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| **Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living**  **Service Users’ Survey**  **West Lothian 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 (173 in West Lothian), 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 West Lothian 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 173 registered service users from West Lothian Council, who had accessed one or more of the following LCiL services in the last year:

- 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. 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.

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.

**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 WLC service users who had accessed services between 1 April 2019 and 29 March 2020, for whom we have contact details – 173 people in total. Of these:

* 35 surveys were completed and returned – **20.2% response rate**.
* 112 service users were contacted by email and 61 by post.
* 24 responded online via Survey Monkey and 11 by post.
* This gives a response rate of 13.8% online and 6.4% 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 | 71% | 23% | 3% | 0% | 3% |
| The service(s) met my needs within a reasonable and appropriate timescale | 69% | 29% | 0% | 0% | 3% |
| I value the work of LCiL and would recommend the organisation to others | 74% | 20% | 3% | 0% | 3% |
| Support from LCiL has helped improve my choices and given me more control in my life | 51% | 37% | 6% | 0% | 6% |
| As a result of support from LCiL I have been able to do other things that are important to me | 51% | 34% | 3% | 3% | 8% |
| The support I get from LCiL helps me to live in my own home | 47% | 38% | 3% | 3% | 9% |
| LCIL has helped me to increase my knowledge and understanding about self-directed support | 44% | 44% | 3% | 6% | 3% |
| With LCIL I know what help is available to me to manage my support | 44% | 41% | 6% | 6% | 3% |
| With LCIL I have a greater chance to make my support work for me | 44% | 44% | 3% | 3% | 6% |
| With LCIL I can better manage my responsibilities as an employer | 63% | 31% | 3% | 0% | 3% |
| It is important to me that LCIL remains a one-stop shop (provides all services as one organisation) | 71% | 26% | 0% | 0% | 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 | 63% | 31% | 0% | 0% | 6% |

**Service Users’ Comments on our Organisation**

We asked service users to comment on LCiL as a whole, to which we received 24 comments in response to 2 questions.Almost all of the comments left were positive ones.

**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, and the support we give.

* ‘Friendly and professional. Willing to respond and helpful.’
* ‘Great to know they are a phone call away, plus I use email to contact them and they never fail in their quick response and are so helpful.’
* ‘It is essential and very valuable’
* ‘LCIL have been and are a fantastic service which has enabled myself to focus more on my daughter rather than the admin side of things, therefore reducing stress I don’t need as a parent and employer. I’d really struggle without their support.’
* ‘Compassionate and go the extra mile to help’
* ‘Staff with regards to pay slips processing and pay enquires are always very helpful.’

**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 / information / legal requirements**

* ‘I would not be able to manage the whole payroll side of my Mother's package without them. If we didn't have that package my Mother could not live with me and have a fairly good quality life. LICL were so helpful when the package was set up and have continued to offer ongoing support, which gives me peace of mind as being a carer is challenging enough.’
* ‘They are able to answer any queries, problems which I could not do by myself. Processing salaries and other payments by calculating payments I need to make as an employer for example HMRC, holidays etc.’
* ‘It allows me to employ my own carers and live an independent life.’

**Respite for carer / independence**

* ‘For communication in nursing home as more of the staff can sign British Sign Language’
* ‘It means my mother in law is supported and I get a little respite for myself’
* ‘Most important is helping me be independent for as long as possible, without care providers!’
* ‘I can't cope with going back to care providers. Had them for about 11 years , prior to SDS’

**Reduces stress / couldn’t do it on my own**

* ‘It gives me the support and confidence to be an employer and know that I have support available when or if I require it.’
* ‘It takes the stress away from co-ordinating my son's care package and thus allows us to be in control of his choices.’
* ‘I couldn't face life without the essential support provided by them.’
* ‘LCiL is important to me to help me manage my life better as I have LCiL support to help me at any time and I am able to employ PAs that help me to manage my disability and life better.’

**Negative comments**

* ‘Recently has requested unnecessary information. Paperwork not supplied as agreed.’

**3. Service-specific responses**

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

* 86% had used the Payroll Service
* 37% had used the Independent Living Service
* 8% had used the Financial Management Service
* 8% had used the Self Directed Support

1. **Payroll Service**

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| **How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?** | | | | | | |
|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Skipped |
| Payroll’s telephone support is excellent | 50% | 43% | 3% | 0% | 3% |
| All my payroll needs are dealt with effectively and efficiently | 70% | 27% | 0% | 0% | 3% |
| They use jargon-free and plain language | 70% | 27% | 0% | 0% | 3% |
| All my Personal Assistants’ payroll calculations are accurate | 67% | 30% | 3% | 0% | 0% |
| I have confidence in the competence and knowledge of Payroll staff | 63% | 30% | 7% | 0% | 0% |
| Payroll staff are helpful and able to answer my queries | 67% | 23% | 3% | 0% | 7% |
| I feel more confident about being a Personal Assistant employer | 73% | 23% | 0% | 3% | 0% |
| I feel more confident about managing my Direct Payment /Independent Living Fund package | 67% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| I value the work of Payroll and would recommend the service to others | 73% | 27% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

**Service user comments about the Payroll Service**

We asked people:

**‘What payroll support have you received’ and ‘After processing your timesheets we send you detailed information. How useful is this to you?’**

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

Out of the 21 people who answered this question, almost all commented that it was of great use to them, especially when it came to record keeping:

* ‘1. Split between direct payments and ILF is most helpful- when it is included 2. Payments to HMRC, etc. very helpful.’
* ‘To have full and complete records to show Independent Living Fund Scotland that my funding is being used correctly.’
* ‘Very useful as gives me correct, accurate information for myself to pay out to those needing paid every month.’
* ‘It's useful as it is always available quickly without having to search for paperwork.’
* ‘To have full and complete records to show Independent Living Fund Scotland that my funding is being used correctly at my review.’
* ‘For information required by WLC as expenditure returns, 1. above (Split DP & ILF) is extremely helpful. On those occasions when this is omitted, my returns are obviously inaccurate - at best a guesstimate.’

There were no comment this year to indicate that service users did not find that 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**

* ‘By supplying the "Payments Advice Sheets" and the payslips it makes it a lot easier to pay the cares plus LCIL and HMRC.’
* ‘Very positive impact as it allows me to access and manage my son's care package efficiently and easily.’
* ‘Very positive impact as it allows me to access and manage my son's care package efficiently and easily.’

**Reduced stress / pressure / reassurance / confidence**

* ‘Allows me to live my life without having to worry about accurately calculating wages.’
* ‘I dread having to process wages every month but LCIL makes it bearable. Thankful for everything they do.’

**Makes life easier / better quality / saves time**

* ‘By supplying the "Payments Advice Sheets" and the payslips it makes it a lot easier to pay the cares plus LCIL and HMRC.’
* ‘I can use the time saved on other activities.’
* ‘Allows me to concrete on my life and my health while getting the support I need from my PA's, without needing to worry about monthly pay.’
* ‘Makes my life easier and I feel I am not alone.’

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

* ‘Without payroll service I could not employ a PA.’
* ‘I would not be able to support my son without their help :-).’

**General positive comments**

* ‘No words can explain this question EXCELLENT’
* ‘Certain amount of freedom in choices’

**ii) 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 3 responses received to the questions below, all were strongly agree or agree.

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| **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 | 33% | 67% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| The changeover to a client bank account held by LCiL was straightforward | 67% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| I find it easy to contact the LCiL Financial Management Support team | 67% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| They are helpful when I have an enquiry | 67% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| All payments are dealt with efficiently, accurately and on time | 33% | 67% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| I feel more confident about managing my support package | 33% | 67% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| I could not manage a Direct Payment without the LCIL Financial Management Service | 33% | 67% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

We also asked:

**‘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 3 service users answered yes.

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

There were no suggestions given by these service users.

**iii) 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. More than 40% of the people who answered 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. | 47% | 29% | 6% | 0% | 18% |
| Their support is excellent | 53% | 29% | 0% | 0% | 18% |
| I appreciate their home visits | 53% | 24% | 0% | 0% | 24% |
| The support provided by ILT has given me more choice and control over decisions affecting my life. | 53% | 29% | 0% | 0% | 18% |
| I know more about Self-Directed Support due to my support from ILT. | 35% | 41% | 6% | 0% | 18% |
| The support I get from the ILT team helps me to live in my own home | 47% | 35% | 0% | 0% | 18% |
| I can better manage my responsibilities as a PA employer with ILT support. | 59% | 24% | 0% | 0% | 18% |
| I feel more confident about managing my Direct Payment and/or Independent Living Fund Scotland (ILFS) with the support of ILT | 59% | 23% | 0% | 0% | 18% |

We also asked the 13 respondents to give further details of how Direct Payments or Independent Living Fund packages have helped them. As you can see, most 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?”** 14 comments were given on this matter, and all of the responses were positive. They focused on how much better life is being able to employ their own personal assistants. Independence, quality of life and respite for families also came up in many of the comments. A few examples are:

‘Without it I couldn't stay in my own home.’

‘Very positive and open up opportunities for my son to engage in activities out with family.’

‘Gives me confidence as an employer I have support with any issues.’

‘Helps me to be interested in life and what is happening in the world around me.’

‘It helps my son develop life skills and independence whilst having full support.’

‘I am a very independent woman who has had to come to terms with an illness that takes away that independence. They help me immensely.’

‘The staff are fantastic. Without them I would have to use an external agency. I have done this in the past and it was less than ideal. Direct Payments is much better.’

**iv) 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.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **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 | 67% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| I feel listened to, heard and fully supported in these groups. | 67% | 33% | 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. | 67% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| I have confidence in the competence and knowledge of the SDS team | 67% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| The SDS team’s support has enabled me to improve my life. | 33% | 67% | 0% | 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 | 67% | 33% | 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:

‘Helps put services in place as needed’

‘It has saved my life’

‘It gives me a safe place to be myself’

‘To hear of things and info that’s not easy to find’

**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.

* ‘The continued support myself and my son have received has been exceptional, without this support I don’t know what we would have done.’
* ‘I would recommend this to anyone who needs support’
* ‘I know that help is just a telephone call away’
* ‘I couldn’t face life without the essential support provided by them’
* ‘LCIL has saved my life and gave me a safe place to get the support and advice I needed to turn my life around.’