

Making a Real Difference

Checking and listening to people's experiences and working together to improve choice and control via Health and Social Care.

Personal budgets, personal health budgets and education, health and care plans (EHCP) are now a core part of government policy and are a significant part of social care, health and education for people of all ages.

The question now is not whether real choice and budgetary have a role in public services but how we can ensure they offer maximum benefit to recipients.

It is vital that we learn about what is working and not working at both a national and local level and apply these lessons.

How can POET help?

Over the past 10 years, In Control together with the Centre for Disability Research at Lancaster University has developed the Personal Outcomes Evaluation Tool (POET) to measure the outcomes of personalised care and support including personal budgets, personal health budgets and EHCP's and delivery – **and finding out the impact they are having on people's lives**. There have been several national reports published (link details below) .

By routinely measuring and monitoring both process and outcomes – **through people's direct reported experience** – the POET is able to produce a data set that identifies the critical conditions that councils, schools, clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), providers, trusts and other agencies need to establish if they are

“We must strive to improve the outcomes people experience as a result of using personal budgets not just focus on increasing the numbers. We should always be asking ‘are people getting better lives and support – and is the experience simpler and more flexible?’”

Norman Lamb MP
Minister of State for Care and Support,
Department of Health

‘The Department, with partner organisations, should carry out further analysis of existing data from the Adult Social Care survey as well as improving the POET survey and its take-up, to improve evidence and understanding of both how personal budgets are used and how they lead to better outcomes for users’

Recommendations from
Public Accounts Committee
June 2016

to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the self-direction and choice and control agenda.

More than 15,000 people have shared their experiences to date using POET, making this the largest national data set of its kind.

POET is the only national tool available enabling people to share their experiences on the impact personal budgets and EHC plans are having on their lives and offers a real co-productive opportunity to help influence and shape better local delivery.

A survey of people's experiences can't answer all the questions about what organisations should do to improve delivery – but most importantly it listens to people who are recipients of the system and creates a powerful feedback loop to work together for improvements and can be used alongside other information and evidence. A wide range of organisations are using POET and local findings in a range of ways, including:

- Measuring the impact of the SEND reforms introduced by the Children and Families Act 2014
- Informing local engagement and planning sessions with managers, practitioners, personal budget and EHC plan holders and their families. This can support local areas to compare their results with national evidence and set them against other local data, experiences and perspectives. Organisations can then develop improvement plans to help deliver the Care Act, Children and Families Act and personal health budget delivery, for example.

- Using POET findings as part of wider local stakeholder engagement and planning using TLAP's Making it Real markers – informing reviews of personal budgets but also steering necessary improvements in the other areas such as information and advice.
- Informing and supporting Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNA).
- Incorporating POET within regular processes for checking user experience and outcomes including via the review process. In this way local delivery and wider commissioning activity can be systematically informed by direct user feedback.

In the Third National Personal Budget Survey we have outlined some of the emerging themes and how councils and other organisations can potentially make use of them.

What do the findings tell us?

Adults:

Easy process = Good outcomes

2x

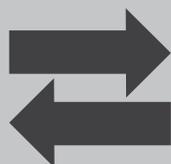
Personal budget holders who said their views were included in the process were nearly twice as likely to report good outcomes

3x

Those that found the process easy were nearly three times more likely to report good outcomes



People who used their budget for personal assistants or community-based solutions were more likely to report better outcomes than those who used their budget on traditional services



Carers who said their views were included in the process were significantly more likely to report better outcomes



People were also more likely to report good outcomes if they had help to plan their support and if they knew how much money was in their budget

But these factors made very little difference to outcomes:



Personal factors such as gender, ethnicity, age or social care group



Type of personal budget direct payment, council managed or individual service fund

At least two thirds of respondents said their personal budget had made things better or a lot better in 11 of the 15 areas of life we asked about:

- Dignity in support
- Independence
- Arranging support
- Friendships
- Quality of life
- Mental health



- Control over life
- Feeling safe
- Family relationships
- Paid relationships
- Self-esteem

80%+

said a personal budget had made things better or a lot better when it came to dignity in support and quality of life.



More than two thirds of carers said that as a result of the person they care for having a personal budget things had got better or a lot better in three of the eight aspects we asked about (remain well and continue caring, quality of life for them and the person being cared for).

Children and young people:

80%+

In seven of the nine outcome areas we asked about (individualised support, feeling supported, paperwork, partnership, communication, continuity, information) said things worked well all or most of the time.

In the other two areas (clarity of role and timeliness)

78%

said things had worked well all or most of the time.

Parents/carers were also positive about the impact on their own lives. In four of the six areas we asked about (life balance, feeling supported, confidence in future and aspirations) at least 80% said things had got better or a lot better.



In four of the seven work areas we asked practitioners about (partnership with parents, individualised response, being child centred and understanding the needs of the child/young person), at least 70% were positive.



In five of the nine areas we asked about (support, quality of life, home, happy and relaxed, fit and healthy) at least 80% said that things were better or a lot better for their children.

Parents/carers and practitioners were all in agreement that partnership working and keeping the process simple were areas that needed to improve.



The majority (70% of parents) felt that the personal budget or EHC plan met their child's needs.

Find out more

We have now published several reports using POET:



- [The Third National Personal Budget Survey](#)



- [The POET surveys of Personal Health Budget Holders and Family Carers](#)



- [Measuring the outcomes of EHC plans and personal budgets for children and young people with SEND](#)

You can download these reports at:
www.in-control.org.uk/poet

Embed POET into review systems

Many organisations are now in the process of embedding the POET into their IT systems to systematically complete at reviews. This approach not only enables regular consistent data capture, but can show expected standards to the workforce using them.

To find out more about how your organisation can make use of POET, please email us at: poet@in-control.org.uk or telephone 01564 821 650

What next?

Having built POET over 10 years across adult social care, health and now children's services we believe the right thing is for it now to be owned across a wide coalition - with people using public services at the heart of decisions about its use and its future. In the coming months we will be working to make this democratic ownership a reality.

www.in-control.org.uk/poet

For more information about how POET can help you understand how well Personal Health Budgets are working in your area email; POET@in-control.org.uk

People POET

On behalf of the National Independent Living Strategy Group, In Control have been facilitating a People's POET, checking life after Independent Living Funds (ILF) and Care Act compliance in practice. This is not only showing us useful information about what's working and what's not working with the Care Act implementation, but also highlights gaps in what information the public need and 'triangulates' the statutory use of the POET.