

Easy Read

 National Centre
for Social Research



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Research to make new survey questions using the social model of disability

Final report on what we found out



March 2026

How to use this document



This is an Easy Read version of: **Social model of disability: final report.**



You might need help to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue** may be hard to understand. You can check what they mean on **page 25**.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Where the document says **we**, it means **National Centre for Social Research**.

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Hawdd ei Ddeall Cymru
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This document is also available in Welsh.

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About this report



The Welsh Government wants to change how it collects information about disabled people.



We are the National Centre for Social Research.



In 2024 Welsh Government asked us to make and test new survey questions. These questions needed to use the **social model** of disability.



The **social model** of disability is a way to think about disability.



It says a person is not disabled by their impairment or health condition.



People are disabled by things around them that make life harder. These can be buildings, services, or people's attitudes.



The social model says the world should change to meet people's needs.



Other questions to collect information use the **medical model** of disability.



The **medical model** of disability sees disability as a difference that needs to be fixed or cured.



We carried out research. We asked disabled people what questions they want to see about disability.



We also looked at what is important for people who use information about disability. Such as, researchers and charities.



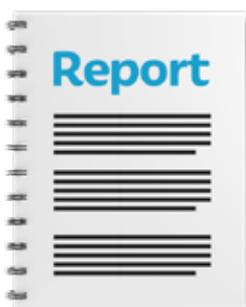
You can read about the earlier parts of our work here: gov.wales/social-model-disability



The first part of our research finished in 2025. We found that 2 new questions were needed.



We then made and tested the 2 new questions.



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

What we did



We make new survey questions using learning from last year's research.



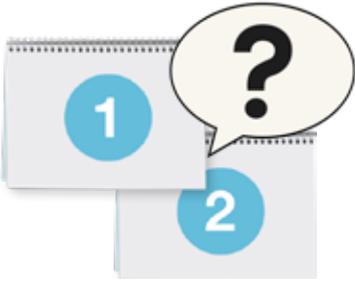
The questions had to be made so everyone is included and can take part.



The questions also need to be available in:

- English
- Welsh
- British Sign Language
- Easy Read

Questions about impairment



We made 2 versions of a question about **impairment**.



Impairment means a difference in how a person's mind or body works. For example, this can be because of a health condition.

Version 1:



- We made smaller changes.



- We made it to include more people.



- People filled in their own answers.

Version 2:



- We made bigger changes.



- We changed how an **impairment** is described.

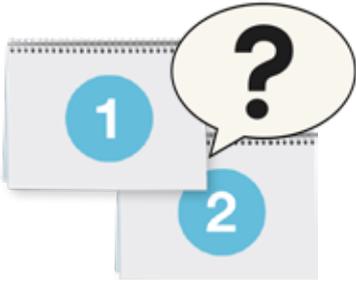


- We included conditions that do not affect someone all the time.



We also talked to people about the questions.

Questions about barriers



We made 2 versions of a question about **barriers**.



Barriers are things that stop disabled people doing things. For example, buildings without ramps or information not in Easy Read.

Version 1:



This included **barriers** in areas of life. For example, health care, work and transport.

Version 2:



This included other types of **barriers**. For example, people's attitudes and different ways people communicate.

Testing

First part of testing



Both versions of each question were tested. Adults, and parents of disabled children took part.



They were asked what they thought about the questions. They shared any problems they had.



We also tested British Sign Language and Easy Read questions with people. But this testing was with less people.

What we found out

Impairment questions



There was no clear difference between the 2 versions. People liked different parts from both versions.



People liked simple and clear options. People said version 2 felt easier to answer.



In the British Sign Language versions, people had problems with both versions.

Barrier questions



People understood both versions. But they thought some things needed changing.



People said version 1 had too many words and version 2 was confusing.



People liked the Easy Read version. But some said it had too many words and answer options. People also said images should be clearer.



In British Sign Language, people said both versions were difficult to understand and answer.

Testing with more people



We first made some changes to the questions using results from research and first part of testing.



We then did more testing with people including disabled adults.



We could not include Easy Read or British Sign Language.



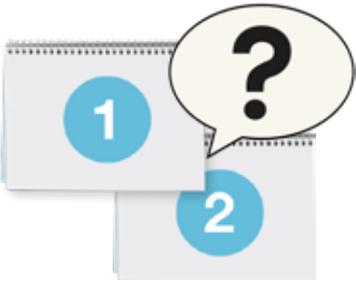
Over 4000 people were asked for feedback. Just over half of them replied.



Just over 2500 interviews were carried out.

What we found out

Impairment questions



Version 1 is the standard impairment question which is used when collecting information. Version 2 question was made with the best parts of the 2 versions from the first part of testing.



Using version 1:

Over 3 in 10 people said they had 1 or more **impairment**.



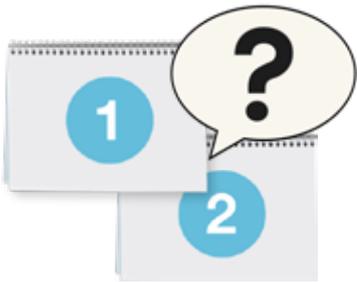
Using version 2:

Almost 6 in 10 people said they had 1 or more **impairment**.



Mental health conditions were reported most often in both versions.

Questions about barriers



We included the 2 versions of the **barriers** question again.



The versions were changed slightly before being tested again. The changes made based on what we learned before.



People with **impairments** reported more **barriers** than those without **impairments**.



Attitudes were the most common type of **barrier** people said.

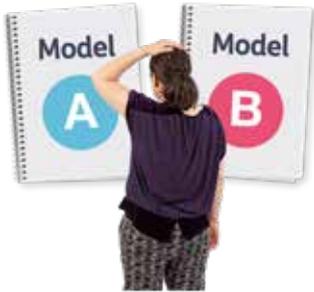


In life areas, the most common **barriers** were in health care and public spaces.



We found that giving people options to choose from helped them answer more easily.

Measuring how many people are disabled



We used 3 different ways to find out how many people are disabled. One used the **medical model**. 2 used the **social model**.



Slightly higher numbers of disabled people were reported when we used the **medical model**.



This shows that how questions are worded affects how people answer.

What the Welsh Government should do next

Impairment questions



The Welsh Government should use the question about **impairment** using the **social model** in future surveys.

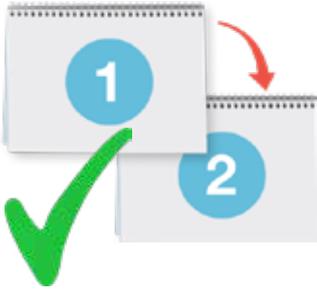


They should review this question in future. This will check if more work is needed.



They need to do more work on the British Sign Language version.

Barrier questions



The 2 versions of the **barrier** questions both worked. So, the Welsh Government should continue to use and test both versions.

They need to do more testing to look at:



- If changing the format of the questions helps more people answer.



- Making the parent questions clearer.

Other ideas

Parent version



More testing with parents is needed.



Parents have asked for more information about what to do if they have more than one disabled child. For example, which child they talk about when answering the question.

Child version



Questions should be made for disabled children.



These questions should then be tested.

British Sign Language version



More testing with more people is needed.

Easy Read version



The images need checking.



The words need more testing.



Answer options should be clearer.

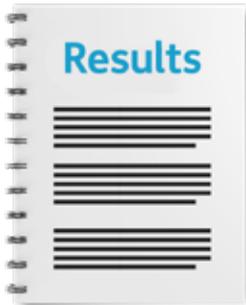


More people should test the questions.

Collecting information



More face-to-face interviews are needed.



The Welsh Government should publish the results of future testing.



They should give clear guidance to people making surveys.

Hard words

Barriers

Barriers are things that stop disabled people doing things. For example, buildings without ramps or information not in Easy Read.

Impairment

Impairment means a difference in how a person's mind or body works. For example, this can be because of a health condition.

Medical model

The medical model of disability sees disability as a difference that needs to be fixed or cured.

Social model

The social model of disability is a way to think about disability.

It says a person is not disabled by their impairment or health condition.

People are disabled by things around them that make life harder. These can be buildings, services, or people's attitudes.

The social model says the world should change to meet people's needs.