



Sandwell & West Birmingham - Activity Support and Mobility Volunteer Role Insight & Impact Report

Headline Findings

- Volunteer support reduces referrals to the therapy team
- Volunteers help patients to maintain their usual level of mobility
- Volunteers help to improve patient mood

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A.Introduction

Volunteers are crucial to the NHS's vision for the future of health and social care as they work in partnership with skilled staff to perform a variety of roles that support patients and staff.

The aim of the Volunteer Innovators Programme (VIP) was to develop and assess impactful volunteer innovations that can be refined and shared to other UK trusts looking to adopt effective volunteer services. The innovations were chosen based on their potential to make the most impact, and their ability to be tested and scaled in other NHS settings. The aim of our Insight and Impact work has been to assess the impact of each innovation on staff, patients, volunteers and the system.

Sandwell and West Birmingham (hereon in, Sandwell) wanted to help patients maintain their normal level of mobility whilst in hospital. They also wanted to prevent deterioration resulting from immobility, which could result in higher lengths of stay. With guidance from ward staff and therapists, volunteers encourage some patients to get out of bed, get dressed in their day clothes, walk, move or exercise. Activity routes around the wards were developed to facilitate movement and games are available to support physical activity and mental stimulation.





There were 40 volunteers at the start of the project on two wards. At the end of the project, 58 volunteers were supporting three wards.

"The volunteer role in this project is absolutely vital. They're the ones that are with the patient. They're the ones that are going to provide the motivation and encouragement." Staff member, Sandwell.

B. Methodology & Sample

The key insight and impact questions for this project are:

- 1) Do mobility volunteers help patients maintain their usual level of mobility?
 - 2) Do patients have improved mood as a result of volunteer support?
 - 3) Are volunteers satisfied in their role as a mobility volunteer?
 - 4) Does the volunteer mobility service help to reduce referrals to the physio team (on ward D43)?

Patient

Feedback from patients was collected using the VIP Patient Survey which was administered quarterly. A copy of the VIP Patient Survey can be found in Appendix A. **Total number of responses to the VIP Patient Survey:** 24 responses, 14 of these patients were supported by a volunteer and 8 were not supported by a volunteer (2 unknown). This consists of 14 female and 10 male patients, with an age range between 21-95 years.

Staff

Responses from staff were collected using the VIP Staff Survey which was administered every quarter. A copy of the VIP Staff Survey can be found in Appendix B. **Total number of responses to the VIP Staff Survey:** 47 responses, 62% of responses were from Nurses, 15% Healthcare Assistant and 21% Allied Health Professional. Staff pay bands range from Band 2 - Band 7 and are distributed as: Band 2 (n=10), Band 3 (n=2), Band 4 (n=1), Band 5 (n=16), Band 6 (n=7), Band 7 (n=1), undisclosed (n=10).

Volunteer

Responses from volunteers were collected using the VIP Volunteer Survey which was administered every quarter during the innovation. A copy of the VIP Volunteer Survey can be found in Appendix C. **Total number of responses to the VIP Volunteer Survey**: 10 responses which consists of 7 females and 2 males (1 undisclosed), 90% aged 16-64 years and 10% 61 years and over.





Between the 1st April 2019 and the 21st March 2020 data was collected from volunteers using the management tool 'Better Impact'. **Total number of responses received through Better Impact**: 428 volunteer shifts were recorded. During this period, volunteers gave a total of 1375 hours of their time and had 2543 patient interactions. Based on this, volunteers are estimated to have spent an average of 32 minutes with each patient. Most of the volunteers volunteered at Sandwell Hospital (66%), with 34% volunteering at City Hospital.

C. Key findings

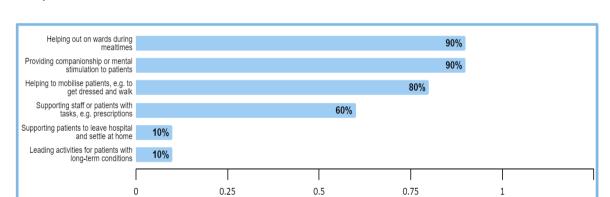
Total activity

Total number of patients supported during VIP - 2,228

Total number of volunteers recruited throughout VIP - 18

Total number of volunteer hours recorded during VIP - 1,267

Volunteer activities undertaken during VIP - Volunteers at Sandwell were asked to report on the activities they undertook during their volunteer hours at the hospital. Graph 1 below presents a breakdown of the activities reported.



Graph 1: Volunteer activities undertaken at Sandwell

1) Do mobility volunteers help patients maintain their usual level of mobility?

The volunteering project in Sandwell was built upon pre-existing activities that were already well established in the Trust, as a result of Helpforce Wave 1. By participating in the programme, Sandwell was able to test the deployment of activity support and mobility volunteers in different settings and continue to build their evidence base. This gave the programme access to more comprehensive volunteering data than was available for some other sites and provided the opportunity to look at how the volunteer service might be impacting upon specific patient outcomes over a relatively long timeframe. One potential





impact area that was reviewed was the proportion of patients 'discharged to usual place of residence', a metric which is considered to be a proxy for a successful outcome of rehabilitation. Data was collected from two locations, the Acute Medical Unit (AMU) and the Older Persons Assessment Unit (OPAU). Based on this data, there does seem to a partial relationship between the pattern of volunteer activity in the OPAU and the proportion of people being discharged to usual place of residence from the unit. See Graph 2. This suggests that for the cohort of patients within the OPAU (largely frail elderly patients), the relationship between deployment of mobility volunteers and being discharged to usual place of residence could warrant a more thorough investigation. This relationship was not seen in the data from the AMU.

Graph 2: Volunteer interactions with patients compared to the proportion of patients discharged to usual place of residence from the Older Persons Assessment Unit (OPAU) - Sandwell Hospital (April 2018 to February 2020)



Furthermore, based on Sandwell's Better Impact data, and looking at the time period between April 2019 and March 2020, Activity Support and Mobility volunteers helped 23% of patients to walk or exercise (or 580 patient interactions involved the provision of support for walking and exercise). There was also a 6.6% increase in patients wearing day clothes due to volunteer encouragement (or approximately 175 patients who had a volunteer interaction were encouraged to put on their day clothes who normally would stay in their PJs all day). This suggests that mobility volunteers are helping patients to maintain their usual level of mobility.

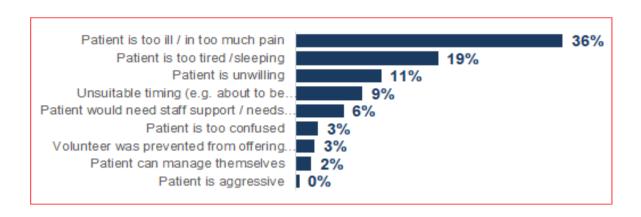
"I've been lying in bed for most of the day. It was nice to get out of bed and have a walk with one of the volunteers. I think that the volunteers do a good job taking out the patients to get over their illness and help them to get out of bed and have a walk about and help them recover." Patient, Sandwell





It was not always possible for volunteers to provide mobility support to patients for a number of reasons. The top three reasons for volunteers not providing walking or exercise support are: patient being too ill or in too much pain (36%), patient being too tired or sleeping (19%), and the patient being unwilling to participate (11%). For a full breakdown of the range of reasons for volunteers not being able to provide mobility support to patients please see Graph 3 below.

Graph 3: Breakdown of reasons for patients being unable to participate in mobility support



There were barriers to helping patients get dressed into their day clothes, the top three being: patients having no day clothes with them (21%), patients being unwilling to change (20%), and patients being too ill (18%). (Note: nearly 45% of patients were already dressed when volunteers visited).

2) Do patients have improved mood as a result of volunteer support?

Volunteers improve patient mood

Nearly all patients surveyed (93%) agreed or strongly agreed that the volunteer had cheered them up or improved their mood (7% strongly disagreed). 86% of patients agreed or strongly agreed that the volunteer had helped them to feel less anxious (7% Neither agree nor disagree, 7% disagree).

"This gentleman was a wheelchair user due to a degenerative health condition. When this gentleman first took part in the class he seemed quite low in mood and lacking in

confidence. He took part in several classes. As the classes went on his confidence seemed to grow, and he became more involved in the exercises that were being delivered. The Activity Coordinator even mentioned to him how much more confident he seemed. "Volunteer team, Sandwell





3) Are volunteers satisfied in their role as a mobility volunteer?

(NOTE: Results should be interpreted with caution due to low sample size (n=10))

Mobility volunteers are satisfied in their role

90% of volunteers were likely/extremely likely to recommend volunteering at this hospital to friends and family. Almost all volunteers (90%) felt that volunteering has given them a sense of purpose and increased their confidence (90%). These results suggest that volunteers are not only satisfied with their volunteer role but that volunteering has also had an impact on them.

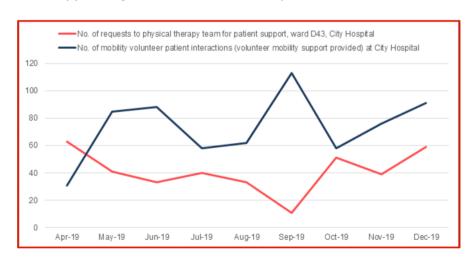
"It gives me a sense of pride, and I feel positive that i'm doing something positive within the community." Volunteer, Sandwell

4) Does the volunteer mobility service help to reduce referrals to the physio team (on ward D43)?

Mobility volunteers help to reduce referrals to the therapy team

Analysis of the re-referrals and volunteer activity data on a specific ward at City Hospital (D43) suggests that when more mobility volunteers provide support to patients, this leads to fewer requests to the therapy team. This suggests that patients are able to maintain their usual level of mobility in some part because of the support provided by mobility volunteers on the ward. Graph 4 below shows that the need for therapy support decreases as volunteer interactions with patients increases, and vice versa.

Graph 4: No. of patient interactions with volunteers at City Hospital and the no. of requests to the physical therapy team for ward D43 between Apr-Dec 2019







Other Insights:

Volunteers help to save staff time

Results from the VIP Staff Survey show that volunteers save staff time (11% no time; 15% between 5-10 mins; 13% 10-20 mins; 23% 20-30 mins; 4% 30-45 mins; 11% 45-60 mins; 2% 1 hour +; 21% don't know). Of those who said volunteers save them time, 47% felt that the time saved enabled them to spend more time on care planning, organising medicines etc and 41% of staff felt able to support more patients.

Staff are satisfied with volunteer support

A large number of staff (70%) were satisfied with volunteer support (21% neither satisfied/unsatisfied; 9% very unsatisfied). 73% of staff felt that volunteer support is helpful in allowing them to have enough time to deliver good care to patients (4% neither agree/disagree; 2% disagree; 15% strongly disagree; 6% n/a). Sandwell did have the highest percentage for 'strongly disagree' amongst all VIP trusts.

Volunteering increases interest in working in health and care

A large majority of volunteers (89%) reported that volunteering at the hospital has increased their interest in pursuing a career in health and care. In fact, 89% of volunteers felt that volunteering at the hospital has increased their interest in working for the NHS specifically. (Note: small sample so results should be interpreted with caution).

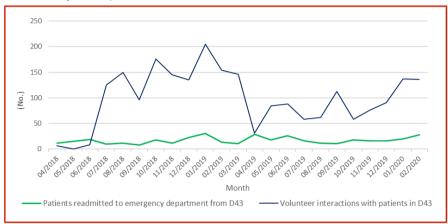
Minimal impact on readmissions to the emergency department

The available data for ward D43 meant that it was possible to investigate if volunteer support was having an impact on patients being readmitted to the emergency department. The number of patients being readmitted remained largely consistent over time suggesting that this is not an area where mobility volunteers have much impact. See Graph 5.





Graph 5: Volunteer interactions with patients on ward D43 compared to patient readmissions to the Emergency Department from ward D43 per month (April 2018 to February 2020)



Considerations for the voluntary services team:

Staff perception of volunteers

51% of staff reported that there is a lack of clarity about volunteer roles (highest score for this compared with the other VIP trusts) and 36% of staff felt that there is too much variation in how volunteers do things.

D. Conclusions

In summary, the insight and impact work completed on the Activity Support and Mobility volunteer role adds insight into the added value of volunteering in health and care. Activity Support and Mobility volunteers are able to support patients to maintain their usual level of mobility whilst in hospital and also aid improvements in patient mood. By providing this support, this has potentially helped to reduce referrals to the therapy team.

Acknowledgements

Helpforce would like to express thanks to Jonathan Maddison, Ruth Wilkin and Sarah Orley for their hard work and support throughout the project. Thanks also goes to the voluntary services team and volunteers for their hard work and dedication to the project.





E. Appendices

Appendix A - VIP Patient Survey

Patient & Carer Survey - Service evaluation questionnaire Please tell us about your stay in hospital ... 2 minute survey

Thank you for taking part in this survey. This information sheet explains why this research is being carried out and what it will involve. We would be grateful if you could read the following information.

What is the purpose of this survey?

This survey is aimed at better understanding your experience in hospital - for those had support from a hospital volunteer and those who did not.

Who is organising this research?

This survey is organised by Helpforce, a not-for-profit organisation that aims to raise the profile of volunteering in health and care across the UK, in close collaboration with this hospital.

Do I have to take part?

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you take part, your consent is implicit. This means that you give your consent by filling in this survey and submitting it. However, you are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason by contacting us.

The survey consists of questions about how you are feeling and your experience at this hospital. All data from surveys will be treated as entirely confidential and no personal or identifiable data is requested.

Your survey responses will not affect your healthcare in any way. All data from surveys will only be available to the internal hospital team and the Helpforce research team and its research partners for analysis purposes only. It will be securely stored and will be treated as confidential at all times.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The data will be analysed and written up as a report. This report will be made available to the hospital. It may also be made available to the public through Helpforce or any of its partners such as NHS England. Participants will not be identified at any point. The data collected is for research only, it will not be used for any other purpose. If you have any questions or wish to provide any feedback about this survey, please contact: Dr Allison Smith at as@helpforce.community





Thank you again for taking part in this study!

Name of ward										
1) Were you supported by a volunteer during your hospital stay? (Please circle your answer). <i>If</i> 'no', please skip ahead to question 6.										
Yes / No / Don't	Know									
2) <u>On aver</u> answer)	age - approxim	ately ho	ow long did	the vo	olunteer spe	end per visi	t (ple	ase circle	one	
Less than 5 mins	5 – 10 mins	10 -	20 mins	20 –	30 mins	30 – 45 mi	ns	1 hour o	r	
3) How ofte	n did you spen	ıd time v	with a volur	nteer c	on-ward?					
Every day	Every other d	-	2-3 times a week		Once a we	eek	Once	oce or twice a		
4) Volunteer activities: What did the volunteer do? (Please tick all that apply). Did activities with me (e.g. crosswords, read paper, played games) Helped me with getting out of bed Helped me to get dressed Accompanied me on a short walk or with gentle exercise Provided me with information about my care and treatment Helped me with my food and drink at meal times Gave me someone to talk to / was company for me/patient Other (please tell us what the volunteer did):										
My overall experience of the volunteer support I received: Disagree Disa						Not Applicable				
The volunteer che										





The volunteer helped me feel less anxious			

6) How likely are you to recommend this service (e.g. <u>this hospital</u>) to your friends and family if they needed similar care or treatment? (please tick one box) (NHS Friends and Family Test)

Extremely unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Extremely likely

7) Please rate the following statements about your current hospital stay or healthcare support (please tick the relevant box). Please note this is confidential. (Care Transitions Survey)

How good was the healthcare provider at	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Does not apply
Showing care and compassion (seeming genuinely concerned, connecting with you on a human level; not being indifferent or "detached")						
Being interested in you as a whole person (asking/knowing relevant details about your life, your situation; not treating you as "just a number")						
Really listening (paying close attention to what you were saying; not looking at the notes or computer as you were talking)						
Making you feel at ease (introducing him/herself, explaining his/her position, being friendly and warm towards you, treating you with respect; not cold or abrupt)						

8) Your age and sex - please circle

Age	18-20	21-30	31-40	41-50
	51-65	66-74	75-84	85 and over
Sex	Male	Female	Other	Prefer not to say





9) (optional) "Is there anything else you would like to say about the volunteer support you have received?"

Appendix B - VIP Staff Survey

Patient & Carer Survey - Service evaluation questionnaire

Please tell us about your stay in hospital ... 2 minute survey

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questions or wish to provide any feedback about this survey, please contact: Dr Allison Smith at as@helpforce.community

Thank you again for taking part in this study!

Name of ward		•••••							
1) Were yo 'no', please sk		-	lunteer durin on 6.	ng youi	hospital s	tay? (Please	e circle	e your ans	swer).
Yes / No / Don't	Know								
2) <u>On aver</u> answer)	age - approx	imately l	now long did	the vo	lunteer spo	end per visi	t (pled	ase circle	one
Less than 5 mins	5 – 10 mins	10	– 20 mins	20 –	30 mins	30 – 45 mins		1 hour o	r
3) How ofte	n did you sp	end time	with a volur	nteer o	n-ward?				
Every day	Every other	day	2-3 times a week		Once a we	eek	Once or twice a month		
Did acti Helped Helped Accomp Provide Helped Gave m Other (p	vities with me with gette me to get droanied me or d me with in me with my e someone to lease tell us	ting out of essed in a short formation of talk to what different what different food and one what different food and one what different food and other than the what different food and other than the what different food and other than the food and	d the volunter osswords, responds or with an about my didrink at me was compare volunteer of the following with the following with the following with the following was compared to the following with the	gentle care an al time any for did):	e exercise nd treatme es me/patier	nt nt port has ma			ase tell
My overall exper volunteer suppor received:		Strongly Disagree	Disagree		leither agree r disagree	Agree		Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
							·		





The volunteer cheered me up / improved my mood			
The volunteer helped me feel less anxious			

6) How likely are you to recommend this service (e.g. <u>this hospital</u>) to your friends and family if they needed similar care or treatment? (please tick one box) (NHS Friends and Family Test)

Extremely unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Extremely likely

7) Please rate the following statements about your current hospital stay or healthcare support (please tick the relevant box). Please note this is confidential. (Care Transitions Survey)

How good was the healthcare provider at	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Does not apply
Showing care and compassion (seeming genuinely concerned, connecting with you on a human level; not being indifferent or "detached")						
Being interested in you as a whole person (asking/knowing relevant details about your life, your situation; not treating you as "just a number")						
Really listening (paying close attention to what you were saying; not looking at the notes or computer as you were talking)						
Making you feel at ease (introducing him/herself, explaining his/her position, being friendly and warm towards you, treating you with respect; not cold or abrupt)						

8) Your age and sex - please circle





	51-65	66-74	75-84	85 and over
Sex	Male	Female	Other	Prefer not to say

9) (optional) "Is there anything else you would like to say about the volunteer support you have received?"

Appendix C - VIP Volunteer Survey

Short Volunteer Survey - Please tell us about your volunteer experience? ... 2 minute survey

Volunteer participation information sheet

We are very pleased that you have agreed to complete the survey. This information sheet explains why the survey is being carried out and what it will involve. We would be grateful if you could read the following information carefully. Please contact us if anything is unclear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of this survey?

This survey is aimed at better understanding the your volunteering experience and the impact volunteering may have on you. The findings may also help us to further improve the volunteer services in healthcare settings.

Who is organising this research?

This research is organised by Helpforce (www.helpforce.community), a not-for-profit organisation that aims to raise the profile of volunteering in health and care across the UK, in close collaboration with the hospital you volunteer at.

Do I have to take part?

Participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. If you take part, your consent is implicit. This means that you give your consent by filling in this survey and submitting it. However, you are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. The survey consists of questions about your volunteering activities, experience, and how you are feeling.

Will my taking part in the survey be kept confidential?

The survey team will follow ethical practice. The participation of all those taking part will be entirely confidential. Your survey responses will not affect your volunteer role in any way. All data is anonymised, securely stored and treated as confidential at all times.

What will happen to the results of the study?





The data will be analysed and written up as a report. This report will be made available to the hospital. It may also be made available to the public through Helpforce or any of its partners such as NHS England. Participants will not be identified at any point. The data collected is for research only, it will not be used for any other purpose. If you have any questions or wish to provide any feedback about this survey, please contact: Dr Allison Smith at as@helpforce.community

Thank you again for taking part in this study.

c. Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?

anxious", overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

d. On a scale where 0 is "not at all anxious" and 10 is "completely

YOUR VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE															
1. How often are you currently volunteering in the hospital or for the hospital?															
☐ At least once a week	☐ At least once a week ☐ Less that					s than once a week but at least once a month									
☐ Less than once a month	\Box 0	Other (please specify):													
2. Approximately how many hours do you currently spend volunteering in the hospital or for the hospital in an average month?															
hours	Ÿ														
3. What activities do you underta	•	ospita	l or f	for th	ne ho	spita	ıl? <u>T</u>	ick a	ll tha	at ap	ply				
\square Helping to mobilise patients, e.g. to get dressed and move around															
☐ Helping out on wards during mealtimes, e.g. encouraging patients to eat, passing them a drink															
☐ Providing companionship or mental stimulation to patients, e.g. visiting people for a chat, play cards, share music/books															
☐ Supporting patients to leave hospital and settle back at home															
☐ Supporting staff or patients with tasks, e.g. picking up prescriptions, moving patients around within hospital															
☐ Leading activities and social activity groups to support patients with long-term conditions, e.g. dementia, stroke															
☐ Restraint debriefs (mental hea	ılth)														
☐ Handholding & comforting -	in theatre/surgery														
☐ Other (please specify):															
_															
4. How likely are you to recommone	end volunteering at the trust to	friend	ls an	d fan	nily i	f the	y wa	anted	l to v	olunt	teer?	<u>Tick</u>			
☐ Extremely likely	Likely				ΠN	eithe	r lik	elv o	r unli	kely					
Extremely likely															
LI Chinkery	Lizatemery Officery				υυ	on t	KIIO	w							
5. We would like to better unders	tand aspects of your wellheing	Ther	e are	no r	ight	or w	rone	gans	wers	For	each	of			
these questions I'd like you to give an answer on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is "not at all" and 10 is "completely".															
a. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9						10									
b. Overall, to what extent do you fe	el that the things you do in your	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			

0

1

1

2 3

2

3 4

9

9

8

7 8

10

10

5

5 6

6 7

4



 \square Other



6. On a scale of 1-10, (where 1 is disagree and 10 is agree) please rate how you feel about the following at the moment. Please circle.	Dis	agree	<u>e</u>			Ag	<u>ree</u>				N/A
a.My volunteering gives me a sense of purpose	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A
b.My volunteering has increased my confidence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A
c.My volunteering has increased my ability to get paid work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A
d.My volunteering at the hospital has increased my interest in pursuing a career in health and care	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A
e. My volunteering at the hospital has increased my interest in working for the NHS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A

e. My volunteer working for the	ing at the hospital hand NHS	as increased my int	erest in	1 2	3 4	5	6	7 8	9	10	N/A
7. How interested are you taking up a career in health and care/NHS? (Please circle)											
A. I have recently taken steps to take up a career in health and care (e.g. job search, job applications, discussions with key professionals)											
B. I have not yet taken any steps to take up a career in health and care (e.g. job search, job applications, discussions with key professionals) but plan to shortly								with			
C. I have not taken steps and have no intentions to do so in the near future											
D. Not applic	able										
8. To what exte (Please circle)	ent did your volunt	eering in this hosp	oital motivate y	ou towa	rds a car	eer in	healt	h and o	care/N	NHS?	
A. I am not considering a career in health and care											
B. To some extent although my main motivation came from elsewhere											
C. My volunt	C. My volunteering was the main motivator towards a career in health and care										
D. Not applic	D. Not applicable										
BACKGRO	OUND INFO	RMATION									
	know a bit more abou	t you so that we can o	compare the exper	riences of	different t	types of	f volun	teers.			
7. About you a. Sex:	□ Male	☐ Female	☐ Prefer not to	0. 0017							
b. Orientation	☐Hetersexual/s	☐Gay/lesbian	□ Bisexual		ther		- □ F	Prefer n	ot to s	sav	
0. 011011001	traight	LiGay/lesolali	_ 		VII.01			10101 11		<i>,</i> ,	
c. Age:	□ 16-20	□ 21-30	□ 31-40	□ 4	1-50		□ 5	1-60	□ 6	51-74	
	□75-84	□85 and over					_ _				
d. Status:	☐ Employed	☐ Unemployed	☐ Student				□I	Retired			





8. What is your ethnic background?									
White	Asian/Asian British	Chinese and other ethnic							
☐ British	□ Indian	<u>background</u>							
\square Irish	☐ Pakistani	☐ Chinese							
☐ Any other White background	☐ Bangladeshi	☐ Any other ethnic background							
Mixed	☐ Any other Asian background	(please specify)							
☐ White and Black Caribbean	Black/Black British								
☐ White and Black African	☐ Caribbean	-							
☐ White and Asian	☐ African								
☐ Any other mixed background	☐ Any other Black background								
9. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions, disabilities or illnesses that have lasted or are expected to									
last for 12 months or more?									
□Yes	□No	☐ I would prefer not to say							

Thank you again for taking part in this study.