



 **POET**TM
Personal Outcomes Evaluation Tool

**Adult Social Care
User Guide
Version 2**

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Introduction

This guide is intended to help councils make best use of the Personal Outcomes Evaluation Tool (POET). It describes the key elements of the process for using POET from planning to making best use of the results.

The guide is focused on the use of POET in adult social care. It takes a step-by-step approach with links and references to other sources of information that can be found on the POET section of the In Control website – www.in-control.org.uk/poet. Whilst it does not cover every eventuality, by reading this guide, councils should be able to get going with POET. Further advice and information can be obtained from In Control where necessary. The guide is a live document and will be updated from time to time.

The latest copy will be available at:
www.in-control.org.uk/poetuserguide

Background

POET has been developed over a number of years by In Control and the Centre for Disability Research at Lancaster University. The survey provides a straightforward and powerful way of finding out about the experience and outcomes from personal budgets, beyond simply counting numbers. So far there have been three national reports commissioned by Think Local Act Personal with the next one due in Spring 2016. Copies of these reports are available at www.in-control.org.uk/poet

On a local level POET can be used by councils to:

- capture the outcomes and experiences of people going through self-directed support
- identify through analysis and benchmarking, those areas of local strength and those requiring improvement action

allow wider benchmarking and mutual support e.g learn from councils who are undertaking POET elsewhere

- form the basis of a local action planning session with stakeholders, in the context of other intelligence and perspectives

The national reports were produced using data from three survey forms. One designed for users of personal budgets and personal health budgets, one for carers, and one for staff.

The survey has also been adapted for disabled children and young people with education, health and care plans (EHC). This guide covers the process for the adult social care only. It is envisaged that In Control will develop a whole life approach to POET and will encourage alignment between organisations such as Adult's, Children's, Health and Providers. In Control will also be looking at embedding questions into IT systems to ensure continual learning and improvement and building in a strengths based approach. If you would like further information about POET for other services and sectors please email poet@in-control.org.uk.

Where we are now

The Care Services Minister Norman Lamb has recommended that all councils should be checking people's experiences of using personal budgets, through tools such as POET. The tool also supports Sector Led Improvement and the delivery of the Care Act.

Below are the usual options offered if outside of a free offer of support.

Option 1: Do it yourself

In Control offers a free licence in 2015/16 for English selected volunteer councils and CCGs to access the tool. This will allow basic level access to an online portal so that councils can upload surveys and analyse findings. In Control offers the option of providing a short report with basic analysis to those councils achieving a sample of more than 100 personal budget holders and 50 personal health budget holders.

Option 2: Supported POET

This option allows access as above but also includes additional support from In Control to make best use of POET including:

- Initial advice on most effective use and access to online and telephone advice
- Facilitation of a stakeholder engagement session at the start of the process to maximise involvement
- Provision of a more detailed report and analysis tailored to the locality
- Facilitation of a post analysis planning session with stakeholders to review findings and plan improvement action.

This option is available at a cost of £1,950 plus VAT and expenses

Planning and process

Undertaking POET – at a glance

Preparation - It is important to take a planned approach to undertaking POET including gaining senior management approval, allocating staff time to undertake the survey, and communicating with key stakeholders.

Each council should provide a named contact in order to ensure ease of communication with In Control

Please let Gaynor Cockayne gaynor.cockayne@in-control.org.uk know if the contact changes during the undertaking of POET.

It is also recommended that there is a named contact to identify the person who is responsible for administering the survey

The main stages for undertaking POET are as follows:

- Planning the survey and who to distribute to
- Carrying out the survey and all data inputting by 27th February 2016 at the latest (including chases).
- Analysis leading to a local report with national comparison
- Stakeholder engagement, this includes triangulation of intelligence with Local User Groups recommended by the Council
- Action plan for improvement and recommendation of where mutual support may be beneficial

Getting started

Planning the survey

When planning to undertake POET it is worth checking with adult social care colleagues and children's services colleagues whether they are or intend to carry out a POET survey, in order that these can be co-ordinated rather than run in parallel, given that some of the same people could be asked to complete both surveys. If you are in doubt, please contact In Control who will hold this information. It is also best to avoid coinciding with any other surveys that may involve the same target group, for example local citizen surveys or national Department of Health surveys.

Key contact(s)

A named council is required in order to ensure easy communication, together with the details of any other key contacts who will be involved in the exercise e.g. the person responsible for administering the survey if different from the key contact. Where ever possible it is recommended that the personalisation lead or equivalent is the key contact.

Communication

It is important to tell staff and other stakeholders that the survey is being carried out and to explain how the survey results will be used. If staff are required to help complete surveys, for example completing with the person as part of a review, it is a good idea to run a briefing session(s) so they are clear on the process. It is also good practice to inform your local planning groups, disabled peoples' organisations/user led organisations, and community and voluntary sector organisations so that they are aware and can help promote and publicise the survey. This should help to encourage people to take part and maximise the response rate. In Control has a template press release that can be used to publicise the survey and can be given to your press offices so they can arrange local media coverage for the survey. If you have opted for the 'Supported POET' then In Control can help you with engagement with key stakeholders ahead of the surveys being issued.

Carrying out the survey

Survey methods

Councils select various methods to survey but we have found that face to face or via a telephone conversation provides the best response rates and sometimes allows for further probing. Often Councils use their ULO's, own staff or voluntary sector staff to carry out the face to face or telephone surveys, where this is the case, it has worked well. If using a traditional postal survey, you will need to survey at least 50-60% extra people on top of the 100 cohort, this is to ensure you receive the required sample size as often people send back blank returns or do not respond if they don't have a good understanding of what the survey is for. Where postal surveys are used it is strongly recommended that the council provides a freepost return envelope and a requested date for return is given.

Size of survey

It is important that the cohort reflects your population needs. The matrix on page 8 allows Councils to select a cohort broken down by client and budget type. It is important to ensure this reflects your population needs. The PSSEX1 spend breakdown by client group or the population statistics within the Councils Joint Strategic Needs Assessment should assist you to agree an appropriate cohort. It is important to ensure that one person within the Council is responsible for selecting the cohort and ensuring a reflective return rate. Councils should aim for a minimum of 100 completed returns for personal budget holders including residential care.

Layout and questions

In Control will provide a word version of the survey so that you can add in your logo and local authority name into the introductory text if you wish. You may also adapt the introductory text to include local context. There is also an explanatory letter to accompany the survey explaining its purpose, which can be amended to fit local circumstances.

The survey questions have been tried and tested and developed in a way that we know works so we can get meaningful data, they therefore must not altered in any way. Feedback on your experience of using the survey, including the questions, is welcome

Timescale

It is a good idea to set in place a process and timescale for reminding people to complete the survey, offering assistance where required. As previously stated it is recommended that one month is allowed for completion and return of surveys with a possible two week extension to 'chase up' late responses

Data entry

The data is entered via an easy-to-use online system. As a guide, entering data from the surveys onto the system for 100 responses would take between 4 and 6 hours of input. The council will be provided with a, user name and password and instructions on how to access the system in order to see and analyse local data.

Carrying out the survey

Matrix Sampling for targeted survey

% of population served

	Over all pop	Council managed	ISF (Provider/broker)	Self (direct payments)	Short term
Older people					
Learning disabilities					
Physical disabilities					
Mental health					

An example timetable could be:

- Set up including communication with key internal contacts and stakeholders by 31st October 2015
- Identify personal survey sample, print surveys and distribute (with freepost returns envelope) by 13th November 2015
- Survey target return date, input surveys on going as returned by 29th January 2016
- Issue a 'chase up' response with a two week Extension by 15th February 2016
- Enter all remaining data by 27th February 2016

Local reports

Once sufficient data has been obtained and entered (a minimum of 100 completed person budget holder surveys, In Control will produce a local report. This will highlight key findings and make comparisons with other councils included in the most recent national data set. The report will be agreed with the council. It is normally expected that the report will be provided within one month of the survey results being made available by the council. We have also created a facility for councils to run their own reports via our online system. A link to the data, username and password along with some brief user instructions will be issued to each council.

Engagement and action planning

Local engagement and action planning

Following on from the local report, councils are strongly encouraged to host local engagement activity that considers and responds to the findings from POET. This should include an engagement event to which personal budget users are invited, together with other key stakeholders including operational staff and local organisations. You may wish to also include your Health and Wellbeing Board and/or Local Healthwatch. Relevant senior managers would normally be expected to attend. The purpose is to share the headline results from the survey in comparison with national data and identify areas of good progress and those requiring improvement. The event should end with a clear sense of the priority areas for improvement. The format for the engagement event is to be decided locally. Following on from your engagement event, the next stage will be to develop a local improvement action plan in conjunction with local stakeholders.

Case studies

Leeds City Council has kindly provided an overview of their involvement in POET, together with a blog post on the engagement event they held. This is available on the [Better Lives Leeds website](#).

In Control is building up a library of resources, including case studies which show other examples of local use. It is hoped therefore that councils will share their experience of post survey engagement and action planning.

Resources

There are relatively few direct financial costs, other than paying the cost of postage if using postal surveys and the costs of holding the engagement event. The main cost is the 'opportunity cost' of staff time.

When considering this, account needs to be taken of the fact that this will be spread out over a period of time and distributed across a number of staff, who may take responsibility for different parts of the process and/or share some tasks. Additionally, whilst the time taken for data entry is directly related to the number of survey returns, the work required for planning and implementation of POET is not linked to the size of the survey.

Similar effort is required to run a survey with 100 responses, as for a 500 say. Our experience is that councils that have planned the survey well with clearly allocated responsibilities have gained most. Moreover as the use of POET becomes part of the council's mainstream systems for planning and review the time taken for future surveys should reduce. In Control can provide advice on embedding POET within council systems and processes. Some of these conversations are already taking place.

Frequently asked questions

Q: Who should we distribute the questionnaires to?

A: The survey is for all personal budget users including residential care.

Q: What is the recommended sample size of the survey?

A: For councils - 100 completed returns from personal budget holders

We know from experience that response rates tend to vary but are normally between 20% - 30% if running a postal survey so please take this into consideration and survey a larger cohort.

Q: How do we circulate the questionnaires?

A: Councils may select various methods to survey but we have found that face to face or via a telephone conversation provides the best response rates. Councils may use their ULO's, own staff or voluntary sector staff to carry out the face to face or telephone surveys. If using a traditional postal survey, you will need to survey at least 50-60% extra people on top of the 100 cohort, this is to ensure you receive the required sample size as often people send back blank returns or do not respond if they don't have a good understanding of what the survey is for. Where postal surveys are used it is strongly recommended that the council provides a freepost return envelope and a requested date for return is given. We suggest this is no longer than one month. It is essential that a local contact should be given for people with queries and/or to request help with completing the questionnaires.

Questionnaires can be circulated by email and should include the direct link to your online surveys.

Gaynor Cockayne from In Control will send you online links specific to your local authority for each survey type gaynor.cockayne@in-control.org.uk

It is entirely up to the Council how they wish to undertake surveying.

Frequently asked questions

Q: Are the questionnaires available in other formats including for parents / carers with learning difficulties?

A: The questionnaires are available in easy read and large print formats.

Q: Are the questionnaires available in other languages?

A: The questionnaires are not currently available in other languages

Q: Can we change the questions in anyway?

A: In Control welcomes suggestions for changes to POET however POET cannot be amended or adapted without the explicit prior permission from In Control. It would be very helpful if you could please collate any comments you receive on the questionnaires themselves and email them to Gaynor Cockayne at the end of the period.

Q: When should we distribute the questionnaires?

A: You may distribute the questionnaires anytime between when you receive them mid October and 31st December 2015.

Q: How long does it take to complete the questionnaires?

A: It is difficult to generalise but an average of 10-15 minutes.

Q: How is data entered?

A: You will receive a link to the online survey, this is specific to each council. You will use this link to enter the data from the complete surveys that are returned to you. The link can also be shared and used 'live' so the data would be captured immediately. Having a link specific to your council will allow you access to see your own local data.

Frequently asked questions

Q. Will we receive regular updates on returns from our area?

A. Each local authority will have their own link so once results are inputted it will be possible to see this real time data. You will receive a user name and password to the portal and will be able to access and view your local data. Once the national data has been inputted and analysed individual benchmarking reports will be produced. We anticipate that this will be in early April 2016

Q: Has POET had Research Ethics Committee approval?

A: The POET surveys have been designed for people to evaluate their experiences of the personal budgets and personal health budgets. They are therefore service evaluation rather than research, according to guidance from the National Research Ethics Service, and as such do not require Research Ethics Committee approval.

In Control is working with the Centre for Disability Research at Lancaster University on the development of the tools and analysis of the results.

Q. How to make best use of the results

A. In Control is able to support local areas to consider and use their data to inform action planning. Please let John Water john.waters@in-control.org.uk know if you would like to agree a date for this to take place.

Q. If I have any queries about POET who should I contact?

A. Email poet@in-control.org.uk or contact Gaynor Cockayne 01564 82 1650

Terms and conditions

The POET questionnaire remains the property of In Control and may only be used with explicit permission from In Control.

Data collected by using the tool will be made freely available to the participating local authority from where the data was collected. The data collected remains the property of In Control.

Data from participating authorities forms part of a growing national data set and used for the National Personal Budget Survey and other associated publications. All individual data will however be anonymous.

Participating local authorities are free to publish data collected using the tool provided appropriate acknowledgement is made to POET and In Control.

In Control welcome suggestions for changes to POET however POET cannot be amended or adapted without the explicit prior permission from In Control.

Participating local authorities may embed POET into local information systems provided they have prior agreement from In Control and agree to share anonymous data collected using the tool in an appropriate format.

The post survey engagement and action planning is an important part of the POET process and is a condition of funding. Therefore we must stipulate that engagement and local action planning takes place.

Contacts and further information

The POET team

John Waters, In Control co-author of the National Personal Budget Survey and advisor to POET sites with overall responsibility for the POET programme within In Control
john.waters@in-control.org.uk

Gaynor Cockayne, In Control first point of contact for all POET enquiries and administrative support
gaynor.cockayne@in-control.org.uk

Natasha Burberry, POET co-ordinator responsible for coordination of the adult social care POET programme
Nlbimprovement@gmail.com

Chris Hatton, Centre for Disability Research, University of Lancaster co-author of National Personal Budgets Survey

Library of resources

As previously mentioned In Control is building a library of developing practice on the use of POET including templates, case studies, local reports, and action plans. We therefore greatly value councils that are happy to share their experiences of using POET and key documents associated with this.

Further information

If you would like any further information or would like to request copies of the survey questions, example reports or action plans, please contact: poet@in-control.org.uk or telephone 01564 821 650