Support

Over one in 20 people don’t get the support that they need to do everyday things. Not having support often shapes our lives. In our experience this tells us a lot about choice. For example, 3% of people with learning difficulties not getting support that they need to drink a cup of tea means that they can’t choose to have a cup of tea and a lot of other people don’t choose when to drink their tea. Also, as well as the 3% of people with learning difficulties who don’t get the help they need making a sandwich, other people, waiting for support, make a sandwich.

Over the years having lived in different places we have found that people in residential homes find it the hardest to complain. They don’t always know how to complain and if they do they don’t always complain because they have to live with people (e.g. other residents and/or staff) they complain about. The same happens with other services we use. So we wonder if the number of people who are very happy and happy about support is too large. It is also important to notice that the kind of people who wanted to complain about support include those who need most help to be independent (e.g. the poor and the ill).

Because we think independence is important we were pleased that a lot of people in supported accommodation (residential homes, NHS hospitals or living with the support of the Supporting People programme) received support about their housing and that most of them were very happy with the support. This should make supported accommodation an important step to living in our own places in the community.

Ian Davies & Karen Spencer
We asked the people we interviewed how much personal support they received and who they would turn to if they needed help about housing or work.

Personal Support

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

We then asked them whether they got help with the things they said they needed support with. For each of the 11 different things, nearly everyone who needed support did get some help. The things that people were least likely to get help with were:

- Drinking a cup of tea (3%)
- Making a sandwich (3%)
- Finding out what is on the TV tonight (3%)
- Getting dressed in the morning (2%)
- Putting on a pair of shoes (2%)
- Having a shower or a bath (1%)
- Ordering something to eat or drink at a cafe (1%)
- Washing your clothes (1%)
- Filling in a form (1%)
- Paying money into your bank or Post Office (1%)
- Making an appointment (1%)

Overall, one in twenty people (6%) said they had an unmet need for support in at least one of these areas. We wanted to find out which people were more likely to have an unmet need for personal support.
People were more likely to have an unmet need for personal support if (in order of importance) they:

- Had higher support needs
- Were poor
- Saw members of their family less often
- Lived in a more deprived area

We asked people how happy they were with the support they got.

- Nearly two out of three people (63%) said they were very happy
- Nearly one out of three people (30%) said they were quite happy
- A few people (7%) said they were not happy.

We wanted to find out which people were more likely to have wanted to complain. People were more likely to have said that they were happy with the support provided if (in order of importance) they:

- Were not poor
- Lived in either a Supporting People scheme or a Registered Residential Care Home
- Were older
- Did not have a long standing illness or disability
- Had good general health
- Did a wider range of leisure activities
- Lived in a richer area

One in ten people (10%) said they had wanted to complain about the support they received. We wanted to find out which people were more likely to have wanted to complain.
People were more likely to have said that they had wanted to complain if (in order of importance) they:

- Were living in supported accommodation
- Were poor
- Had a long-standing illness or disability
- Had poor health

We also asked people about who organised their support. The people who organised their support were most likely to be

- A member of their family (59%)
- A support worker (30%)
- Key worker (9%)
- Social worker or care manager (8%)
- A friend (2%)
- Teacher (2%)

Support with Housing

We asked people about where they would go for help about housing. We also asked them about how happy they were with any help they had received.

Figure 26 shows where people living in private households and people in supported accommodation said whom they would turn to if they wanted help about housing.
This Figure shows that people living in private households were most likely to turn to family and friends for help. People living in supported accommodation were most likely to turn to a support worker for help.

Just over one in five people (23%) in private households said they had received support about housing. They were most likely to have received support from friends or family (43%), Social Services (30%), Housing Department (26%), a support worker (15%), their landlord (2%), the NHS (1%).

Nearly two out of three people (65%) living in supported accommodation said they had received support about housing. They were most likely to have received support from a support worker (61%), Social Services (27%), friends or family (19%), Housing Department (6%), the NHS (3%), their landlord (1%).
People were happier with the support they received from some people than others. Figure 27 shows how happy people living in private households and people in supported accommodation were with the support that they had received about housing.

This Figure shows that people living in supported accommodation were more likely to be happy about the support they received.

**Support About Work, Education & Training**

One in six people with learning difficulties (17%) had a paid job and about one in twenty people with learning difficulties
(6%) had an unpaid job. Nearly two out of three (65%) who were unemployed and said they were able to work said they would like a job.

We asked people who had a job and people who said they wanted a job about the support they had received to try to find work.

Only a few people (9%) had heard of the WORKSTEP programme. More had heard of the New Deal for Disabled People (23%). Most people were happy with the support they had received while using the WORKSTEP programme (73%) or the New Deal for Disabled People (69%).

Two out of three people who were 25 or younger (66%) had heard about the Connexions service. Two out of every five (40%) had used it. Most people (77%) who had used the service were happy with the support they had received.

About half of the people (52%) said that they had received some help when they were looking for a job. Figure 28 shows where people had got help from.

This Figure shows that people were most likely to get help from their parents or support workers.
Finally we asked everyone who they would ask if they wanted to find out about taking a course. Figure 29 shows who people would ask for support.
Figure 29: Where People Would Go for Help About Doing a Course

This Figure shows that people were most likely to ask for help from their parents or support workers, or they would ask at a college.