

Independent Living Centre, St George's Road, Semington, nr Trowbridge,
Wiltshire, BA14 6JQ
Tel: 01380 871800, Fax: 01380 871507,
Email: assistant.wsun@btconnect.com, Website: www.wsun.co.uk



Information and Advice Consultation

WILTSHIRE AND SWINDON USER'S NETWORK

February 2017



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Introduction

WSUN were asked to engage with people as part of Wiltshire Council's program of work around the review, design and recommissioning of the information and advice service for Wiltshire.

This report examines peoples' responses and experiences to a questionnaire about an Information and Advice service.

Evaluation Method

The questionnaire used was designed by WSUN to be as clear and easily accessible as possible. It could either be used as a standalone questionnaire which people could complete independently or it could be used by Outreach Workers for semi-structured interviews. This involves asking each individual the exact questions as they are printed on the questionnaires and recording in detail all the responses. The interviewer may then ask further questions following the initial responses from participants either to clarify the original response or identify the implications of the initial response. These secondary responses are also recorded in detail.

This report addresses the responses by the 105 people

- 66 females and 29 males, 10 people did not disclose their gender
- 7 people were aged between 18 and 30 years
- 13 people were aged between 31 and 45 years
- 17 people were aged between 46 and 55 years
- 34 people were aged between 56 and 70 years
- 25 people were aged between 71 and 85 years
- 9 people were older than 85 years

This report will:

- Evaluate as well as describe
- Qualify as well as quantify
- Represent subjective as well as objective views
- Identify commonly held opinions of all interviewed residents
- Participants often expressed their opinions in very clear terms, and these statements appear throughout this report in **bold blue text**.

Key Areas of Focus

- Identify where people currently find information
- Help identify what people want from an information and advice service, including accessibility
- How they wish to engage, for example face to face or telephone contact
- How digital solutions may support an information service, including the current 'Your Care, Your Support' website
- Gain insight into how people can be assisted to keep safe and well (part of the Council's cross cutting work stream about how people can be encouraged to look after themselves and to maintain independence for as long as possible)

How people responded

1. How do you find information and advice about care and support you need?

Overwhelmingly people reported that they would ask their GP for information (48%) although some people acknowledged that this may not always prove successful.

I suppose I could go to my GP, but I don't know how successful that would be!

Friends, neighbours and family were the next largest response (41%).

I get information from my son, I rely on my son

This was closely followed by using the internet (40%).

18% of people used the library and other Council services were also a source of information and advice:

- Wiltshire Council Website - 8% (This was the main Council website)
- Adult Social Care / Social Worker – 8%
- Wiltshire Council Offices – 4%
- Area Boards 3%

8% of people reported that newspapers, magazines, leaflets and notice boards were a valuable resource.

A large number of organisations were mentioned these included:

- Wiltshire and Swindon Users' Network – 12% (although it is acknowledged that our Outreach workers were interviewing)
- Citizen's Advice – 10%
- Carers Support – 5%
- Age UK – 7%

- Doorway – 4%

Mind, Wiltshire CIL, Alzheimer's Support, Healthwatch Wiltshire, Wiltshire Wildlife, Turning Point, RNIB, Action for Blind, and Guidedogs were all mentioned once.

Health care services other than the GP:

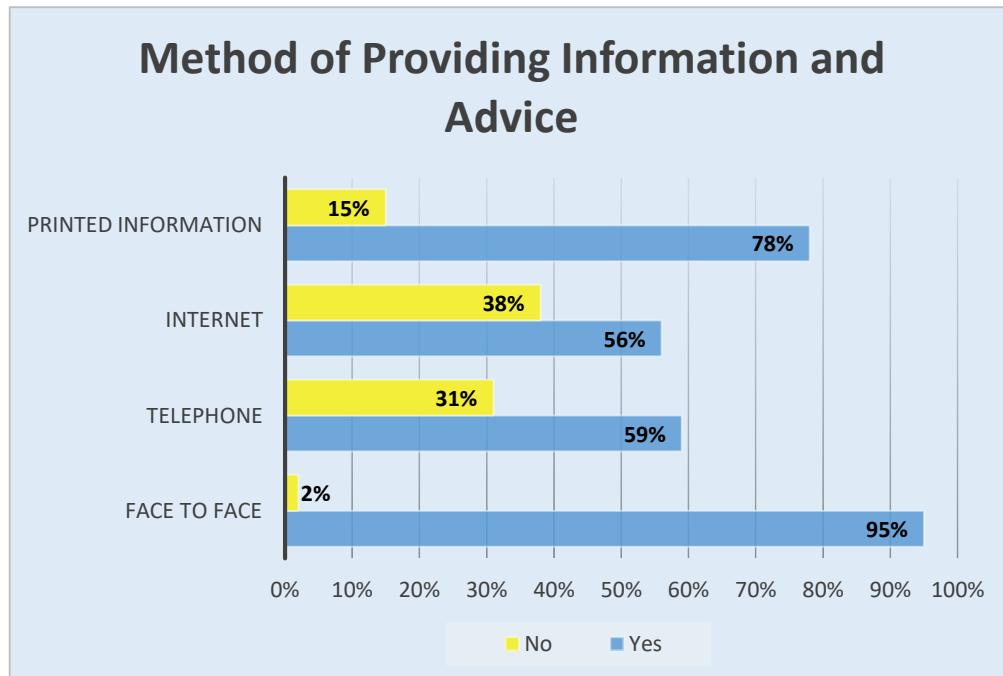
- Other health care professionals (not specified) – 14%
- Pharmacy - 7%
- Opticians – 4%
- Clinical Commissioning Group (1 person)
- Care Coordinators (1 person)
- CQC website (1 person)
- Lift (now known as IAPTS) (1 person)

Community groups and facilities were also mentioned:

- Local Support Groups – 4%
- Memory Groups/ clubs – 4%
- Community centres – 3%
- Mental Health Groups – 3%
- Safe Places – 3%
- Local town hubs – 2%
- Local healthcare events - 2%
- Church (1 person)
- Rotary (1 person)

2% of respondents said they didn't need advice, whilst 3% of people said they didn't know where to find the information or that they found it difficult.

2. How is information best delivered?

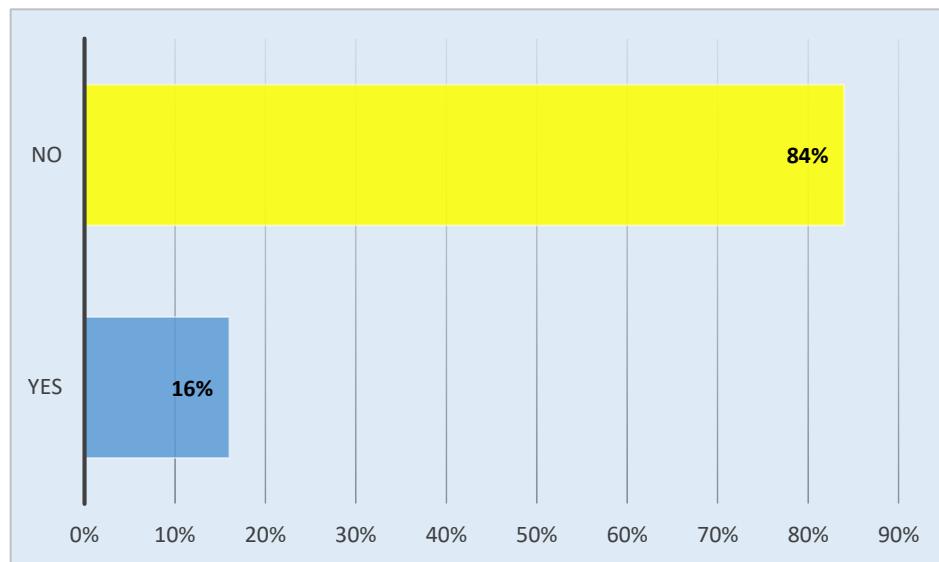


Face to Face was the method of engagement people found the most acceptable for the delivery of information and advice (95%) followed by printed information (78%), the telephone (59%) and internet (56%). Over a third (38%) of those who were interviewed or completed questionnaires, did not like the internet as a way of obtaining/delivering information. Of those 38%, 29% were in the age range of 56 + years, significantly fewer were from the lower age range.

Some people expressed difficulty using the telephone due to hearing impairments

I can't hear well and I don't get the phone if I don't know the number

3. Have you ever used Wiltshire Councils ‘Your Care, Your Support’ website?



84% of those questioned had not heard of, or used the ‘Your Care, Your Support’ Website.

Of the 16% (17 people) of those who had used the website, 7 people answered yes to the question ‘Did it provide the information they were looking for?’, but 1 person qualified this by saying ***to some extent*** whilst another said ***some of the time***.

9 people responded that it did not ‘provide the information they were looking for.

Issues highlighted included:

- Out of date information
- Difficult to navigate (2 people)
- Too many results/ Too much irrelevant information (3 people)
- Difficulty using a screen reader (visually impaired)

- Information not local

I used it to try to assist someone else but ended up phoning WC instead, ... I couldn't find any information easily, I tried different words, but still couldn't find it. Bad layout, can't navigate around website. Screen reader (for visual impairment) didn't act well, jumps from box to box

The word 'Care' 709 results!

When asked how the website could be improved responses included:

- Update on a regular basis
- Direct link needed from the Wiltshire Council's home page
- Easier access to easy read information
- Better Marketing
- Improve how the search facility sorts relevant information (3 people)
- Less hits to a search word (3 people)
- Information to be about local services

4. What are the most important things required for an information and advice service?

46% of respondents felt that clear, concise, jargon free, timely and relevant, up to date information was important for a good information and advice service.

Caring, friendly compassionate staff (21%) and staff that were knowledgeable were also important factors (10%)

Many people want this (information) by telephone, but it only works if the person taking the call is skilled at finding out what the caller needs and giving information in a way that is appropriate.

Another important consideration was around communication: Good Communication (15%) and listening to feedback and acting on it (3%)

'Where everybody matters' – yeah, believe in your own strapline and promote good communication. Listen to feedback and use it!

The way in which respondents wanted to interact was also commented on:

- Good phone support (15%)
- Face to Face service (10%)
- Good Websites and internet search facility (10%)
- Printed information (7%)
- Email support (2%)

Easily accessible information was also a key consideration (25%) as well as the accessibility of the service itself:

- Longer hours of 24hr accessibility (8%)
- Free phone numbers (4%)
- Easy to travel to (2%)

To be accessible and provide clear and concise information

Person centred supported was essential for some (7%), as was a holistic approach (3%). Some people felt that specific support for certain groups should be available too.

- Sight and Hearing impaired (6%)
- Mental Health (2%)
- Physical (2%)

I would want people to deal with the whole thing, a holistic approach rather than being passed around

Finally, respondents felt that a service should be well marketed (12%), provide good signposting (8%) be transparent and honest about its aims and purpose (5%) be non-judgmental (3%) and confidential (2%) and work with other organisations to avoid duplication of resource and effort (5%).

5. What do you need from an information and advice service to make it more accessible?

Almost a quarter of people (24%) felt that publicising the service well, was very important.

17% of respondents felt that having information available in accessible formats, such as large print, contrasting colours, different languages and easy to read versions was an essential factor. 15% reiterated the need for clear, concise, jargon free, timely and relevant, up to date information.

Again the types of ways you could interact and the availability and accessibility of the service were mentioned:

- Good websites with easy search facility (16%)
- Face to Face service (11%)
- Accessible venue (10%)
- Printed or written information (9%)
- Longer hours (9%)
- Good phone service and easy to use phone service (a person not an answerphone) (9%)
- Easy to travel to (5%)
- Must be free (2%)

Once again people expressed the need for caring, friendly, polite compassionate staff (7%) who were knowledgeable (11%) and who had good communication skills (5%).

Respondents also felt it was essential that there was specific support for those who are most vulnerable (6%)

Many vulnerable people end up in bad situations because they are not understood.

Finally links with other services was felt to be an important factor:

- GP links (4%)
- Joint working with other organisations (3%)

6. What information do you need to help you stay well and safe?

For some people this was a difficult to answer and for those we interviewed we often had to explain what we meant by the question. 23% of people did not answer, responded that they ***didn't need the service***, or ***I don't need help*** or said they didn't know.

By far the greatest number of people (33%) commented that they needed good information and education about health, exercise, diet and safety.

Information about opportunities for educating myself about health issues and exercise

Regular professional monitoring and check-ups (Health) (11%), good publicity of health services and contacts (5%) and information from health professionals (6%) were also thought to be significant. People also felt that appointment and health check reminders (4%) were important.

Using the community for networking and support (16%) and family and friends (11%) were considered central to people's wellbeing.

Respondents also commented on the following:

- Information and publicity events, including services and products to help maintain independence (12%)

- Crisis or emergency support (5%)
- Home safety / maintenance, advice and contacts (5%)
- Benefits and financial advice (4%)

Also important were, going out and about (3%) leisure and fitness facilities (2%) correct medication (4%) and my phone (3%).

Signposting and support for accessing information from other services is so important, to ensure people have the information they actually need to make choices

Recommendations

1	Information and Advice must be clear, concise, jargon free, timely and relevant, and should delivered by knowledgeable, friendly and compassionate staff. (Additional training of key front line staff may be required)
2	The ways in which people can access information and advice need to be varied and local, but without unnecessary duplication. The service must include accessible, easy to read information, including on-line (suitable for screen readers) and the opportunity for face to face or telephone contact.
3	Education of the public must include how to keep safe and well and contain information concerning diet, exercise, health needs and social interaction opportunities.

Contact Information

For further information on this report please contact us:

Wiltshire & Swindon Users' Network,

The Independent Living Centre,

St. George's Road,

Semington,

BA14 6JQ

Phone: 01380 871800

Email: louiserendle.wsun@btconnect.com

The Wiltshire Community Care User Involvement Network

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