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| **Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living**  **Service Users’ Survey**  **Edinburgh and the Lothians**  **2018/19**  **May 2019** |

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The Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living (LCiL) is committed to seeking feedback from its service users in order to capture their views about our work and enable us to identify areas of good practice and where improvement and development may be required.

This report represents the findings of our sixth comprehensive Service Users’ Satisfaction Survey and includes information on the methodology used as well as service users’ views on the services we provide.

Questionnaires were sent to 973 service users in total across the 4 Local Authorities, who used at least one of LCiL’s services between April 2018 and March 2019. The survey results were separated into Local Authority Area but this report focuses on the results from the combined results or all four LA’s.

The findings of this survey will be used to influence and shape our ongoing work in supporting disabled people to live more independent lives in the community of their choice.

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**1. (i) Methodology**

* The objective of the survey was to gather information on service users’ satisfaction with LCIL. To give depth to the survey, an overall service satisfaction section is complemented by a section on specific services.

Questionnaires were sent to 973 registered service users from Edinburgh and the Lothians, who had accessed one or more of the following LCiL services in the last year:

- Grapevine Disability Information Service

- Payroll Service

- Financial Management Support

- Independent Living Service

Contact information for those who had accessed the services was exported from LCiL’s database in line with GDPR requirements.

As well as a range of generic questions covering topics such as staff interaction with service users, services users’ confidence in the service(s) they use and the impact of the service in their lives, it was also decided to seek feedback on particular aspects of service provision. We also tried to capture some of the impact LCiL has on people’s lives. These findings enable LCiL to highlight the range and diversity of the services they offer to their service users and to provide evidence of service users’ views.

The survey was sent in late March – early April with a return deadline of 12th April 2019 in order to produce a completed report by May 2019.

**(ii) Issues**

* Some of the issues that arose at this time included:

**Confidentiality** – It was decided to keep these surveys completely anonymous – we did not request any personal information from the recipients. The only information known from returned surveys was the Local Authority of the sender.

**Format of survey** – In order to encourage as many service users as possible to complete and return the survey, we offered 2 different formats: Survey Monkey and printed copies. A few service users asked for word versions via email, following their receipt of a Survey Monkey link. These were sent upon request.

Many questions offered an opportunity for open-ended responses and a rating scale was used so respondents could indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with statements about service provision. This ensured that a more detailed and comprehensive service user satisfaction survey would cover most aspects of LCiL’s services.

It was highlighted by a few respondents that they were not sure if they should leave blank or mark ‘disagree’ when a question did not apply to them – this may have caused more negatives than it should, if people did not just leave the question blank. A ‘Not Applicable’ option will resolve this next time.

**Method of contact** – All service users for whom we hold an email address were contacted by email with a link to the relevant survey in Survey Monkey. For all others, a hard copy of the questionnaire was posted, with only the relevant sections for services that we knew they had used.

Service users were informed that the survey would be anonymous in order to encourage respondents to comment freely. Each survey was marked with the Local Authority of the recipient, based on the addresses we have in our database.

Regardless of method of contact, all users were given the option to complete the survey in one of three ways:

1. By returning a hard copy by post;
2. By returning an emailed completed form;
3. By completing the survey online via a weblink to Survey Monkey.

iii) **Response rates**

The survey was sent to all service users who had accessed services between 1 April 2018 and 29 March 2019, for whom we have contact details - 973 people in total. Of these:

* 200 surveys in total were completed and returned – **21% response rate**.
* 594 service users were contacted by email and 379 by post.
* 123 responded online via Survey Monkey and 77 by post.
* This gives a response rate of 21% online and 20% by post.

**2. Overall service satisfaction**

We asked service users to rate their overall satisfaction with LCiL and LCiL’s impact on their lives by indicating how much they agreed or disagreed with the following statements about the organisation.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Skipped |
| The LCiL service(s) I used fulfilled my expectations | 59% | 31% | 4.5% | 1.5% | 4% |
| The service(s) met my needs within a reasonable and appropriate timescale | 65.5% | 29% | 3% | 1% | 1.5% |
| I have confidence in the competence and knowledge of LCiL staff | 66% | 28.5% | 3% | 0.5% | 2% |
| I value the work of LCiL and would recommend the organisation to others | 75% | 17% | 5.5% | 0.5% | 2% |
| Support from LCiL has helped improve my choices and given me more control in my life | 56% | 34.5% | 5% | 1% | 3.5% |
| As a result of support from LCiL I have been able to do other things that are important to me | 51.5% | 36% | 6% | 1.5% | 5% |
| The support I get from LCiL helps me to live in my own home | 48% | 36% | 7.5% | 2% | 6.5% |
| LCIL has helped me to increase my knowledge and understanding about self-directed support | 48% | 40% | 7% | 0% | 5% |
| With LCIL I know what help is available to me to manage my support | 48% | 40.5% | 6% | 0.5% | 5% |
| With LCIL I have a greater chance to make my support work for me | 56.5% | 31% | 5% | 1.5% | 6% |
| With LCIL I can better manage my responsibilities as an employer | 55% | 26% | 7% | 0% | 12% |
| With LCIL I am more involved in deciding and planning my support | 50% | 35.5% | 8% | 0.5% | 6% |
| It is important to me that LCIL remains a one-stop shop (provides all services as one organisation) | 70% | 22% | 3.5% | 1.5% | 3% |
| Even if I may not use LCIL for a year or more, it is important for me to know it can help me at any time | 65% | 29.5% | 1% | 1% | 3.5% |

**Service Users’ Comments on our Organisation**

We asked service users to comment on LCiL as a whole, to which we received 177 comments in response to 2 questions.Of these, almost all positive or very positive.

**Why is LCiL important to you?**

**Positive comments**

Most of the positive feedback centred on the value LCiL has on their lives and the difference the organisation makes to them. People appreciate the excellent staff, the independence they can achieve and the assurance that we are always there for them. Many people said they couldn’t manage without LCiL’s support and feeling more confident was a theme that came up several times.

The positive responses can be grouped into the following categories:

**Payroll / employment, recruitment and legal requirements** (37)

* ‘I manage my mother’s account and had no clue about payroll and direct payment. Without their help I would be in real trouble.’
* ‘As I have no knowledge of payroll the service gives me peace of mind that everything is being done correctly.’
* ‘The depth and breadth of LCiL's knowledge and experience regarding the employment of Personal Assistants has been priceless. I wouldn't have known where to begin without their support.’
* ‘Am not familiar with the legal and administrative demands of being an employer. LCiL can advise on almost anything.’
* ‘Employing a PA for my brother was partly for his benefit and partly for mine. However, having to cope with all the admin of employing someone would have cancelled out any benefit to me, and been an additional cause of stress, had it not been for LCiL’s excellent support.’
* ‘Taking on responsibilities as an employer would be too daunting for me without the support LCiL provide.’

**General support / positive comments** (78)

* ‘Helped to improve my understanding of support available, and advice whenever I feel on my own.’
* ‘I would not be able to live at home without their support and knowledge.’
* ‘Gave me ability to put best care in place possible for my parents. During a horrid time in our lives they were a rock!’
* ‘‘I have full trust in LCiL to help me at any time with any difficulty that faces me during my need. They are competent and knowledgeable.’
* ‘The LCiL staff are all so very helpful and always go the extra mile to support carers and all those who use the service.’
* ‘They are a god send, I would not manage without them.’
* ‘LCiL are well informed and really helpful, I couldn’t manage without their help.’
* ‘Because my life is excellent with it.’
* ‘As they are peer-led, they really understand the obstacles of disabled living.’

**Independence** / **Reducing Stress** / **Better quality / control of life** (28)

* ‘Gives me feeling of managing my life with some independence.’
* ‘It has given me a life line to help me keep independence.’
* ‘Allows me to live my life as good as possible, with a bit of independence.’
* ‘Since being linked to LCiL, I have felt more involved in my practical and personal needs which has enabled me to feel empowered and has boosted my self-esteem.’
* ‘This is a fantastic service which enables carers and the cared for person to regain control of their lives and how it is managed.’
* ‘They have considerably helped with my sister and myself. Without their help we would not have coped and not be where we are today.’
* ‘It's the most important thing I've ever had. My life is so much easier, thank you.’

**Information and advice** (19)

* ‘Has provided information I could not access before and has helped in implementing support.’
* ‘No there is no other help out there that I am aware of that provides this service and sign posts you to information and other relevant services.’
* ‘Thanks so much - my experience of LCIL has been great, they helped me and my family understand the process and could not have been more professional and supportive.’

**Advocacy / Communication with other bodies** (6)

* ‘It’s important because it’s my direct contact with the council.’
* ‘Solid steady presence when social work department was inconsistent.’

**Peer Support** (2)

* ‘I have done the assessment for my daughter with the Social Worker. I'm awaiting the decision. I went to LCiL workshop so I could understand what to expect and my rights.’
* ‘LCIL drop in sessions and ‘one to one’ support, equipped me with accurate and timely information and advice, which gave me the confidence to pursue Self Directed Support.’

**Constructive / Negative** (8)

A few of the negative and constructive comments were from people who have had some frustrations with payroll this year, and waiting times in general over the various services:

* ‘At times I am now slightly reluctant to ask for advice and help, especially with Payroll. I realise they are busy but I would like more help to understand payroll, annual leave etc.’
* ‘Both I and my staff are frustrated by the poor service provided by the payroll team since XX left. He or someone would always phone to remind me if my PA’s time sheets were not in on time or if LCiL had a delay with the payroll due to computer failure or staff absenteeism.’
* ‘Only the waiting time for someone to come is too long.’

**Constructive comments**

* ‘Perhaps taking on too much; maybe LCiL should concentrate on a little less in everything overall.’
* ‘The time sheets used to be up till the last Saturday of each month. Now it’s the first week of the following month making it a bit more difficult to get them in on time. I would prefer it the old ways.’
* ‘Though you are a great organisation I feel sometimes I have to wait a while for responses to questions. However you have been a great help to us overall.’

**3. Service-specific responses**

Service users were then asked specific questions about the services they had used. Of those who responded:

* 75% had used the Payroll Service
* 53% had used the Independent Living Service
* 14% had used the Grapevine Service – the Grapevine Service is only funded for CEC based service users
* 13.5% had used the Financial Management Service

1. **Grapevine**

The Grapevine service offers free and confidential disability advice and information to people in the City of Edinburgh Council.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?** | | | | | | |
|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Skipped |
| My telephone enquiry to Grapevine was dealt with promptly | 52% | 35% | 6.5% | 0% | 6.5% |
| My email enquiry to Grapevine was dealt with promptly | 37% | 20% | 0% | 0% | 43% |
| I attended a Grapevine event which was relevant to my needs | 48% | 10% | 6.5% | 0% | 35.5% |
| The face to face support was professional | 65% | 26% | 3% | 0% | 6% |
| The face to face support was friendly | 65% | 29% | 0% | 0% | 6% |
| Grapevine staff listened carefully to me | 65% | 29% | 0% | 0% | 6% |
| Staff use jargon-free and plain language | 61% | 29% | 0% | 0% | 10% |
| The information provided (by phone, email or face to face) was clear and well presented | 48% | 26% | 0% | 0% | 26% |
| I have confidence in the competence and knowledge of Grapevine staff | 61% | 36% | 0% | 0% | 3% |
| The Grapevine staff were helpful and able to answer my enquiry | 55% | 32% | 0% | 0% | 13% |
| I value the work of Grapevine and would recommend the organisation to others: | 61% | 36% | 0% | 0% | 3% |

We also encouraged respondents to tell us what difference the information or advice from Grapevine had made:

As a direct result of their enquiry to Grapevine:

* 31% of people had a better understanding of the benefits system
* 30% of people had the information needed to navigate the system
* 5% of people had taken part in more social activities
* 21% of people had been able to stay in their own home
* 13% of people had an improvement of circumstances in general

**Service user comments about the Grapevine Service**

We asked service users to offer more detailed information about how their enquiry had improved their circumstances and about the impact of the service on themand their lives. Responses included

**Support with PIP and benefits.**

* ‘Life saving for me and my sister. We are both pensioners and feel intimidated by all the questions on the PIP forms. Grapevine explained each question to us as simply as possible. Their help is invaluable to all people who feel overwhelmed by forms that are so complicated. I would, and have, recommended Grapevine to others.’
* ‘I was ignorant of the benefit system. With your help and easy way it was explained to me, and help with filling in forms, I am now able to pay for help in the house after getting benefits.’

**Independence at home and family life.**

* ‘Getting the attendance allowance for both parents enabled our family to provide care for both.’

**Feeling supported.**

* ‘We were very grateful and pleased at the help we received.’
* ‘I know I could approach Grapevine and know I would be supported and given the correct information.’
* ‘By helping me to obtain attendance allowance I can now afford a cleaner and help with my garden.’

**Being connected to useful information and other services.**

* ‘In process just now but East Lothian Council not as helpful as Edinburgh Grapevine.’
* ‘It is a useful place to learn exactly how to navigate the minefield system that is benefits!’

1. **Payroll Service**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?** | | | | | | |
|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Skipped |
| I find it easy to contact the Payroll Team | 62% | 27% | 5% | 1% | 5% |
| Payroll’s telephone support is excellent | 57.5% | 30% | 5% | 0% | 7.5% |
| All my payroll needs are dealt with effectively and efficiently | 62% | 25.5% | 7.5% | 0% | 5% |
| Payroll staff are professional | 63.5% | 29.5% | 2% | 0% | 5% |
| Payroll staff are friendly | 63% | 29% | 3% | 0% | 5% |
| They listen to me carefully | 59% | 31% | 3% | 0% | 7% |
| They use jargon-free and plain language | 61.5% | 29.5% | 1% | 0% | 8% |
| All my Personal Assistants’ payroll calculations are accurate | 58% | 30% | 4% | 0% | 8% |
| I have confidence in the competence and knowledge of Payroll staff | 65% | 21% | 6% | 0% | 9.5% |
| Payroll staff are helpful and able to answer my queries | 65% | 23% | 4% | 0% | 8% |
| I feel more confident about being a Personal Assistant employer | 63.5% | 26% | 3.5% | 1% | 7% |
| I feel more confident about managing my Direct Payment /Independent Living Fund package | 61% | 26% | 4% | 1% | 8% |
| I value the work of Payroll and would recommend the service to others | 58% | 27% | 4% | 3% | 8% |

**Service user comments about the Payroll Service**

We asked people:

**‘After processing your timesheets we send you detailed information. How useful is this to you?’**

Out of the 109 people who answered this question, almost all commented that it was of great use to them, especially when it came to record keeping:

* ‘Very, I like that I get both paper and email copy.’
* ‘Very useful as records must be kept, this makes it easy.’
* ‘It is essential, so I know how much to pay the PAYE and how much tax to pay. Good to have paper records as well.’
* ‘Very as it explains everything in a way I can understand and keeps me up to date for my records.’
* ‘Very useful. The information sent is very clear and simple and makes the necessary payments to each department, people and authorities straightforward.’
* ‘Very useful as I am required to send the timesheets to Midlothian Council every three months. Also pay my carer the correct amount of wages along with her wage slip.’
* ‘Brilliant. Keeps me organised. Keeps my records straight.’
* There were only 3 people who found the detailed information was not useful or more detailed than they require.’
* ‘It could be useful to some people, however, in my opinion, some of the detailed sheets are superfluous.’

When asked **‘what they used the information for’**, the most common answers were for Independent Living Fund and social work reviews, council and tax returns and so that they are aware what to pay their employees, the pension providers and HMRC.

Service users were also asked **“How would you describe the impact of the payroll service in your life?”** and **“Why is it important to you?”**

The answers can be broken down into the following categories:

**Employing a PA/managing Care package is made possible or easier (25)**

* ‘Becoming a PA employer is a daunting prospect and the payroll side of things is probably the most intimidating. The payroll service has taken all the stress out of this element and made being an employer much easier.’
* ‘Personal assistant is extremely important to me - without a payroll system I would be at a loss.’
* ‘Because I need regular respite, as my son has very complex needs, and there was nowhere where his support needs could be met, so with the help of LCIL and funding via a direct payment, I am able to tailor make a service which meets my needs and my sons.’
* ‘Managing the care package with the help from LCiL has changed my daughter’s life. She has a life now.’
* ‘It is hard to imagine how I would have managed being an employer for the first time in my life without the help of the payroll service.’
* ‘The role of caring and supporting a disabled person is complicated and demanding. This service takes away the worry around employing people. Ensures people are paid correctly for what they do.’

**Reduced stress / pressure / reassurance / confidence (43)**

* ‘Reduces the responsibility and stress on me. I already have enough stress caring 24/7.’
* ‘Knowing that everything being dealt with legitimately brings so much peace of mind!’
* ‘It's a reassurance to know they are there with expert advice and support.’
* ‘No stress for me. I have the confidence that they do correctly every time.’
* ‘Takes one job away from a stressful home life.’
* ‘Fantastic as takes a lot of stress away from me – I know they are experienced in what they do, therefore I can rely on them when I need assistance etc.’

**Makes life easier / saves time (24)**

* ‘Makes life easier and less stressful knowing LCiL will deal with any requests.’
* ‘As a carer I have hardly any time to myself so LCiL makes life so much easier.’
* ‘It saves me a lot of time so that I can get on with looking after my son and other things.’
* ‘Life is tough and stressful as carer. This makes my life easier.’

**Essential / couldn't cope without it / couldn’t do it myself (25)**

* ‘I would not be able to do this myself. It is a vital service for me.’
* ‘I couldn’t do without it. The support I have received has been invaluable, and without that help I would be unable to cope.’
* ‘I would be bogged down in paper work and probably have had a nervous breakdown.’
* ‘I couldn’t do without it. The support I have received has been invaluable, and without that help I would be unable to cope.’
* ‘I would not be able to do this myself. It is a vital service for me.’
* ‘The Payroll Service from LCIL is a definite boon that I couldn't easily function without.’

**General positive comments (62)**

* ‘Don't think any other organisation could do a better job than LCiL.’
* ‘Blissful escape from the rigmarole of bumph.’
* ‘Great as I was not good with computers and they were a great help with time sheets.’
* ‘A crucial service.’
* ‘Life changing.’
* ‘Invaluable.’
* ‘Crucial a lifeline thanks don’t know if you all know how important your support is so thanks again.’
* ‘Excellent makes me feel that everything is good.’
* ‘Without the payroll team I would be struggling.’
* ‘This is a big part of my sons care package so it’s great to know it’s done correctly.’

**More of a life / freedom / independence (21)**

* ‘Allowing me to have my chosen personal assistant of my choice, without needing to be referred to an organisation.’
* ‘Incredible - gives me freedom and advice on what I can do.’
* ‘It takes care of payments for my PAs and lets me get on with life.’
* ‘Need to feel I can deal with at least a small part of my life even with assistance.’
* ‘The payroll service provides an essential and invaluable role in my son's life. He would not have the quality of life he enjoys without SDS and LCiL services make this possible.’
* ‘I could not have the quality of life I have now, if it weren't for them.’
* ‘Managing the care package with the help from LCiL has changed my daughter’s life. She has a life now.’
* ‘I could not cope with external care providers again. I know that I have some control in what happens to me.’

**Negative comments/feedback (7)**

* ‘Frustration at times when can't get simple information without a struggle.’
* ‘I'd like to be able to speak directly to the Payroll team, instead of being fobbed off in the nicest way by the receptionist. A direct number would be good.’

**iii) Financial Management Support Service (FMS)**

Our FMS Service offers disabled people a step further than the Payroll Service. Through individualised client accounts held on behalf of service users, LCiL is able to pay PAs, HMRC, agencies, care providers and/or professionals as instructed by the service user.

Out of the responses received to the questions below, almost all answered with strongly agree or agree.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?** | | | | | | |
|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Skipped |
| The FMS support agreement is tailored to meet my specific needs | 43% | 24% | 0% | 3% | 30% |
| The changeover to a client bank account held by LCiL was straightforward | 40% | 27% | 0% | 0% | 33% |
| I find it easy to contact the LCiL Financial Management Support team | 47% | 20% | 3% | 0% | 30% |
| The FMS team is professional | 47% | 20% | 0% | 0% | 33% |
| The FMS team are friendly | 43.5% | 23.5% | 0% | 0% | 33% |
| They listen to me carefully | 43.5% | 23.5% | 0% | 0% | 33% |
| They use jargon-free and plain language | 40% | 24% | 0% | 0% | 36% |
| They are helpful when I have an enquiry | 47% | 20% | 0% | 0% | 33% |
| The FMS staff are excellent | 50% | 17% | 0% | 0% | 33% |
| All payments are dealt with efficiently, accurately and on time | 50% | 17% | 0% | 0% | 33% |
| I feel more confident about managing my support package | 47% | 20% | 0% | 0% | 33% |
| I could not manage a Direct Payment without the LCIL Financial Management Service | 47% | 17% | 0% | 3% | 33% |

10 out of the 30 participants in the FMS part of the survey answered the questions:

**‘When you first took up the enhanced Financial Management Support, a support agreement was designed to meet your specific needs. Does the support currently provided still meet your needs?’** and ‘**Has the support been adaptable to meet your changing needs?**

All but one service user answered yes.

Participants were also asked **“Do you have any suggestions to improve the Financial Management Support service?”**

Most did not have any suggestions, with one respondent stating ‘if it is not broken don't fix it’.

The only **constructive criticism** we received was:

* ‘Sometimes I don't receive time sheets along with payslips and up to date annual leave details. This is my only concern. I have recently had to phone to remind Payroll to post out to me. The service is helpful and if I contact them about anything, Payroll is always available and responds to my enquiries efficiently and promptly.’

**iv) Independent Living Service (ILS)**

The views of the service users who receive support from the Independent Living Team are further proof of the high quality services and benefits for disabled people. While on average 20% of the ILS respondents skipped some questions, almost all of the people who did answer each question, agreed or strongly agreed with all of the following statements about the ILS:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?** | | | | | | |
|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Skipped |
| I find it easy to contact the Independent Living Team (ILT) | 48% | 30% | 5% | 0% | 17% |
| Their support is excellent | 49% | 30% | 4% | 0% | 17% |
| I appreciate their home visits | 37% | 28% | 6% | 3% | 26% |
| The ILT staff are professional | 57% | 23% | 3% | 1% | 16% |
| They are friendly | 60% | 22% | 3% | 0% | 15% |
| They listen carefully to me | 58% | 21% | 5% | 0% | 16% |
| They use jargon free and plain language | 57% | 24% | 4% | 0% | 15% |
| I feel more confident about being a Personal Assistant (PA) employer | 52% | 26% | 4% | 1% | 17% |
| I have confidence in the competence and knowledge of the ILT staff | 55% | 24% | 4% | 0% | 18% |
| They help when I have a problem with recruiting staff | 34% | 34% | 5% | 0% | 27% |
| They help when I have a problem with one of my PAs | 28% | 29% | 6% | 1% | 35% |
| I feel more confident about managing my Direct Payment / Independent Living Fund package | 48% | 28% | 5% | 0% | 19% |
| Employing PA(s) has helped improve my choices and given me more control in my life | 50% | 24% | 4% | 0% | 22% |
| As a result of employing PA(s), I have been able to do other things that are important to me | 50% | 23% | 4% | 1% | 22% |
| The support I get from the ILT team helps me to live in my own home | 43% | 29% | 4% | 0% | 24% |

We received 143 responses when we asked respondents to give further details of how Direct Payments or Independent Living Fund packages have helped them. As you can see, almost all of the service users responded that as a result of our help, they are able to socialise more, and live in their own homes.

Service users were asked **“How would you describe the impact of the Independent Living Service in your life?”** and **“Why is it important to you?”** Responses across the two questions could be categorised as follows:

**Staying independent / Staying at home / Improved Quality of life (33)**

* ‘To have a more independent life with my family rather than in a care home.’
* ‘Independence, choice, continuity, security and dignity is now more intact for my parents.’
* ‘I wish to remain in the community and not go 'into care'. My life is generally massively improved and my standard of living is good. I do not want to change anything. I am able to live a much 'fuller' life now after spending 12 years in hospital.’
* ‘He is happy in his own home. We can now visit him and do things for him, but don't have to worry about the actual day to day care. Helps all the family.’
* ‘Independence, choice, continuity, security and dignity is now more intact for my parents.’
* ‘To have good quality life and to be with people that I'm comfortable with.’
* ‘It’s important to me that I am given the opportunity to live a full and independent life. The ILS has helped me achieve this.’

**Improved care / employing PAs (18)**

* ‘I was nervous and unsure how to go about taking on a PA, but from the first meeting where everything was explained fully, I have been in a much better frame of mind.’
* ‘So needed after having horrible time with private care company.’
* ‘I’ve found LCIL to be supportive and knowledgeable, a helping hand through the care package maze.’
* ‘Helps me live the kind of life I want to live not the kind of life others would have me live.’
* ‘The ILS has been transformative; giving me a greater understanding of my rights as a disabled person and helping me access support. Without information regarding SDS I would not have known that employing a PA was an option.’
* ‘Made a massive difference; means I have a regular carer rather than different ones every day.’
* ‘Essential to feel that you get the care you need and not what is decided in a meeting.’

**Excellent / Invaluable (14)**

* ‘The support I get from the ILS is invaluable.’
* ‘They are indispensable to me.’
* ‘Massive - wouldn't manage without it.’
* ‘Don’t know how I would cope without them!’

**Getting out more / social activities / equality (10)**

* ‘With the help of my PA I am now at college and go to the gym and pictures most weeks whereas before PA I wasn’t able to do this so a massive impact on my life.’
* ‘My brother has been able to go regularly to the gym and out for walks, benefitting his physical and mental health. I have been able to relax and enjoy my spare time more fully, knowing that my brother is in good hands, and that I don't have to be fully responsible for him getting regular exercise on top of everything else I do for him.’
* ‘They have made me feel like a normal person.’
* ‘Because although i am a physically disabled person I feel with the help of LCIL they make me feel like i can live a normal life like everyone else.’
* ‘Otherwise I would hardly ever get out, sometimes run out of food or have to have shopping delivered.’
* ‘It also gives me a break as Darren needs 24/7 care.’

**Advice / support (15)**

* ‘I know if I have a problem. I have their support behind me. I don’t have to do it alone.’
* ‘It is important to know that as a carer, I am not alone to deal with everyday life. If issues do arise, I know I only have to make a phone call and my fears are put to rest.’
* ‘It's there when I need it especially in in times of crisis when I need supported.’
* ‘Currently in the middle of the advice process but ILO being able to sit-in on social work assessment was invaluable and meant I could be fully clear about the most significant things.’
* ‘As a first time user I have been both impressed and felt supported whilst embarking on a direct payments system for my son.’

**General positive comments (26)**

**Neutral comments (2)**

**Negative/constructive comments (4)**

* ‘ILO and payroll team don't seem to communicate with each other.’
* ‘It is sometimes difficult to speak to the staff because 'they are in a meeting' or the telephonist 'triages' the call, i.e. decides if my call is relevant enough.’

**Anything else you would like to share about the ILS?**

* ‘It would be a sadder world were it not there.’
* ‘Just knowing they are there means a lot as any time I have a query or question I know I can phone them.’
* ‘I can see the vital assistance that is provided and am extremely grateful to know that ‘I am not completely on my own.’
* It is an imperative service and could not continue to live in the community without it. I feel comfortable phoning or emailing any questions I have. The service is prompt.’
* ‘It's to be recommended to anyone who needs or qualifies for it. It makes a huge difference to my quality of life’
* ‘Top class to help live in freedom……WITHOUT HOSPITAL!!’
* ‘They are terrific.’

**A final word**

Ultimately, it is service users who determine how well LCIL has met its aim of supporting disabled people to live more independent lives, and how happy they are with our services.

Here are some final comments from the survey as a whole:

* ‘I would like to say, without the help and support we receive, our lives would be very difficult. I truly believe my husband would now be in a care home. Thank you all very much.’
* ‘Would like to give a special thanks to all LCiL staff, but my greatest thanks would go to XX, as they have been amazing to us. Helped us a lot.’
* ‘They have been very valuable to me and I would not like to see their service diminished in any way.’
* ‘No except that they are great people and what is making me stick with LCiL.’
* ‘Continuity of service is and continues to be very important to me, like my utilities I do not intend to leave a provider that offers such fantastic help and Customer service despite now having to make up difference as council are saying will only pay for a cheaper, unknown out of town provider.’
* ‘Because I've no other support. Glad I've got the support.’
* ‘Excellent organisation. Excellent helpful staff who make you feel like a worthwhile member of society.’
* ‘I would not be here, if it weren't for LCiL!!!’
* ‘It has truly help me, and come at a very important time. I can’t thank the team enough for their support.’
* ‘They deserve respect and acknowledgement of their hard work.’