

Getting good support

Report of a survey

We are the 'Skills for Support' research team.



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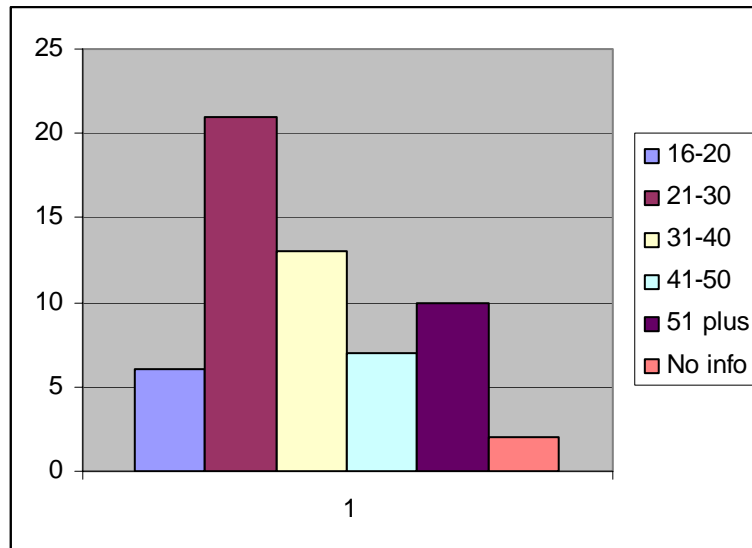
Val Williams

Our project is about how to give people with learning difficulties good support.

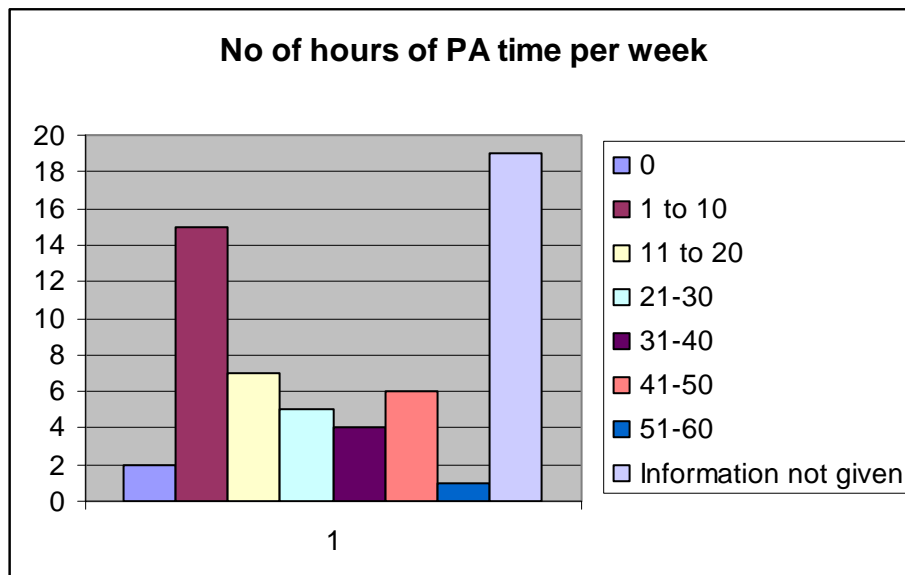
This is an easy-read summary of our first report. It is about the survey we are doing.

- Our survey went out to people who get 1-1 support. 59 people sent back the survey. Most of them had a direct payment.

- More men than women sent back the survey. They were all ages, but it did include some older people (over 50) who have a PA.



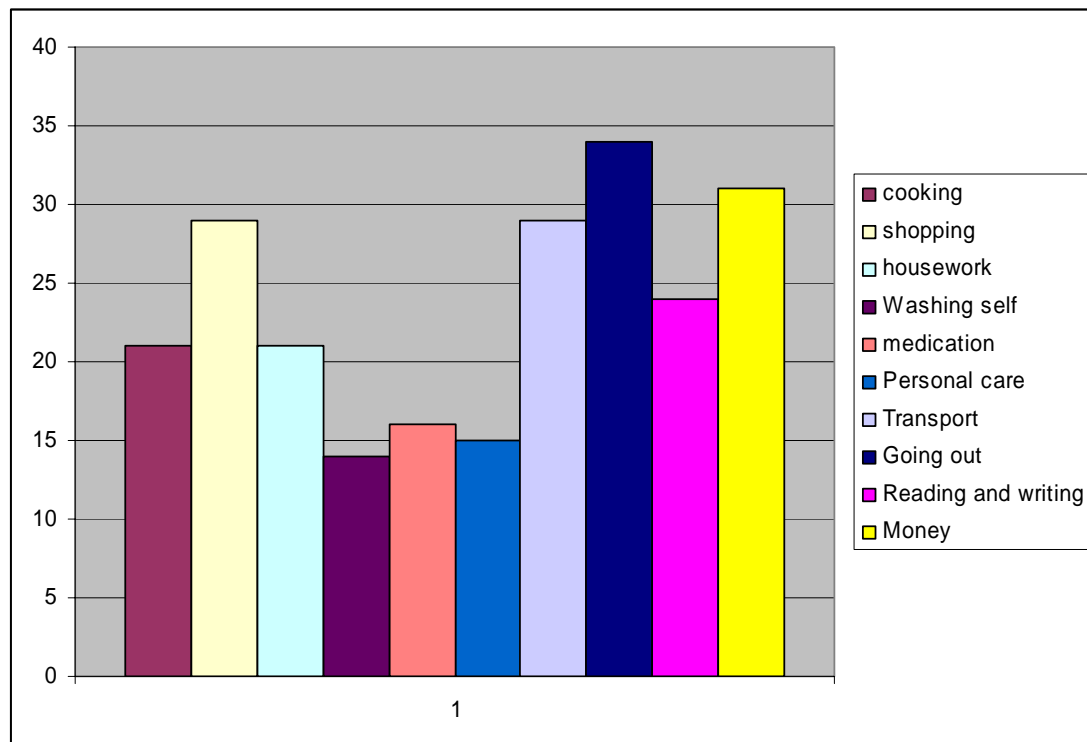
- Most people had between 5-7 hours support a week.



- Nearly all of them said that having a PA was **'very good'**.

What do people do with their PA?

Most people said they go out, do shopping, or have help with transport.

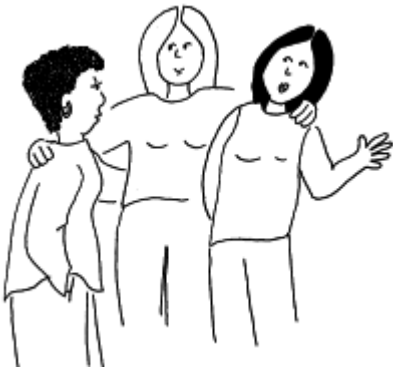


- People with learning difficulties are getting support from PA's to get out and do things.

Choosing

- Not everybody had picked their own PA.
- About 1 in 3 people said they had employed someone they knew already.

What did people like best?



- People liked being friends with their PA.



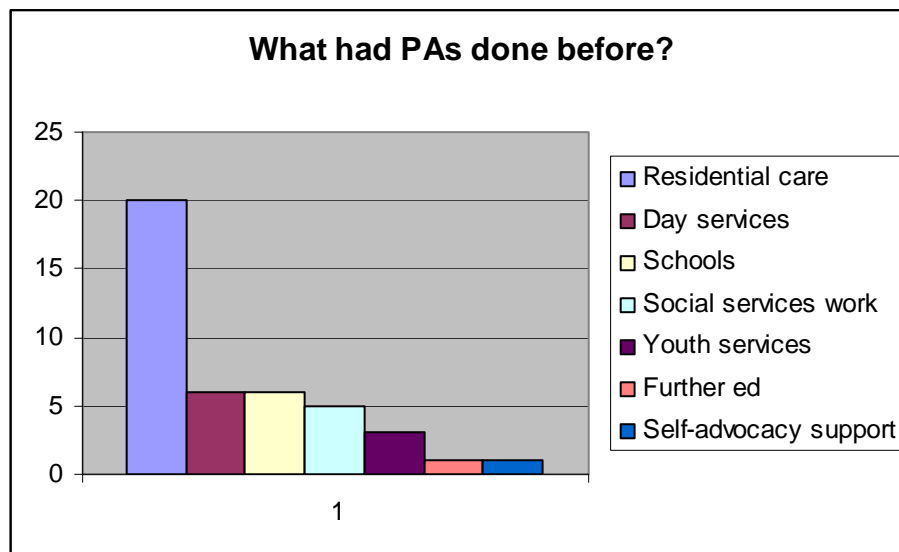
- When the PA supports you, it means your parents don't have to do everything.



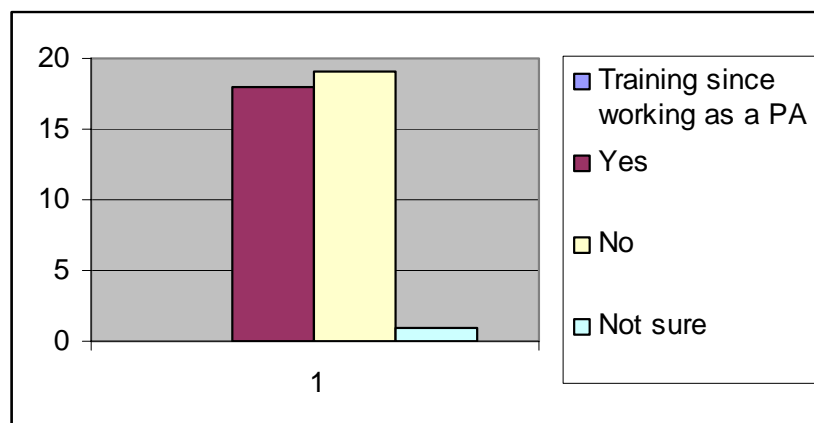
- Sometimes the PA gets you into new things that they like doing.

What had PAs done before?

- About 1 in 3 of the PAs had worked in residential homes before they got the job as a PA. But nearly half of the PAs had not worked in social services or in care work before.

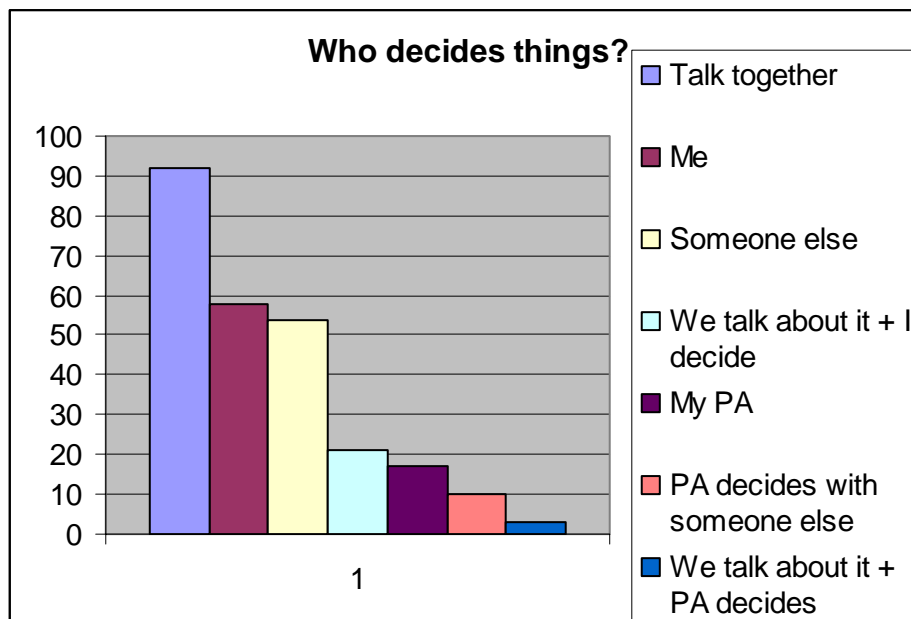


- A few had done training since they got the PA job. But none of this was person-centred training.



Who's in control?

- People often said their PA spoke up for them. But they also said the PA does not take over. The PA's felt the same.
- People said they decided things mostly by talking together.



What we think about all this



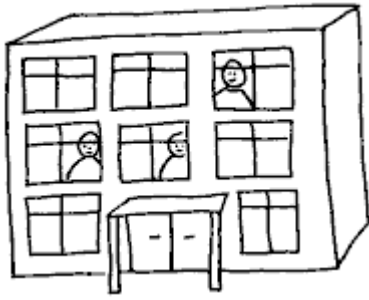
Having a PA is something new. Getting a direct payment is also new. It means you can be in control, not your staff.



Staff and supporters have often bossed us around. They also treat us like children, and they speak for us.



But sometimes you do need someone. You may not know what to say. It's OK to speak up for someone, but you need to ask them first. A good PA will do this.



We think it's a good thing to have some experience of care. But things are very different in residential homes. People might find it hard to change their habits. That's what training is needed for.

We are also doing other things in our project.



- We are talking to people with learning difficulties who have a PA.

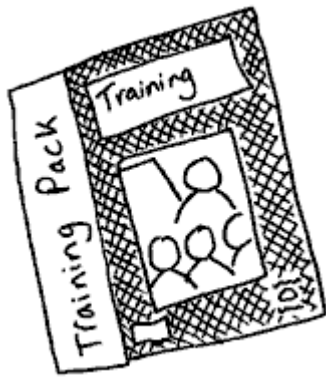
- We are talking to their PA's



- We have focus groups.



- We are making videos with people and their PAs. The videos will show us how people really work together.



- Then we are going to make a training pack. People with learning difficulties can help to support and train their own PAs.

It's our lives, and our support. We want to make sure things get better for more people like us, all around the country.