

Service Users' Perspectives on Reablement (An overview prepared for Wandsworth, March 2009)

The current text summarises the available evidence regarding service user involvement and service users' perspectives regarding reablement and intermediate care. It refers to a range of tools, available through the Care Services Efficiency Delivery Programme, multimedia video, and a range of reviews and articles that describe service users' experience and perspectives re reablement.

There was no evidence located about any reablement schemes that involve service users in their evaluation as interviewers or researchers.

1 Tools

In their 2007 document *Homecare Re-ablement. Assessment Tools and Satisfaction Surveys*, Care Services Efficiency Delivery (CSED) Programme provide a list of tools used to collect service user feedback. Regarding the service users' perspectives as part of the assessment of the reablement schemes, from the seven local authorities that worked with CSED,

... it would seem that although most services have some form of documentation, the response rates are not high and they do little with the information gathered other than respond to individual replies. Some CSSRs have sought to improve the response rates by individually handing the questionnaire with a stamped addressed envelope to the user and, where appropriate, carer whilst others have mentioned using 'quiet' time in their call centres to contact a sample of users... Some of the services use the feedback to monitor trends and include summaries within their monthly or quarterly management information reporting.

(CSED, 2007)

Here are some examples of measurement tools included in the above document:

- Herefordshire Council – STARRS service user questionnaire
<http://www.csed.csip.org.uk/silo/files/27-starrs-questionnaire-sep-06--large-print.doc>
- Leeds City Council – Enablement Community Support Service – Feedback from service user covering letter
<http://www.csed.csip.org.uk/silo/files/49a-feedback-from-service-usersv4-covering-letter.doc>

- St Helens Council – Intermediate Care Services – Your Views form
<http://www.csed.csip.org.uk/silo/files/67-your-views.pdf>
- Staffordshire County Council - service users' and carers' satisfaction questionnaires
<http://www.csed.csip.org.uk/silo/files/80-service-user-satisfaction-survey-questionnaire.doc>
<http://www.csed.csip.org.uk/silo/files/81-carer-satisfaction-questionnaire.doc>
- Salford City Council – Intermediate Home Support questionnaire results
<http://www.csed.csip.org.uk/silo/files/s10.doc>
- Metropolitan Borough of Wirral – Wirral Enablement Discharge Service User Questionnaire
<http://www.csed.csip.org.uk/silo/files/w12.doc>
- Newcastle City Council – Service User Consultation Questionnaire
<http://www.csed.csip.org.uk/silo/files/nc6.doc>

In terms of **multimedia**, Shropshire's *Enhancing Re-ablement in Shropshire* DVD could be a useful resource, particularly when working with service users and the community. It is available on the following link.

<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/adultcarer.nsf/open/A951FF202B7EE6738025753D003E3F0D>

This is a 13-minute long video describing the reablement scheme in Shropshire, including stories from service users and carers.

2 Research on reablement and user perspectives

Most of the research carried so far focuses on the effectiveness and outcomes of reablement. In that respect, there is not much evidence available about people's *perspectives, experiences* and *stories* related to the reablement process, which would give the needed qualitative side of the needed evidence.

However, there are certain elements in the available research that indicates to service users' perspectives.

In their *Research into the Longer Term Effects/Impacts of Re-ablement Services* (2007)¹ Newbronner et al comment on their findings about the importance of the service user attitudes upon the outcomes of the reablement.

The service users' desire to regain and/or maintain skills was crucial... service users' attitudes can be significantly affected by the attitudes of their

¹ For an overview of this study see also the Community Care publication *Improving Independence – Can Homecare Re-ablement Make a Difference in the Long Term?*
<http://www.communitycare.co.uk/Articles/2008/06/19/108581/improving-independence-can-homecare-re-ablement-make-a-difference-in-the-long.html>

carer/family, especially in relation to risk... Not surprisingly, service users' social circumstances also affect their attitude to services, with contributors noting that users who are isolated or lonely may be able to undertake a task themselves but want a regular homecare service because the visits provide social contact...

(Newbrunner et al, 2007)

Therefore, the authors point out the importance of working with service users' expectations and attitudes. The report does not include further details about service users' perspectives on the reablement process.

In their *Outline of Proposed Direction for 2008/2009* (2008) CSED point out that they will seek to provide further evidence re reablement through case studies. Therefore, I expect that the service user perspective in the evaluation process will be strengthened.

One document that presents a range of service users' points of view is SCIE's Knowledge Review Outcomes-focused Services for Older People (Glendinning et al, 2006).

Here is a quote from this review concerning reablement:

Older people interviewed in the practice survey confirmed the very significant benefits of intermediate care and reablement services aimed at achieving *change outcomes*². Users of these services affirmed how they had been encouraged to identify important goals and helped to achieve these. They reported significant improvements in *confidence and morale* as well as physical functioning. These improvements were attributed to the fact that these services were delivered in ways that maximised users' *choice and control*.

Here are also some case examples from the above document:

Miss B had a fall and broke her hip. On leaving hospital her mobility was greatly reduced, partly because she lacked confidence to walk outside in case she fell again. She was therefore unable to do her shopping and maintain her social life. After referral to intermediate care, she received physiotherapy, equipment and support from a rehabilitation assistant to regain her confidence. 'I wouldn't be where I am now – mobile and with confidence – without it'.

One older person celebrated a small milestone in her rehabilitation – being able to clean the toilet independently: 'I really enjoyed that!'

Mr F spent several weeks in a rehabilitation unit after a hospital stay. He said that staff in the unit had a very personal approach and understood what was important to him. 'One of my aims was to walk the dog, so they allowed him to come and see me – it was very helpful.... It made all the difference in the world.... I have a good quality of life and I know I can get better still.... You need to look forward – they kept stressing that – and I'm the living proof!'

(Glendinning et al, 2006)

Staff working in reablement services pointed out that, as older people regain their abilities and confidence in relation to self-care and household activities, desired outcomes change rapidly – goals that originally seemed unattainable soon become realistic. Regular reassessment was therefore important. They also pointed out that even here significant change outcomes had been achieved, these were not always maintained

² Italics mine

when older people moved to longer-term home care services: 'It gets so far then it's out of our hands and we can't follow it through'.

Also, according to staff, 'Users find it hard to understand choice – they were so used to having services shoved on them'. Some older people were resistant to a reablement approach as they were said to be used to people 'coming and doing things'. Other users resisted the withdrawal of time-limited home reablement services, even if desired change outcomes had been achieved (Glendinning et al, 2006).

McLeod and colleagues explore hospital aftercare social rehabilitation projects in five UK localities through examining older service users' feedback, in their article *For the sake of their health: older service users' requirements for social care to facilitate access to social networks following hospital discharge* (McLeod et al, 2008).

The article is attached to this report; here are some case stories

After the death of her husband, one service user could not go outside without holding someone's arm. Ultimately the goal was for her to feel confident enough to go out on her own, but the first task towards this was just walking down the drive without linking arms. The next goals were walking from one lamp-post to another, then walking to the local shops, in each case accompanied, but not linking arms. Eventually the woman had acquired enough confidence to go on holiday with her family (Project E).

Another service user had attempted suicide and this had received considerable publicity locally. He was convinced that people he passed in the street knew about the attempt and were staring at him. He had therefore ceased going out. The project worker established a supportive relationship with him. She eventually persuaded him to accompany her on a short walk down the road. They progressed to walking around town. He was very nervous for some months, but eventually gained enough confidence to resume walking on his own. He received 'a good year's worth', of project support but the worker felt that the service user had been 'brought back from the brink' (Project A).

(McLeod et al, 2008)

Another case study demonstrates the importance that service users attribute to the quality of the interpersonal contact:

I'd just been left before (after her previous three strokes) and it was quite depressing. This was better—much better. His visits were exactly right . . . I'm a positive person but I found it difficult to be confident again. The reassurance from 'S' helped . . . He also helped with my relationships with others. I could be more patient with my daughter and cousin and other people as I talked about my thoughts with 'S' (Project B).

(McLeod et al, 2008)

These are only a few of the wide range of people's stories quoted in the above article.

In *Involving older people in intermediate care* (2003)³ Andrews and colleagues examine the existing evidence of service user involvement and demonstrate how and why 'effective involvement of older people has to transcend mere consultation and include robust implementation processes' (Andrews et al, 2003)

³ Attached here

3 Studies in progress

At present, Essex are carrying out research on user experiences with reablement, as part of the SDS evaluation. This is a quantitative survey that started in November 2008 and is expected to finish in March 2009 (<http://www.scie-socialcareonline.org.uk/profile.asp?guid=2440fc3f-ad76-4024-954c-913decea3e43>).

The Social Policy Research Unit (SPRU) at the University of York is carrying out DH funded research *Home care re-ablement services: investigating the longer-term impacts (prospective longitudinal study)*. The stated methodology of the research is partly qualitative; however, there is no specific reference to exploring service users' perspective on the process. The study was started in April 2008 and is expected to finish by September 2010.

<http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/spru/research/summs/reablement2.html>

4 References

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