



A summary of the findings from the Independent Living Survey 2016

This report was written by In Control for the Independent Living Strategy Group.

In October 2015, after the Care Act had been made law in England, the Independent Living Strategy Group wrote a report. The Independent Living Strategy Group is a network of disabled people's organisations. The group was set up to make sure that disabled people in England have their right to independent living.



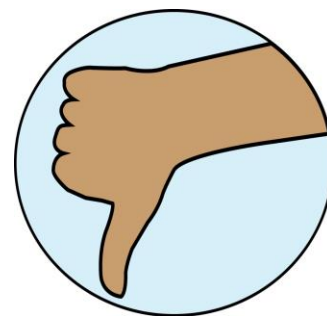
The report was called 'Promoting people's rights to choice and control'. The report looked at how local councils were using their new powers under the Care Act and how they were meeting their new **duties**.



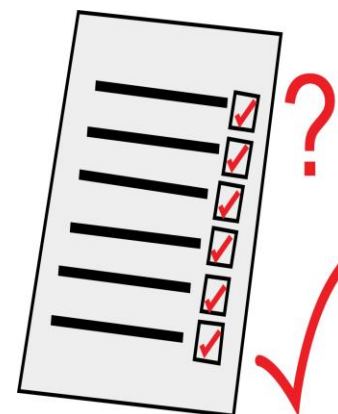
A duty or duties: these are things that a person or organisation must do by law.

This report found that there were some worrying things happening:

- The quality of life of people needing support had gone down
- There was not enough good information and advice for people who need support
- There were lots of rules and limits about how people could use their personal budget



The Independent Living Strategy Group decided to keep a check on what was happening. This is why we did a survey of people who use support from their local council. This survey was done to find out about people's experiences of support and how they were treated by their local council.



Below is a summary of what we found out from the survey. We hope that this report helps local councils to look at how they are working and make it better.



Choice and Control

- Just under half of the people that took part in the survey (48%) said that the choice and control that they have over their support is bad or very bad.



- One out of three people (33%) said that the amount of choice and control that they have over their support has gone down or gone down a lot.



- Lots of people said that there were limits put on how they could use their money for support. For example half of the people (50%) said that they are only allowed to spend their support money on personal care support.



Quality of life and wellbeing

- Well over half of the people (58%) said that their quality of life has gone down or gone down a lot over the past year.



- One in four people (25%) said that the hours of work or volunteering that they can do has gone down a lot.



- Almost two out of five people (38%) said that they now have to go to friends and family for support.



- More than one in four people (27%) said that the amount of money that they now have to pay towards their support has gone up or gone up a lot.



Quality and amount of support

- Around two out of five people (41%) said that their support is good or very good and nearly the same number of people (40%) said that their support is bad or very bad.



- Nearly half of the people (44%) said that the amount of support that they get is bad or very bad. Only around one in three people (30%) said that the amount of support that they get is good or very good.



Experience of assessments and reviews

- Most people (86%) said that when their local authority did an assessment of their needs they had listened to all or some of what the person said.



- Of those people who said that their support had been reviewed in the last year, just less than two out of three people (63%) did not know how much money there was for their support.



- One in four people (25%) had been told that their support would go down because of cuts and savings. They were also told that there was a limit to the amount of money that can be used for a type of service.



Experiences of people who used to use the Independent Living Fund

- Around two out of five people (41%) who used to use the Independent Living Fund said that the amount of support that they now get has gone down or gone down a lot. One out of three people (33%) said that the quality of their support is now worse or a lot worse.
- Around one out of three people (34%) said that there were new rules about the type of support that they can get.



Information and Advice

- More than one out of three people (37%) find it hard to find the information and advice that they need.
- Most people either use friends and family (33%) or user led organisations (22%) for information and advice.



- Not many people (16%) use their local authorities website for information.



- People needed advice on two main areas. Just under half of the people (45%) needed help understanding their rights under the Care Act. Around one in three people (34%) need help dealing with problems with their local council.



- Around half of the people that get direct payments (51%) said that the information, advice and support that they get to deal with their direct payments was bad or very bad.

