Easy Read

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

National Centre
for Social Research

Social model of disability: discovery phase interim report

This is an Easy Read document from the Welsh Government

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Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd / This document is also available in Welsh
Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg / We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh

About this project

The Welsh Government want to change the way that we collect information about disabled people.

We normally ask people about being disabled using questions in surveys. These questions have been used for a long time and need to be updated.

This is because the Welsh Government has started using the social model of disability to help us meet the needs of disabled people.

Our old questions do not use the social model of disability. This means we need to make and test new survey questions that do.

National Centre
for Social Research

The Welsh Government are working with the National Centre for Social Research for this project.

About the social model of disability

The social model of disability is a way to think and talk about disabled people.

It was made by disabled people and shows the world how to include them.

The social model of disability says that a person is not disabled by their impairment or health condition.

Instead, they are disabled by barriers that makes it harder to do things.

Sometimes, we just call it the ‘**social model**’.

About this report

We wanted to find out:

- if there are already questions that work for disabled people and people who use data

- what people thought about having new questions to collect information about disabled people

- if we can make new questions that use the social model of disability

- how we can make those questions better for disabled people to answer

- how to make the information we get from those questions better for people who use it as part of their job.

This report is about what we did, and what we found out.

What we did

We found out about the types of questions that disabled people get asked in 3 different ways.

First, we held 3 workshops with 36 **data users**.

A workshop is a meeting with lots of different people to talk about their ideas and opinions on a topic.

Data users are people that use in information about disabled people as part of their jobs. They could:

- work in government to make policies for improving disabled people’s lives

- use numbers to find out how many disabled people are doing different things
- work for a business or charity that supports disabled people.

We asked about what they need to know about disabled people to do their job and how they might use new questions.

Next, we looked to see what questions other people use to find out information about disabled people.

We looked at 20 surveys from different countries and organisations to:

- understand how other people are collecting information about disabled people

- see what they did well and what they didn’t do well

- find out if their questions used the social model of disability or if they could be changed to use it.

Finally, we held 2 more workshops with 40 disabled people from across Wales.

These workshops were ‘deliberative’. This means that we took extra time to think very carefully about things from different points of view.

In these workshops, we asked everyone what they thought about:

- the questions that are already used to find out information about disabled people

- having new questions that use the social model of disability
- what things would be important to have in a new set of questions.

What we found out from data users

The survey questions that
we use now are called the
‘disability harmonised standards’.

Data users liked using these because they have stayed the same for a long time. This makes it easy to compare information between different surveys and different times.

But they did not like some of the words in the questions.

They liked the idea of having questions that use the social model of disability because they can have more detailed information from disabled people.

But they said we need to make some new instructions and be careful that the new questions are not too long.

They also said we should get disabled people to help us make the new questions.

What we found out from surveys from different countries

We found that most surveys did not use the social model of disability or did not have questions about the barriers that make it harder for disabled people to do things.

Most of the surveys that we looked at asked people about their ‘long-term health conditions’ and did not use the word ‘disability’.

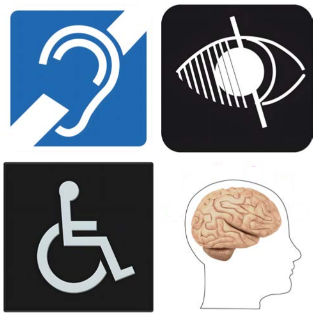
Some surveys had words that we do not use in the UK to talk about disabled people.

A lot of the surveys were made for interviews instead and might not work for people filling in the survey by themselves.

Not many surveys had accessible formats.

What we found out from disabled people

First, we asked about how people like to talk about themselves in surveys.



Many people liked using the social model when talking about themselves and told us that having impairments is different to being disabled.

They did not like the words ‘disability’, ‘being disabled’ or ‘disorder’. They told us that using these words might stop people from filling in a survey.

Some said the word ‘barriers’ could be too confusing for everyone to understand, and it might make some people only think about physical barriers.

Most people decided that making sure that everyone can fill in a survey was more important than being able to compare information between different years.

Next, we asked what people thought about the questions we already use to talk about being disabled.

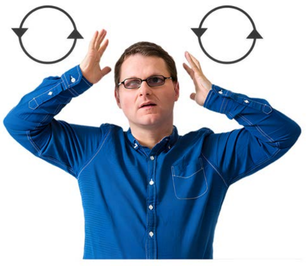
These questions are called the 'disability harmonised standards' and are split into 2 groups:

- questions about 'health conditions'

- and questions about 'impairments'.

At first, people told us that these questions were easy to answer but some people changed their mind after talking about them.

They said that these questions could be hard for some people to answer if their impairment changes day-to-day or by taking medicine.

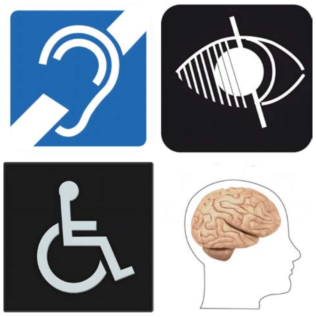


The questions also ask people to decide how much they are affected by their impairments, which people found confusing.

Most people liked the question about impairments more than the questions about ‘health conditions’.

Yes	No	Other
✗	✗	✓

They liked being able to choose more than one answer and having the option to choose “Other”.



But they also said the impairment question could still be made better.

Finally, we talked about having new questions that used the social model to talk about disability.

Most people liked the idea of these new questions and said they would make them feel like the government “cared” for them.

They also thought that having questions about impairments and barriers was a good idea.

But when we tried to make a new question, they said it was too long and complicated.

What we learnt

We did not find any surveys that met everyone’s needs or that properly used the social model of disability.

Because of this, we have made 2 suggestions.

1

To still use the question about impairments but make it better by making it easier for everyone to answer.

2

To make a new question about the things that make life harder for disabled people.

Both questions should be made and tested so they can be used in:

- different ways such as online, on paper, or over the phone

- different languages and versions including English, Welsh, British Sign Language (BSL) and easy read.

More information

This is an easy read version of a Welsh Government report.

You can read the original version here: www.gov.wales/social-model-disability-discovery-phase-interim-report

For more information about this work, you can:

- look at our website: www.gov.wales/equality-race-and-disability-evidence-units

- Email us at: EqualityEvidenceUnit@gov.wales