

## **Self Assessment and Personalisation Overview of the evidence and practice**

(A review compiled as one-to-one support for Leicestershire)

### **1 Evidence from research in Self assessment**

Prior to the advent of the Personalisation agenda and SDS there was considerably small evidence in the area of service user self assessment.

**research in practice for adults** published in 2006 an Outline evidence review that used the available resources and in particular Griffiths and colleagues' systematic review in that area (Griffiths et al 2005, as cited in **ripfa** 2006)

The latter was later updated and published in 2007 (Harris et al 2006, copy attached with the current text).

The main messages outlined in ripfa publication are as follow

- Mechanisms should be in place to ensure that attention is given to the information from self-assessment, and that some action follows based on it.
- The purpose of self assessment should be clear.
- People should have choice about the stage at which they would like professional involvement, and/or assistance from advocates.
- Work is needed on the development and testing of self assessment materials, both the tools per se and their use in operational contexts (ripfa 2006).

### **2 Other evidence from self assessment before SDS/Personalisation**

A comprehensive search through a number of online databases and general internet search proved that **very little** research evidence is published in this area so far, particularly before the most recent developments and the DH pilots outlined in the next section.

Chris Renshaw published an article in 2008 in *Disability and Society* in which the one more interesting thing that is suggested is that people with disability using self assessment can turn to centres of independent living and other nongovernmental organisations to help them with the process (Renshaw 2008)

In 1998 Alison Cox contributed to an article in *Management issues in Social Care* (Cox 1998) sharing her experience as a project coordinator of the Changing Mind Initiative<sup>1</sup>.

A working group chaired by the Bristol social services developed the Avon Health Measure (AMHM) as a

...valid and comprehensive basis for drawing up care plans and engaging people from the start in the existing CPA and care management process. (Cox 1998)

The measure allows people to examine 25 aspects of their lives including:

- housing
- ability to self care
- effects of medication
- social support
- daily routine
- experience of discrimination
- community involvement
- risk to self
- anger
- substance misuse
- mood swings
- experience of a number of mental health symptoms
- income
- communication skills and opportunities
- money management; and
- sleep disturbance

Also, and particularly relevant to mental health

...the measure allows users to detail **what they would like to happen if a personal crisis was developing**<sup>2</sup>. People can also describe any education or training which could enhance their lives or enable them to get back to or into work (Cox 1998).

The author shares some anecdotal evidence of service users' satisfaction with this process.

In 2008 The Commission for Rural Communities published a report based on a study that included interviewing 33 people across the country and living in rural areas (CRC 2008).

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<sup>1</sup> The current name of the project

<sup>2</sup> Bold text mine throughout the document.

A couple of their findings concern self assessment with older people from rural communities. Here they are

Experiences of self-assessment and support planning need to be passed on to older people who may fear or not understand the jargon of the processes. While some may require support, advice and encouragement just at this stage, support with administration may also be needed in the long term, if the older person chooses this system

Information, support and guidance need to be easily accessible to help older people undertake self-assessments and to be engaged in planning their own support (CRC 2008).

### 3 At Present - Department of Health Self Assessment Pilots

11 local authorities participated in these pilots between 2006 and 2007

- London Borough of Barnet
- Birmingham City Council
- Bristol City Council
- Croydon Council
- Derby City Council
- East Riding of Yorkshire County Council
- London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
- Kingston Upon Hull City Council
- Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- St. Helens Metropolitan Borough Council

The projects explored the scope for enabling people to self assess their need for support from a range of services, such as equipment, home care, standard housing adaptations and low-level preventative services. It included the use of the internet, or approaching a third sector organisation for help with filling in an online form. The pilots received a total of £850,000 funding.

A list of the pilot self assessment sites and contacts (valid as of 22.02.2007)

(taken from CSIP's website, <http://www.socialcare.csip.org.uk/index.cfm?pid=81> on 25.06.2009)

	<b>Name of Council</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>1</b>	Birmingham City Council	Proposing to use the Disabled Living Foundation SARA software, to enable people to self-assess their needs in the refurbished demonstration centre (the Assist Birmingham Centre). Pilot will test the feasibility of self-assessment process to help <b>hard to reach communities</b> , i.e. Chinese community, Irish Elders, and BME groups as a whole. Will build on a limited form of self-assessment which is already in place. Aim to roll out the system to day services and other community groups.  Contact: Eileen Symonds, Head of Service Rehabilitation and Enablement, 0121 303 7298, <a href="mailto:eileen_symonds@birmingham.gov.uk">eileen_symonds@birmingham.gov.uk</a>
<b>2</b>	Bristol City	Plan to develop a self-assessment / assisted self-assessment process with

	Council	<p>accompanying guidance and support tools, focussed on the needs of <b>carers</b>. Aim to empower carers to identify their own needs with direct access to certain services (e.g. telecare packages, support and information, small ILS equipment etc). Expect to have a significant impact in reaching 'hidden carers' who are currently not in receipt of any peer or service based support. Close links with the <b>voluntary sector</b> in order to provide self-assessment advice, information and assistance.</p> <p>Contact: Gill Bailey, Project Manager Service Improvement Team, 0117 903 1197, <a href="mailto:gill_bailey@bristol-city.gov.uk">gill_bailey@bristol-city.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Ann Marie Lubanski, Service Improvement Manager, 0117 903 7369, <a href="mailto:am_lubanski@bristol-city.gov.uk">am_lubanski@bristol-city.gov.uk</a></p>
3	Croydon Council	<p>Use of SARA to identify equipment and adaptation needs including self-referral to Social Services. Will use an existing resource centre (the Aztec Centre) to provide access to self-assessment to people and to display assistive technology. Close links with the <b>voluntary sector</b> in order to provide advice to people.</p> <p>Contact: Pam Bennett, Business Development Manager, <a href="mailto:pam.bennett@croydon.gov.uk">pam.bennett@croydon.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Trevor Mosses, Commissioning Manager, 020 8686 4433 ext. 62869, <a href="mailto:trevor.mosses@croydon.gov.uk">trevor.mosses@croydon.gov.uk</a></p>
4	Kingston Upon Hull City Council	<p>Further develop their 'Check, Choose and Use' project to deliver equipment to disabled people. Looking at a range of methods for how service users will access equipment, including a customer service centre and web-based methods. Wide range of partners involved. Focus will be on adults with <b>physical or sensory impairment</b>.</p> <p>Contact: Lynda Bowen, Locality Manager, 01482 616310, <a href="mailto:lynda.bowen@hullcc.gov.uk">lynda.bowen@hullcc.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Jenny Wright, <a href="mailto:jenny.wright@hullcc.gov.uk">jenny.wright@hullcc.gov.uk</a></p>
5	London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham	<p>Direct access self assessment for <b>standard shower related major adaptations</b>. Will develop seamless service arrangements between clinical and technical agencies by delegating assessment responsibility and establishing standard outcome/performance specifications.</p> <p>Extend trusted assessor scheme through voluntary agencies and council housing personnel, undertaking assessments for minor adaptations and small pieces of equipment. Enhance procedural arrangements between the council and registered social landlords to achieve reduced waiting times for service users accessing minor and major occupational therapy provision.</p> <p>Contact: Jonathan Weavers, Project Manager, 0208 753 4146, <a href="mailto:jonathan.weavers@lbhf.gov.uk">jonathan.weavers@lbhf.gov.uk</a></p>
6	Nottinghamshire County Council	<p>Run two pilots across two districts (one in a rural area of Bassetlaw and one in an urban area of Ashfield). Aimed at <b>older people and their carers</b> to obtain simple items of equipment to enable them to remain at home – via telephone, internet and post. Direct provision of equipment will take place.</p> <p>Contact: Pete McGavin, Adult Care Project Manager, 0115 977 4715,</p>

		<a href="mailto:peter.mcgavin@nottsc.gov.uk">peter.mcgavin@nottsc.gov.uk</a>
<b>7</b>	St. Helens Council	<p>Extend access to <b>low level preventative interventions</b> (including equipment/minor aids, specialist falls service, carers service, housing services, home improvement agencies, community support services) via on-line self-assessment and mediated assessment. Self-assessment will provide access to a falls prevention programme, carers pathways and other low-level preventative pathways. Will focus on older adults aged 55+ and will include targeting carers and older people with long-term conditions in need of timely support to maintain their health and independence.</p> <p>Pilot will be delivered in 3 phases:</p> <p>Phase 1: Paper system running concurrently with phases 2 &amp; 3 and distributed by partners: GPs, Energy Efficiency Team / Affordable Warmth Unit, Care and Repair Team, Registered Social Landlords, Careline – Community Alarm Service</p> <p>Phase 2: On-line self assessment facility via Council website</p> <p>Phase 3: Migrate on-line self assessment facility to front end of e SAP system. Develop Community Services Resource Directory available on line and paper formats. Self assessment facilitators will aid individuals who have self assessed to navigate options</p> <p>Contact: Linda Thorley, 01744 456363, <a href="mailto:lindathorley@sthelens.gov.uk">lindathorley@sthelens.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Carole Kilshaw, 01744 456363, <a href="mailto:carolekilshaw@sthelens.gov.uk">carolekilshaw@sthelens.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Chris Lamb, <a href="mailto:chrislamb@sthelens.gov.uk">chrislamb@sthelens.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>8</b>	Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames	<p>Pilot ADL Smartcare tool, connected to the council's website, and a short questionnaire type self assessment both for assessing people for assistive equipment. Self-assessment via the internet, as well as mediated self-assessment for community equipment by other staff involved in care such as <b>district nurses and housing officers and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations.</b></p> <p>Contact: Bill Brittain, 020 8547 4737, <a href="mailto:bill.brittain@rbk.kingston.gov.uk">bill.brittain@rbk.kingston.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Chris Jones, <a href="mailto:chris.jones@rbk.kingston.gov.uk">chris.jones@rbk.kingston.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Kate Harmon, <a href="mailto:kate.harmon@rbk.kingston.gov.uk">kate.harmon@rbk.kingston.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>9</b>	London Borough of Barnet	<p>Self assessment for equipment, minor adaptations and home care services. Will build on an existing self-assessment protocol used to prioritise clients accessing community equipment services. The existing service model will be extended to enable direct access to certain items of equipment, and home care if needs identified, via the self-assessment form. Older People with health and social care needs will also be offered the opportunity to self-review their own needs, where they are already accessing services and feel that their support needs have changed. The review strand of work will enable people to self-assess their need for both <b>community equipment and home care</b>, with direct access to services.</p> <p>Contact: Senel Arkut, Service Manager, Older Adults – Rehabilitation, 020 8359 4262, <a href="mailto:senel.arkut@barnet.gov.uk">senel.arkut@barnet.gov.uk</a></p>

10	East Riding of Yorkshire	<p>Plan to introduce a 'fast-track' client led self-assessment system to provide a specified selected group of minor adaptations and equipment items with direct service provision, building on existing provision of self assessment for minor adaptations. Scheme is open to all adults across the county, but focusing particularly on <b>rural</b> areas, on completion of self-assessment questionnaire (different access routes - on-line, postal or by telephone via customers service centre). A follow up questionnaire will establish clients' views, perceptions of benefit and of risk.</p> <p>Contact: Vicky Taylor, Senior Occupational Therapist, 01482 883234, <a href="mailto:vicky.taylor@eastriding.gov.uk">vicky.taylor@eastriding.gov.uk</a></p>
11	Derby City Council	<p>The Project will provide <b>person centred mediation</b> for disabled adults and their carers who access community care assessment. It will improve user and carer self-determination and enhance individual experience of the assessment process. Use of a third sector agency (Disability Direct) to provide pre and in some instances post-assessment support to disabled people with a specific function to in reach to disabled people in BME communities.</p> <p>Contact: Trevor Wright, Derby City Council, 01332 255503, <a href="mailto:trevor.wright@derby.gov.uk">trevor.wright@derby.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Amarjit Raju, Disability Direct Derby, 01332 299499, <a href="mailto:amor@disabilitydirectbery.co.uk">amor@disabilitydirectbery.co.uk</a></p> <p>Marta Hancock, Disability Direct Derby, 01332 299499, <a href="mailto:marta.hancock@disabilitydirectderby.co.uk">marta.hancock@disabilitydirectderby.co.uk</a></p>

Josephine Hocking writes in 2007 about the London Borough of Kingston the experience of being one of the 11 pilot self assessment schemes:

A publicity campaign is inviting people to visit a website and fill in an assessment, answering detailed questions about their needs. The most common problem to emerge so far is **getting in and out of the bath**.

Using the information, the website explains if users are **eligible** for free equipment from the council. Those who do not qualify can purchase equipment privately, online or otherwise.

So far [as of the publish day], 91 assessments have been completed. The trial runs until October [2007], when it will be evaluated by Manchester University.

...The online assessment tool, called SmartAssist, was developed for the council by software company ADL Smartcare.

Kingston Age Concern and Kingston Centre for Independent Living are assisting service users to complete their assessments.

Older people worry that professionals will take over, tell them what to do or even put them in a home. What they want to do is stay independent, so **finding out for themselves** what is available is useful. (Hocking 2007)

Also, the article makes a very important point that

**Not everyone wants contact with social services.** We can offer an expert service without the need to see a professional. (Hocking 2007)

**Barnet** was another one of the 11 pilot self assessment projects. They

...tested two types of self assessment, one for basic occupational therapy (OT) equipment and one for self review of existing care packages.

The **objectives** of the project were to:

- enable 400 people to self assess their community equipment and/or other needs
- enable 250 people to self review their care package and equipment needs
- provide more timely response to requests to supply and change care packages and equipment
- test out draft self assessment tools and supporting processes for effectiveness and safety
- measure the impact of tools in terms of hard to reach groups and better outcomes for all users in terms of health and well being
- identify the place of self assessment in the single assessment process to inform the development of the Common Assessment Framework for Older People
- explore the impact of self assessment on referrals to the third sector
- explore the potential impact of self assessment on supporting carers of people with dementia through appropriate linkages with the current mental health integrated services project (IDeA 2009)

Lessons learned from the self assessment for equipment included the following:

- older people needed assistance with the forms and guided self assistance with the assistance of friends or relatives was the preferred option
- some clients found the template for drawing sketches of where equipment was needed quite difficult to interpret – the area in which most help was needed
- sometimes clients only concentrated on one piece of equipment that they felt they needed and didn't look at the wider picture of all their needs
- sometimes clients selected pieces of equipment that they did not use when an alternative might have suited them better.

Lessons learned from the self review of home care services included the following:

- the client group with **complex health needs** was inappropriate for self reviews and often required face-to-face interviews
- self assessment may be more suited to clients with disabilities who are **below 65 years** of age
- it would have been better to have a lead officer from the social work team to **facilitate** the process
- the self review team failed to capture some key information and the language used needed to **be simplified**
- it is important to offer **scheduled reviews** of their support to clients.

- Initially the project was set up to help those who approached the Council when they were in need of increased (or decreased) services. However it became clear that this category of clients needed a **rapid response**, hence self assessment did not respond to their needs. The Council concluded that **self assessment worked better for scheduled reviews**.

In general, the OT strand of the project was more successful, because the **OT professionals accepted this as a way forward** in dealing with low level demand on the service, and they appreciated that this would allow them more time to work with people with complex and long term needs. On the other hand, **social care professionals were concerned** about the potential risks arising from self assessment in relation to full care packages, including the risk of Barnet failing its statutory duties by allowing clients to self assess. These concerns were reflected in the relative success of the two pilot areas (IDeA 2009).

For the full text of the IDeA's Barnet case study, to include detailed description of the procedure, please follow this link

<http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=10906003&aspect=full>

**Barnet's** Self assessment form is available on the following web link:

<http://www.barnet.gov.uk/self-assessment-form-may09.pdf> It is accessible through their Occupational therapy page here <http://www.barnet.gov.uk/index/health-social-care/disabilities/occupational-therapy.htm>

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For more information about other local authorities' pilot projects (Kingston, Croydon, Hill, St. Helens) and for a range of PowerPoint presentation on these, including a **report of the pilot projects' workshop**, visit CSIP's website on this page

<http://www.socialcare.csip.org.uk/index.cfm?pid=81>

#### **4 Outcomes of the 11 pilots (research in progress!!)**

The Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU), University of Manchester was commissioned to evaluate the above 11 pilot projects. This is work in progress and only intermediate results are available to this date.

Here is how they describe the research method in PSSRU's Bulletin No. 18 from December 2008

Guided by selective literature reviews, a **multi-method approach** was employed with the ultimate aim of empirically triangulating the topic. Data were provided by a combination of **service user records** held by the authorities, a **user satisfaction** survey, **document research** and **structured interviews**... The bulk of the analysis was descriptive and comparative in nature, mapping out the realities of self assessment and placing them in the context of established practices wherever possible. Some **statistical modelling** was undertaken in order to explore how individual characteristics and assessment modalities might influence user satisfaction. To this end, administrative and survey data could be linked for a

subsample of cases. The **managers' perspective** on self assessment, as elicited in a grounded theory approach, added fruitful qualitative insights to the quantitative analysis (PSSRU 2008).

Here are also some preliminary findings

The main findings include the observation that self assesses are somewhat **atypical** compared to traditional user groups.

Accordingly, a profile emerges of users for whom self assessment **may not be viable**, such as people with cognitive impairment and in generally poor health.

Furthermore, there is a likely **trade-off** between efficiency savings and enhancement of the user experience. Two conflicting goals – delivery of high quality services to a wider group of users and the quest for greater efficiencies in service delivery – cannot be achieved simultaneously, thus requiring the policymaker to strike a feasible balance.

Finally, the use of **information technology** was not as successful or important as anticipated. Related to this is the finding that a service response which has been determined by an assessor is more tailored to individual needs and circumstances (PSSRU 2008).

Since this is only a selection of some preliminary results, they need to be treated cautiously and all such findings need to be put into the context of the overall Personalisation/SDS process.

**At the same time, it is worth keeping an eye on this one because it is likely to be the most significant research evidence in the area of self assessment for the near future.**

## **5 Experience and Examples from other local authorities**

### **5.1 Cumbria Occupational Therapy Self Assessment Tool**

[https://www.adlsmartcare.co.uk/adlsmartcare\\_new/adl\\_default.aspx?ID=9DwxCtUxp24](https://www.adlsmartcare.co.uk/adlsmartcare_new/adl_default.aspx?ID=9DwxCtUxp24)  
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In a similar manner **Suffolk** provide an online self-assessment process for people that need assistance with occupational therapy, and will recommend equipment. In Suffolk, this is run as a part of a public private partnership and forming a new company – Customer Service Direct Ltd, in partnership with the BT ([http://globalservices.bt.com/static/assets/pdf/case\\_studies/suffolk\\_county\\_council.pdf](http://globalservices.bt.com/static/assets/pdf/case_studies/suffolk_county_council.pdf) , accessed on 25.06.2009).

### **5.2 Barnsley Experience**

In Barnsley, self-assessment follows a single assessment process. It kicks in after an individual contacts the local authority about their perceived needs. Once the person's

eligibility has been determined under the FACS, they are given a 13-page self-assessment form with 10 questions to answer.

The forms are designed for service users to fill in relatively easily, but they can request help from a care co-ordinator or care manager, if necessary.

Completed forms are returned to the assessment care team for analysis and a decision is made on an individual's indicative allocation. A letter detailing this is sent to the service user along with leaflets on charging and information on where to go for assistance in planning support and to decide what outcomes they want to achieve, how to keep healthy and what training they may need if they employ a personal assistant (Sale 2008).

Also, self assessment forms from other local authorities

### **5.3 North Lincolnshire**

<http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/C30DD0C3-C513-4D41-9B7D-D8ACDCE3903A/7638/Directpaymentsselfassessmentform.pdf>

### **5.4 London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames**

[http://www.richmond.gov.uk/20090116\\_adults\\_saq\\_live\\_v2.pdf](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/20090116_adults_saq_live_v2.pdf)

### **5.5 London Borough of Newham**

I attach here Newham's RAS Self assessment questionnaire together with their SDS process flowchart.

## **6 Interest expressed from ripfa's network**

On 18 May 2009 ripfa following on the request from Leicestershire, ripfa posted a query on its partnership forum to scope for potential interest of partner local authorities to participate in a virtual / telephone conference group, to discuss the issues of supported self assessment in SDS/Personalisation. The interest was overwhelming; here is a list of the local authorities that expressed an interest to participate so far

- Gloucestershire
- Wiltshire
- Wigan
- Liverpool
- London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
- Warrington
- Bristol
- West Berkshire
- Dorset
- Sheffield

At present (as of June/July 2009) **ripfa** is in a process of considering possibilities for going forward with the virtual group and will consult this process with Leicestershire.

Also, in June 2009 **ripfa** delivered two workshops for Newham, to address a number of concerns that senior practitioners and social workers raised about the implementation of the self assessment process as part of their SDS model.

## **7 Conclusions**

7.1 The amount of evidence in the area of (supported) self assessment in general is underwhelming

7.2 The most significant source of systematised evidence in the near future will be the PRRSU's evaluation of the DH's 11 pilot projects; this needs to be tracked. Also, the conclusions from it need to be considered cautiously because this study encompasses pilot projects of wide range, including the use of online forms.

7.3 Mechanisms should be in place to ensure that attention is given to the information from self-assessment, and that some action follows based on it.

7.4 The purpose of self assessment should be made simple and clear.

7.5 People should have choice about the stage at which they would like professional involvement, and/or assistance from advocates.

7.6 People with disability using self assessment can benefit from independent organisations to help with the process.

7.7 People might needed assistance with the forms and guided self assistance with the assistance of friends or relatives might be the preferred option.

7.8 In OT sometimes clients only concentrated on one piece of equipment that they felt they needed and didn't look at the wider picture of all their needs.

7.9 The client group with complex health needs may be inappropriate for self reviews and often required face-to-face interviews.

7.10 Self assessment may be more suited to clients with disabilities who are below 65 years of age.

7.11 The use of information technology may be not as successful or important as anticipated.

7.12 The evidence about user/service satisfaction of using the online self assessment process is inconclusive.

7.13 Local authorities consider the self assessment process a priority and there is a high expressed interest in sharing experience and knowledge in that area. This could be explained at least partially by the lack of robust evidence in that area so far.

## 8 References

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