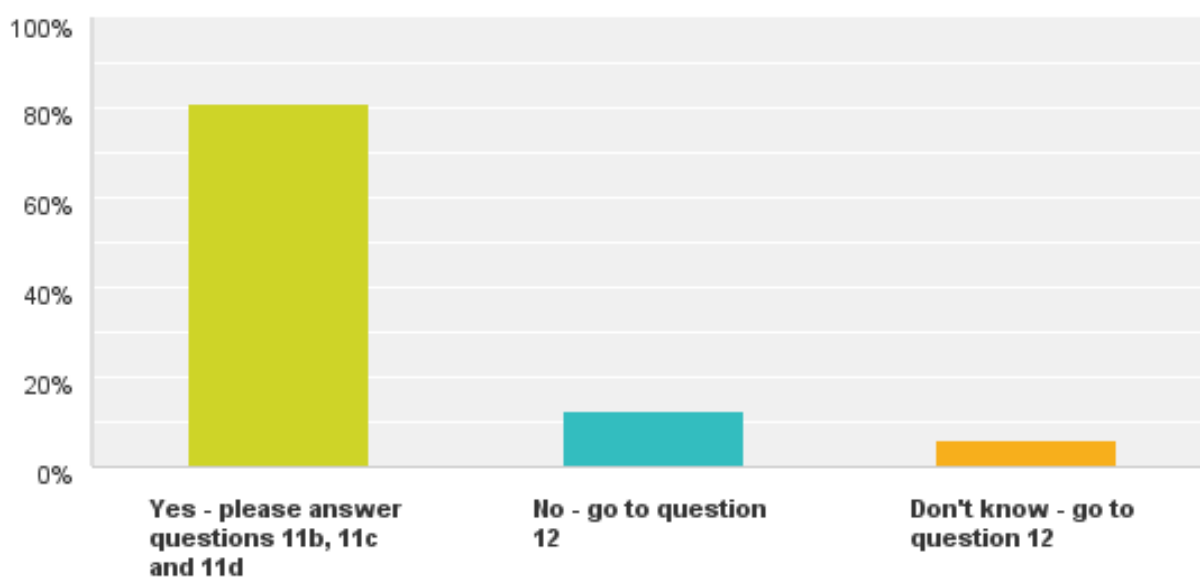
42% of clients indicated that they had either not been provided with a copy of the care plan or it was discussed but a copy not left with the client.



Question 11 was completed by clients who had received a copy of their care plan.

Question 11a - Does your care and support plan take into account all your health and wellbeing needs?

81% of clients were happy that their plan took into account all their health and wellbeing needs.



Question 11b - If you are a carer were you involved with the cared for care and support plan?

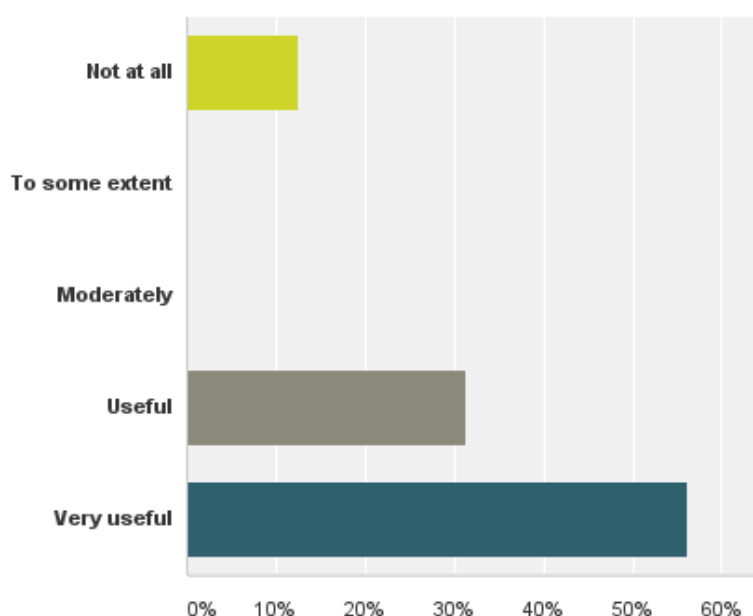
Relatively small numbers responded to this question, with 50% (4 people) stating they were a carer and were involved, and 37.5% (3 people) saying they were not.

Question 11c - How useful has your care and support plan (or plan of care) been for managing your health and wellbeing?

56% of clients who responded found the care plans to be very useful.

Comments included:

- *“Provided many contact numbers if I need help for my husband”*
- *“Helped in many ways”*



Question 11d - To what extent do all the professionals involved in your care appear to be following the same care plan (or plan of care)?

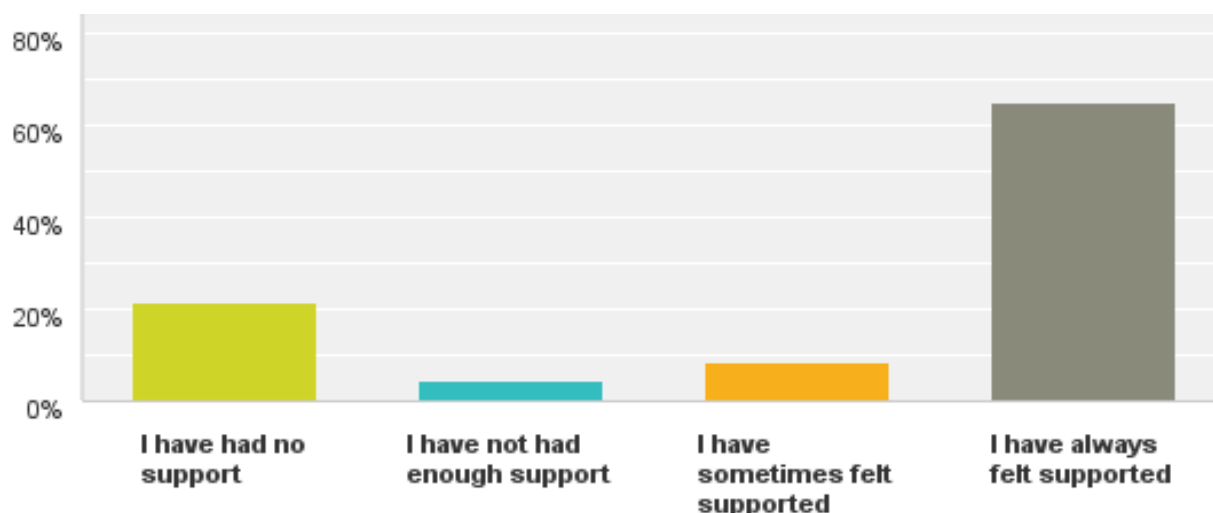
87% of clients who responded confirmed that professionals follow the care plan either always or more often or not.

Comments included:

- *“GP involved from the start”*
- *“Everyone dealing with me follows the plan”*

Question 12 - Have you had enough support from the adult social care team to help you to manage your own health and wellbeing?

Although 65% of clients felt that they had always felt support, 21% felt they had not received any support.

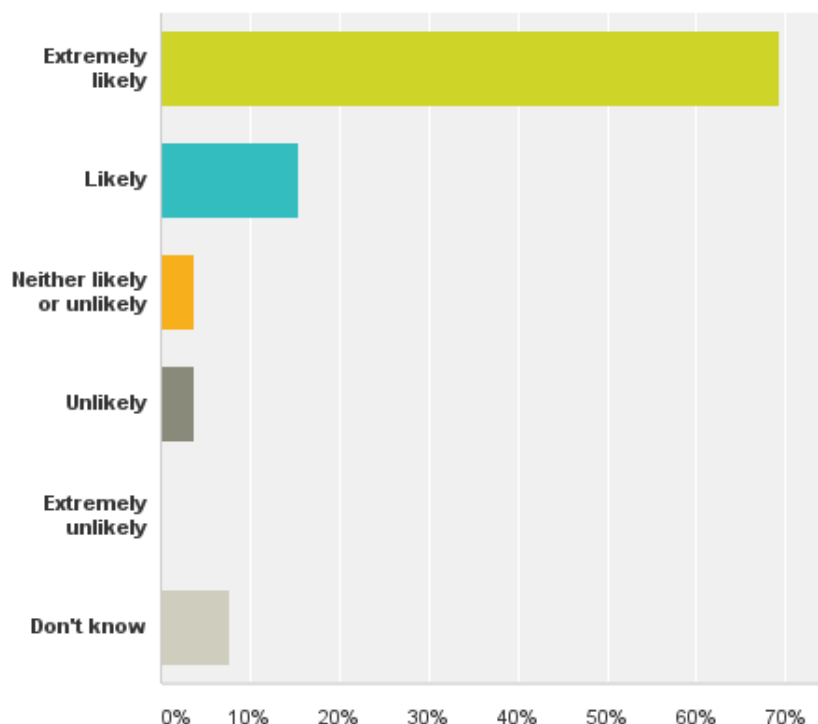


Comments included:

- “When needed we always have support”
- “Everyone is so helpful and understanding. Lots of tips given. Gained more confidence”
- “Have no adult support team help. Only have my wife as a carer to help me”
- “Waiting for my doctor to send a referral to social care as requested”

Question 13 - Thinking about your recent assessment experience, how likely are you to recommend this to friends and family if they needed similar support?

The majority of clients, 85%, were extremely likely or likely to recommend the assessment service.



Question 14 - Thinking about your response to the previous question, what is the main reason you have responded this way?

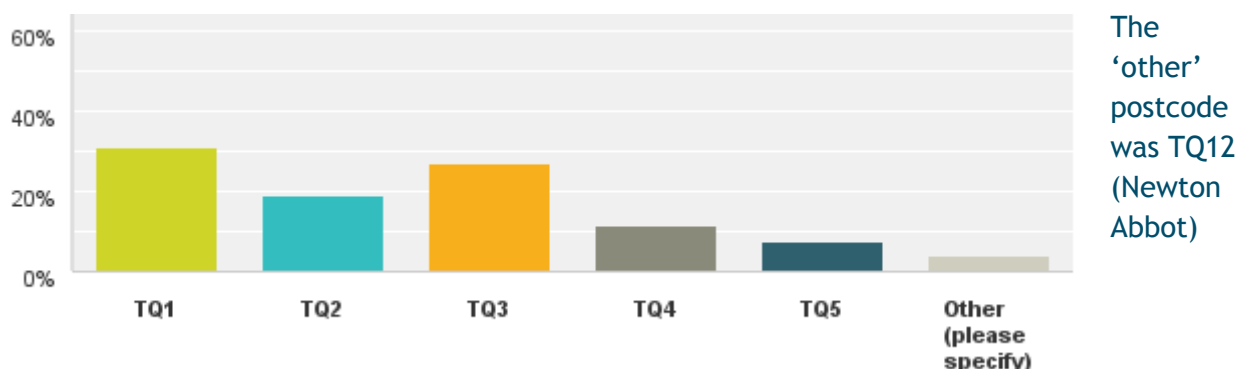
Positive Responses

- Would recommend handling own budget i.e selecting provider needed personally
- Good experience
- The assessment has provided me with lots of support
- Good service received
- I can't fault the service and care I have had
- Everyone is so helpful
- Very helpful when team came out to assess me. Thank you
- The service was fast and did what was required, professional, adequate and with consideration
- They were very thorough and gave me an opportunity to voice my concerns

Negative Answers

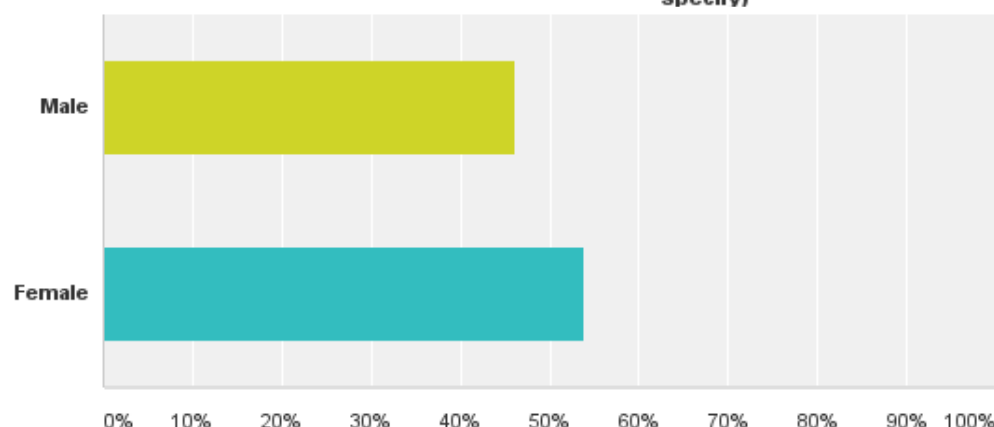
- Disappointment. Following a 10 minute assessment, equipment was ordered and delivered, however some of equipment could hardly get through the front door, wouldn't fit anywhere in the client's home as no measurements were taken before ordering equipment

Question 15 - Please supply the first part of your postcode

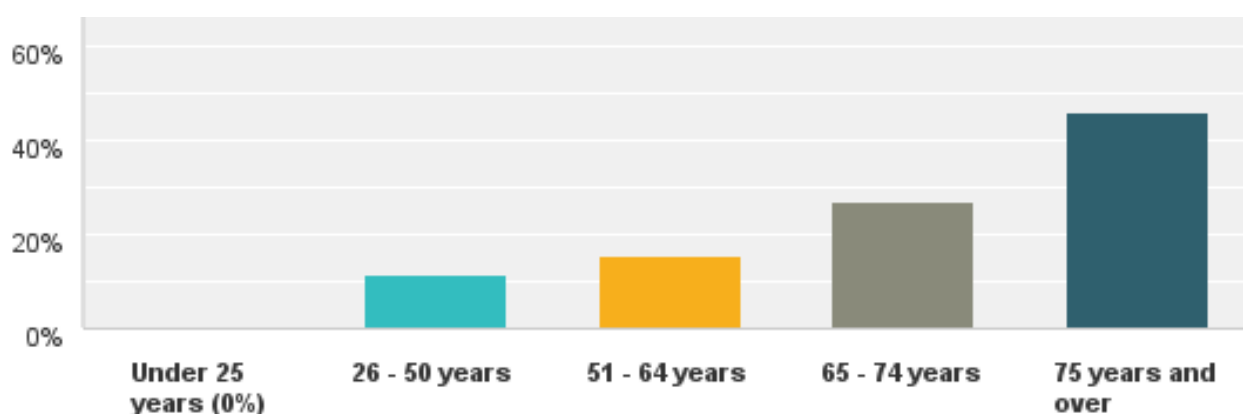


Q16 - Gender

46.15% of clients were male and 53.85% were female.



Q17 - Age range



Summary of findings

One of the difficulties in obtaining client responses to the questionnaire was the lack of clarity with clients about if they had been through a social care assessment recently.

The following is a brief summary of the main points raised:

- Although 64% of clients knew who had completed the assessment with them, Healthwatch Torbay found that 17% of clients did not recall having any form of assessment.
- The majority of clients received an assessment within 1-4 weeks.
- 34% of clients felt they didn't have the opportunity to discuss the most important aspects to them in managing their own health and wellbeing.
- 84% of clients felt the quality of the assessment was good and enabled them to continue to live independently by receiving help with everyday living.
- 42% of clients indicated that they had either not been provided with a copy of their care plan or it had been discussed and not left. However, the majority of clients who had a copy were happy that the plan took into account their needs and was used by professionals when delivering their care.

In addition to the information above, one client wished to share their experience of the process as they were “sick to death of it all” and exhausted. Issues consisted of many visits by various professionals with no single point of contact for the client. It was unclear to the client who was who and how the professional were linking up. This information has been shared with Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust (TSDFT) to identify learning opportunities to help improve the process.

Recommendations

- Healthwatch Torbay to reflect on the findings from the report, together with the issues received directly to us and continue to monitor and raised concerns received from the public regarding the quality of adult social care assessments to Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust (TSDFT).
- We recommend that a wider scope of client experience is undertaken to ensure clients are aware of the reasons for the visit, have a clear single point of contact for ongoing communication, and have a clear outline about what to expect as a result of the visit/assessment.
- Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust (TSDFT) to review the process of ensuring clients receive a copy of their care plan, enabling them to set their own aims and then secure the support and care needed to achieve them.

In addition

As this was a pilot study to increase the engagement and feedback of social care issues and concerns, further work needs to be undertaken to understand exactly what a good quality assessment looks like to enable a benchmark to be set around the current level of service provided and monitor service improvements.

Thanks

Healthwatch Torbay would like to thank everyone who took the time to complete the questionnaire and provided feedback about their experience of the social care assessment process. We would also like to thank Torbay Council and Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust (TSDFT) for their support with this pilot project.

External Comments

“Thank you Healthwatch for producing this useful report which provides a great insight into our residents experiences of their social care assessment which are largely positive. The recommendations given provide Torbay Council and Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust further ideas on how we can improve the service we deliver. Ensuring our residents receive the right help and care remains our main priority, and we will work hard to ensure everyone receives the same high quality of advice, guidance and support.”

Caroline Taylor, Director for Adult Social Services, Torbay Council

“Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust and Torbay Council would like to thank Healthwatch for this useful report, focussing on how people have experienced their social care assessment. It’s encouraging to see so many positive comments, and a real testament to the staff who are working every day to provide a person centred service.

We are going to learn from the concerns people have expressed, especially about making sure we are clear that we have sent people a copy of their plan and focussing on what is important to people.

Thanks for all Healthwatch’s work on this.”

Joanna Williams, Associate Director for Social Care,
Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust

Appendix A

Letter, questionnaire and definition of key words (available on request)

Contact us

Get in touch

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