The People

We interviewed 2,974 people. Of these, 76 probably did not have learning difficulties.\(^5\) This left us with 2,898 interviews with people with learning difficulties.

Sex

Of the people we interviewed, there were more men (59\%) than women (41\%). We would expect this as more men than women have learning difficulties.\(^6\)

Age

The youngest person we interviewed was 16 years old the oldest was 91. About half of the people we interviewed (45\%) were under 30. Figure 2 shows how many men and women we interviewed at each age group.

We compared the ages of the people we interviewed with our best estimates of the ages of people with learning difficulties in England.\(^7\) We found that we were more successful at finding younger people with learning difficulties to talk to than older people.

We found that this was true for people living in private households and for people living in supported accommodation.
We are not sure why we were less successful at finding older people. It could be because:

- Older people were less likely to identify themselves as having learning difficulties
- People supporting older people were less likely to identify the person they were supporting as having learning difficulties
- Organisations and homes supporting older people were less likely to participate in the survey
- Older people were less likely to agree to take part in the survey
- If the person themselves could not give consent, people supporting older people were less likely to agree to take part in the survey.
Ethnicity

Of the people we interviewed, some (6%) were from minority ethnic communities. This is a bit less than the number of adults from minority ethnic communities in England (7%).

Of the people from minority ethnic communities:
- 56% were Asian (people who described themselves as British Asian, Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi etc)
- 35% were Black (people who described themselves as Black British, Caribbean, African etc)
- 9% were from other minority ethnic groups (e.g., Chinese).

Marital Status

Most of the people we interviewed (92%) were single and had always been single. Some were married or were living with someone (6%), a few were widowed, separated or divorced (2%).

Support Needs

We asked the people who we interviewed how much support they needed to do 11 different things. These things ranged from drinking a cup of tea to filling in a form.

- Some people were very independent. One in ten people (10%) could do all or all but one of these things independently.
- Other people needed a lot of support. A few people (4%) needed someone to do all or all but one of the things for them.
We looked at whether some people needed more support than others.

- Men and women needed the same amount of support.
- Older people needed more support than younger people.
- People from Asian communities needed more support than people from White or Black communities.

We talk more about support needs in the last section (Support).