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| **Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living**  **Service Users’ Survey**  **City of Edinburgh Council**  **2019/20**  **June 2020** |

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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 seventh 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 865 service users in total across the 4 Local Authorities (414 in Edinburgh), who used at least one of LCiL’s services between April 2019 and March 2020. The survey results were separated into Local Authority Area and this report focuses on the results from the City of Edinburgh Council.

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 414 registered service users from the City of Edinburgh Council, 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

- SDS Development Programme

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. 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 April, with a return deadline of 4th May in order to produce a completed report by June 2020. This is a little later than we had originally planned due to unexpected workload changes, in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**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 titled with the Local Authority of the recipient, based on the addresses we have in our database.

There were 3 ways that the survey results were sent back to us:

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

**(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.

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.

Last year, 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 year, however, this does not seem to have been a problem after several of the questions were tweaked slightly.

**Covid-19 Pandemic** – We knew in advance of sending the surveys that there was a chance that we would receive less of a response than last year, due to service users perhaps already having a lot on their minds. This does seem to have been the case, however we still feel we had enough of a response to report on.

iii) **Response rates**

The survey was sent to all CEC service users who had accessed services between 1 April 2019 and 29 March 2020, for whom we have contact details – 414 people in total. Of these:

* 87 surveys were completed and returned – **21% response rate**.
* 272 service users were contacted by email and 142 by post.
* 54 responded online via Survey Monkey and 33 by post.
* This gives a response rate of 20% online and 23% of those sent 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 | 72% | 25% | 1% | 0% | 1% |
| The service(s) met my needs within a reasonable and appropriate timescale | 72% | 25% | 3% | 0% | 0% |
| I value the work of LCiL and would recommend the organisation to others | 79% | 17% | 3% | 0% | 0% |
| Support from LCiL has helped improve my choices and given me more control in my life | 62% | 29% | 6% | 0% | 3% |
| As a result of support from LCiL I have been able to do other things that are important to me | 53% | 37% | 7% | 0% | 3% |
| The support I get from LCiL helps me to live in my own home | 52% | 29% | 9% | 0% | 10% |
| LCIL has helped me to increase my knowledge and understanding about self-directed support | 48% | 39% | 6% | 0% | 7% |
| With LCIL I know what help is available to me to manage my support | 48% | 42% | 4% | 0% | 6% |
| With LCIL I have a greater chance to make my support work for me | 58% | 31% | 4% | 0% | 7% |
| With LCIL I can better manage my responsibilities as an employer | 62% | 33% | 2% | 0% | 3% |
| It is important to me that LCIL remains a one-stop shop (provides all services as one organisation) | 78% | 19% | 2% | 0% | 1% |
| 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 | 76% | 22% | 0% | 0% | 2% |

**Service Users’ Comments on our Organisation**

We asked service users to comment on LCiL as a whole, to which we received 144 comments in response to 2 questions.Of these, 137 were positive or very positive.

**Positive comments**

Most of the positive feedback is centred around how much impact LCiL has on their lives, and the value they place on our services. People appreciate the supportive staff, the independence we help to give them and the assurance that LCiL is always there for them. Many people said they couldn’t manage without our support and feeling reassured was a theme that came up several times.

* ‘LCiL is very important to me. They help advertise for staff, help with interviews and contracts. They organise training for employers and PAs’
* ‘Knowing I have a knowledgeable base there to assist me and guide me gives me reassurance and relieves some anxieties. I don’t feel embarrassed to ask anything’
* ‘Staff I have dealt with have always been very helpful and patient’
* ‘Being severely disabled, just knowing they’re there to help me is a great deal’
* ‘LCiL is important to me as it gives me peace of mind knowing that I have assistance when I need it as an employer.’
* ‘It's very reassuring they are there if I need help and assistance’
* ‘It gives me the emotional and social security that there is an approachable system to contact easily and relate to’
* ‘The help you get is fantastic and takes a great deal of stress off’
* ‘Always available to give me advice when I need it. Also they keep me updated on things I need to know as an employer.’
* ‘Because I am not alone, they help me when needed.’
* ‘I hope your funding continues to enable you to tailor assistance to the many people who could be making the most of their direct payments, rather than the very limited options social workers suggest.’
* ‘It was an easily accessible service to me as I live locally. The service provided me with the guidance and support I needed, keeping me informed and keeping in touch throughout. Thank you’
* ‘LCIL’s knowledge and experience provided timely and expert support at a time when was unable to manage areas of my life and was at risk of not accessing the assistance l required at that time.’
* ‘It is a service that goes above and beyond to help clients to achieve a favourable outcome’
* ‘I have been using LCiL services for years and would not have had to confidence to employ my PAs without their help and support. They continue to help answer my queries I may encounter and are always approachable and professional’
* ‘I always feel like a person not a number’
* ‘I'd like to mention a special person called XXX, who has been my life line. NO matter how many times I have called her, she has always been there for me. She has helped me in layman terms, which is important to my needs as a disabled person. She has always been bright cheerful and I would recommend her to everyone – staff like her are the backbone of LCIL because without someone as knowledgeable and empathetic as her, you wouldn't have the great reputation you have which is as important to me as important to you.’

**Negative comments**

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:

* ‘There doesn't seem to be adequate communication between the different sections, e.g. payroll department and Independent Living Officer. I've sometimes had to relay information between one and the other. Sometimes I've been given different information by each. Quite confusing and stressful.’
* ‘LCIL seems to be designed more for people with physical disabilities, not for those like myself who have mental health disabilities. Also help with recruitment isn't great. I'm too scared to try and get a new assistant, my present one is ok but not ideal, was only meant to be temporary.’

**Constructive comments**

* ‘If your case worker goes off sick, you should be informed’
* ‘I find some staff a little over-bearing.’

**Why is LCiL important to you?**

We asked people why LCiL is important to them. The responses can be grouped into the following categories

**Payroll / employment, recruitment and legal requirements**

* ‘LCIL is very important to me, particularly the payroll service because without them it would make employing my own PA’s very challenging and I’m very grateful for this service.’
* ‘I knew nothing about direct payments and employing PAs and they were invaluable in helping me with the recruitment process and continue to help me with their payroll services. I know I couldn't have done this without them.’
* ‘It helps me to advertise for, employ and retain my own PAs so that I have the personal support I need to meet my daily needs as an employer with complex needs.’

**General support / positive comments**

* ‘It has helped me with knowing my rights regarding care of my son, I have gained friendship and support from other service users’
* ’They very supportive friendly understanding and helped me with all my needs’
* ‘I couldn't, cope without the place, nor could clients with needs more complex than mine. It's a crucial lifeline’
* ‘Without them, things would be difficult, almost impossible’
* ‘They value the voices of the supported people the most’
* ‘Because they give me support when I need it. I know where to go’
* ‘Wonderful to people. Nothing is ever a bother. They make us all feel important, not a pest.’

**Independence** **/ Control**

* ‘It has given me a life line to hold onto my independence.’
* ‘LCIL allows me to continue living independently and in my own home.’
* ‘Thank you for continuing to provide a vital service to disabled people. I would not have been able to access the support that I need were it not for your help.’
* ‘It allows me to live my life with a lot more independence’
* ‘Helps me be in control of my own life’
* ‘I have been able to receive more help around the house and have been able to increase the hours of paid help I get.’

**Information and advice**

* ‘One phone call. One appointment. One visit. One solution - need I say more?’
* ‘Great support in a timely and efficient manner, even during the recent pandemic communication has been excellent and the staff are very helpful’
* ‘Trusted resource and guaranteed accurate information’

**Advocacy / Communication with other bodies**

* ‘They have expertise that I no longer have the ability to acquire in a timely fashion so their ILO service is a big confidence boost when negotiating care services & council funding requirements.’
* ‘LCIL provided me with excellent support in completion of carers allowance form for the DWP. Also I was provided a very comprehensive list of caring agencies to approach on behalf of my mum.’
* ‘Because as someone with a brain injury, I find it difficult to engage with people and find a route to care, so having a sound route to receive the correct information is vital because I find dealing with local authorities hit or miss depending on whether the person can take the extra 2 minutes to understand what I’m after.’

**Peer Support**

* ‘It provides an independent space to talk without your own provider. i have also met many friends through their peer support’
* ‘I really value their expertise and it’s easy to talk with staff and ask embarrassing questions. Peer support in groups means a lot to me too’
* ‘It's given me a platform that helps me get out of the house. I also meet like-minded people, and the staff, are always, warm, welcoming, and above all helpful... It gives me a sense of purpose’
* ‘It is open to anyone, and provides space for people to talk about issues and learn new skills about self-directed support/managing support’

**3. Service-specific responses**

Service users were then asked specific questions about the services they had used. Of those 87 who responded:

* 46% had used the Payroll Service
* 41% had used the Independent Living Service
* 39% had used the Grapevine Service – due to the nature of the service many people do not give their contact details
* 7% had used the Financial Management Service
* 11% had used the SDS Development Program

1. **Grapevine**

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

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **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 | 77% | 11% | 3% | 3% | 6% |
| The face to face support was professional | 67% | 20% | 3% | 0% | 10% |
| Grapevine staff listened carefully to me | 72% | 16% | 3% | 0% | 9% |
| Staff use jargon-free and plain language | 74% | 14% | 3% | 0% | 9% |
| The information provided (by phone, email or face to face) was clear and well presented | 72% | 20% | 0% | 0% | 8% |
| I have confidence in the competence and knowledge of Grapevine staff | 74% | 17% | 0% | 0% | 9% |
| Grapevine’s support has enabled me to Improve my life | 60% | 26% | 6% | 0% | 8% |

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:

* 30% of people had a better understanding of the benefits system
* 16% of people had the information needed to navigate the system
* 7% of people had taken part in more social activities or work /volunteering
* 13% of people had been able to stay in their own home
* 17% 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.**

‘The support allowed me to navigate the Benefits System as I would not have managed this independently.’

‘Major. They were recommended by a friend who couldn't speak highly enough of Grapevine after they helped him successfully navigate the PiP process. They've given us both peace of mind of knowing how to access support in the future.’

* **Independence at home and family life.**

‘It has improved my peace of mind that if I need more help I can now afford to get it. House decorating, gardening are 2 examples’

* **Feeling supported.**

‘ENHANCING! One of life's necessities, especially for the elderly and vulnerable who do not have the ability / confidence to obtain or ask for help in their circumstance or condition outside of formal organisations.’

‘Grapevine provided very valuable and expert support at a time when l was reluctant to use such a service but resulted in life-changing positive results.’

‘Great to have people who understand people living with a disability and are there for you when you feel out of your depth.’

‘Excellent. The service they provide is nothing less than amazing. They were knowledgeable in every question I asked’

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

‘They take the stress of finding information needed away, when one is limited with technology through ill health and limited awareness of resources and how to access these.’

1. **Payroll Service**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?** | | | | | | |
|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Skipped |
| Payroll’s telephone support is excellent | 73% | 22% | 2.5% | 0% | 2.5% |
| All my payroll needs are dealt with effectively and efficiently | 78% | 15% | 5% | 0% | 2% |
| They use jargon-free and plain language | 68% | 27% | 2.5% | 2.5% | 0% |
| All my Personal Assistants’ payroll calculations are accurate | 78% | 17% | 0% | 2.5% | 2.5% |
| I have confidence in the competence and knowledge of Payroll staff | 78% | 17% | 0% | 2.5% | 2.5% |
| Payroll staff are helpful and able to answer my queries | 83% | 12% | 5% | 0% | 0% |
| I feel more confident about being a Personal Assistant employer | 73% | 22% | 2.5% | 0% | 2.5% |
| I feel more confident about managing my Direct Payment /Independent Living Fund package | 76% | 24% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| I value the work of Payroll and would recommend the service to others | 78% | 17% | 0% | 2.5% | 2.5% |

**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 29 people who answered these questions, almost all commented that it was of great use to them, especially when it came to record keeping.

We also asked: ‘What they used the information for’. The most common answers were for ILF and social work reviews, council and tax returns and so that they are aware what to pay their employees, the pension providers and HMRC.

* ‘Very. I need this information to be able to pay my PA, LCiL and HMRC accurately. They also send me monthly info regarding my PA's annual leave to date and yearly p60’
* ‘My son has DP & ILF require to keep accurate records’
* ‘Keeping a track of my SDS budget monthly & annually. Also helpful to note if HMRC payments may be due.’
* ‘This allows me to pay my PAs the requisite amount each month and for them to have a detailed breakdown of what they have earned and how it has been worked out.’
* ‘This information is used for annual returns and for tracking my own care package in the current year and predicting for future financial years.’
* ‘It allows me to see the breakdown of tax and NI and i keep these in a file if i ever need to go back to them.’
* ‘In case the council wants to check anything I have back up.’

There were only 2 people who found the detailed information was not useful or more detailed than they require.

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**
* ‘I couldn't do the process myself so without them I couldn't employ an assistant.’
* ‘It has a very positive impact on my life as it enables me to have my own PA’s.’
* ‘Invaluable - I could not employ the PAs without this service. I do not have time to work it all out myself.’
* **Reduced stress / pressure / reassurance / confidence**
* ‘Life is easy and LCIL are very helpful to remove the stress of having to do this all by myself, you are very valuable to me.’
* **‘**Straightforward, clear and simple: involves little or no stress to pay promptly and accurately. One less thing to worry about!’
* ‘Essential, reduces stress, invaluable support. Have used and will continue to use this service for many years)’
* ‘I need to know that I am employing people responsibly and couldn't do that without payroll's support.’
* ‘Massive peace of mind and confident about everything being correct.
* **Makes life easier / saves time**
* ‘It is a god send - I have nothing to worry about in that department - all my time and efforts can be spent on fun things with my son.’
* ‘I am not gifted in clerical matters / HMRC / Time sheets. LCiL totally take over all of this for me - freeing up my time. I am eternally grateful’
* ‘It would make life much more difficult if it was unavailable.’
* ‘Makes life a bit easier each month.’
* ‘Life is made easier with the help of many hands.’
* **Essential / couldn't cope without it / Couldn’t do it myself**
* ‘I couldn't do the process myself so without them I couldn't employ an assistant.’
* ‘As something I can't cope with, I think it's invaluable’
* ‘It is vitally important as I am not able to do this on my own anymore.’
* ‘ Very useful, without service, management would be almost impossible’
* **General positive comments**
* ‘When PAs do a good job for my disabled daughter, it is important to know LCiL staff will sort out your payroll to pay staff correctly.’
* ‘It’s an accessible service built around the needs of disabled people.’
* ‘A godsend.’
* ‘It provides a service beyond my capabilities.’
* ‘This allows me to manage easily and have peace of mind.’
* **More of a life / freedom / independence**
* ‘It allows me to get on with living my life rather than administering it.’
* ‘They help me maintain my lifestyle at my pace’
* ‘It ensures I can live my own independent life with my own team of PA’s to support me in my everyday tasks/life.’
* ‘It allows me to remain as independent as possible.’
* **Negative comments/feedback**
* ‘Sometimes I do not get the information I need’
* ‘I wish for regular payment updates / balance sheets - this does not happen’
* ‘I worry because most times I have to double check’

**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.

There were only 10 respondents to the FMS questionnaire. However, over 7 out of the 10 either agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **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 | 50% | 20% | 20% | 0% | 10% |
| The changeover to a client bank account held by LCiL was straightforward | 30% | 50% | 10% | 0% | 10% |
| I find it easy to contact the LCiL Financial Management Support team | 30% | 40% | 20% | 0% | 10% |
| They are helpful when I have an enquiry | 30% | 50% | 10% | 0% | 10% |
| All payments are dealt with efficiently, accurately and on time | 50% | 30% | 10% | 0% | 10% |
| I feel more confident about managing my support package | 30% | 40% | 20% | 0% | 10% |
| I could not manage a Direct Payment without the LCIL Financial Management Service | 60% | 20% | 10% | 0% | 10% |

9 out of the 10 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?**

8 of those Service users said yes

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

Only 2 participants commented on this question, both stating none. One even stated they were ‘perfectly happy with the service provided’.

**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 11% of the ILS respondents skipped some questions, more than 40% 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 |
| The Independent Living Team (ILT) are contactable when I need them | 64% | 19% | 11% | 0% | 6% |
| Their support is excellent | 61% | 28% | 5% | 0% | 6% |
| I appreciate their home visits | 44% | 33% | 6% | 3% | 14% |
| The support provided by ILT has given me more choices and control over decisions affecting my life. | 57% | 25% | 6% | 0% | 14% |
| I know more about Self-Directed Support due to my support from ILT. | 58% | 17% | 14% | 0% | 11% |
| The support provided by ILT has allowed me to live more independently. | 50% | 28% | 8% | 0% | 14% |
| I feel more confident about managing my Direct Payment and/or Independent Living Fund Scotland (ILFS) | 61% | 19% | 8% | 0% | 11% |

We received 32 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 from the chart below, a good amount 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**

‘Now I have help I can be with my children which is priceless’

‘Gives me more freedom’

‘All of this allows me to continue managing my own support, which allows me to continue to live independently’

* **Improved care / employing PAs**

‘I knew nothing about employing Pas before I started working with LCiL and they have helped me every step of the way.’

‘… I find it hard to trust people, but when I had a PA we did things together (mainly my hobbies) which I enjoyed…’

‘I know can confidently turn to the independent living service with questions about care for my mum. Had not thought to do so regarding direct payment, but will do so in the near future.’

‘The whole entire LCiL is important to me because it does the paperwork behind employing PA’s and keeps us up to date with legislation.’

* **Excellent / Invaluable**

‘Helps me survive’

‘My ILO is very supportive and often provides information as needed. When there are changes to care packages and no information from CEC, my ILO has helped me to manage and navigate understanding these changes.’

‘Essential, valued, appreciated’

‘Knowing my caseworker is there to support me is invaluable’

* **Getting out more / social activities / equality**

‘Allows me to live a life like other people’

‘Feeling safe, trying to be more social with people, trust and stop feeling not wanted, being happier than I can feel at times, maybe not so isolated.’

* **Advice / support**

‘Just knowing that they are there, if and when I need their advice allows me to focus on other things, knowing that when I need support, they will provide robust, impartial and positive feedback.’

‘Knowing skilled, knowledgeable people are available when I need them.’

* **General positive comments**

‘Very important’

‘Great advice and support’

* **Neutral comments**

‘Independence is very important’

* **Negative/constructive comments**

‘It’s a little hard that my contact only works 2 days but I am set up so not too much of a problem, just have to wait a little if I have a question.’

‘They don’t seem to have much awareness and sensitivity about mental health issues e.g. agoraphobia, chronic anxiety. This survey itself is very narrow and unimaginative, not easy to fill in. I think there should be a neutral or ‘not sure’ option in the answer choices. It’s been hard to choose ‘agree’ or ‘disagree to questions the way they are worded’

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

* ‘Fantastic service, I feel happy I have them help’
* ‘Vital that service is funded to continue its excellent work’
* ‘The staff are very friendly and approachable, and I feel very comfortable working with them. I am confident that the staff will keep me right’
* They are indispensable to someone who would like to continue to live in their own home and manage their own support’
* I am very happy with your service, thank you’

**v) Self-Directed Support (SDS) Development Project**

Working across Edinburgh and the three Lothians, the Self Directed Support Development Programme engages with disabled people, those with long term conditions, older people and parent carers of disabled children.  We offer peer support groups and workshops to help these individuals self-empower to have knowledge, understanding and confidence to assert their rights and to live their own, independent life.

We received responses and comments from 9 individuals, although this is a small number we felt it was still worth reporting.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?** | | | | | | |
|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Skipped |
| The SDS programme’s peer support groups and workshops are excellent | 89% | 11% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| I feel listened to, heard and fully supported in these groups. | 75% | 25% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| They use jargon-free and plain language | 67% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Information provided at the workshops was clear and well presented. | 78% | 22% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| I have confidence in the competence and knowledge of the SDS team | 89% | 11% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| The SDS team’s support has enabled me to improve my life. | 67% | 22% | 11% | 0% | 0% |
| I value the opportunities the SDS programme offers. | 67% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| I know more about Self Directed Support due to my contact with the SDS programme | 44% | 56% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

We also asked:

**‘How would you describe the impact of the SDS programme in your life?** and **Why is this important to you?** All of the comments left were positive:

* ‘it has opened up opportunities to share information, support and applying for funding etc’
* ‘I've become more confident in asking to have needs met, more organised in what those needs are and better organised in asking for variations to current packages, to suit ongoing and changing needs’
* ‘Offers opportunities that my son would otherwise find difficult to access’
* ‘It enabled me to support my mother and stay sane myself.’
* ‘because otherwise i would have no idea of what is available’
* ‘I lacked confidence before in almost all areas and basically sat back, doing very little if my own planning’
* ‘gives me purpose’
* ‘I am pretty isolated so having staff to turn to was crucial’
* ‘it's too easy to feel alone and abandoned by the system’
* ‘I look forward to seeing Everyone, and it brightens my day. It's also a lifesaver, Literally’
* ‘Great team, always within a phone call, or, email's distance. Timeous in their replies’

**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:

* ‘Biggest help in my life’
* ‘It helps my son get more support and exposure to social interactions outside the home which can often be stressful otherwise.’
* ‘It’s opened the door of support packages to me’
* ‘LCiL have been a great help for over a decade now for whatever my needs are’
* ‘Supports my client when no one else can’
* ‘They have considerably helped my sister and myself. Without their help we would not have coped and not be where we are today. Thank you very, very much’
* ‘Because they are peer led they really understand the obstacles of disabled living’
* ‘Keep the service going, you're very much appreciated and needed. Thank you’