

A Review of the Connect to Support Hampshire Website

Introduction

About Healthwatch

Local Healthwatch organisations are independent champions for people who use health and social care services. Healthwatch Hampshire is here to find out what matters to local people and help make sure their views shape the support they receive. As part of our work, we review local services such as the Connect to Support Hampshire website.

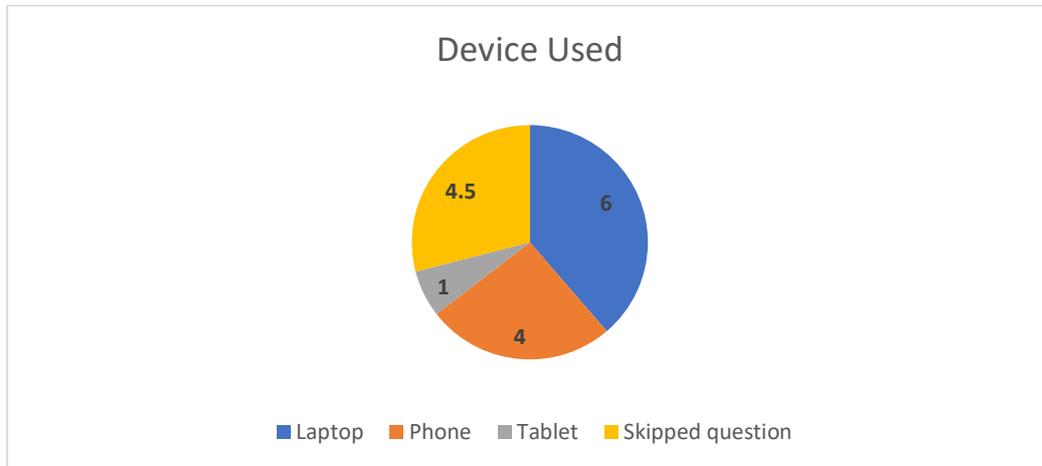
Project background

Late last year we released a report titled Caring During Covid, and we made a number of recommendations that we are currently following up with the respective organisations. For example, carers reported that they found it difficult to access information on how to get a Carer's Assessment. As a result of this we carried out a Mystery Shopping exercise of the Connect to Support Hampshire website - (<https://www.connecttosupporthampshire.org.uk/>). Our volunteers and partner organisations were invited to complete a questionnaire based on how easy/difficult they found they found using the website to access information to answer questions that had been raised around Carers' Assessments. We received 13 responses which have been collated and anonymised.

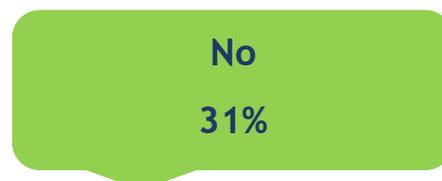


What Carers Told us about Using Connect to Support Hampshire

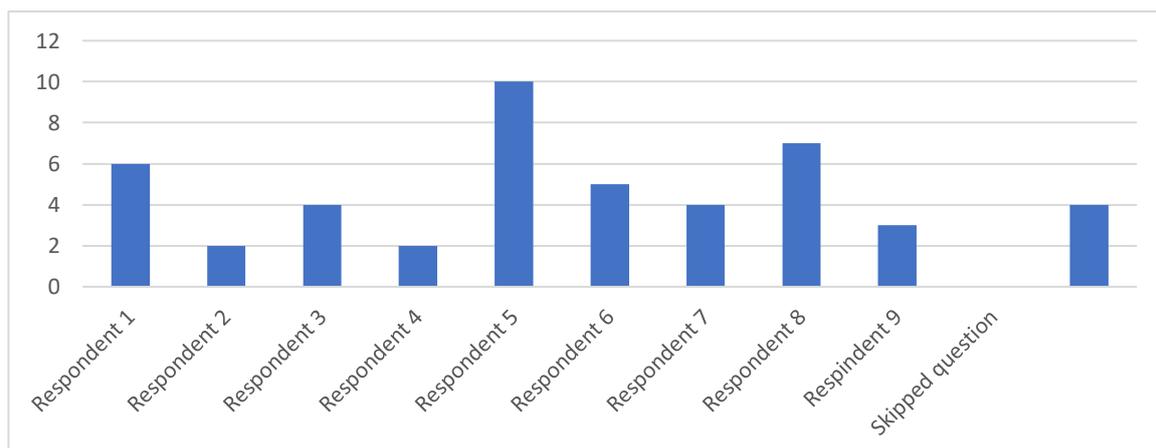
Q1 Please indicate if you are using a laptop, phone, or tablet.



Q2 Can you navigate from the home page to find information about carers' assessments?



Q3 If yes, how many clicks (from the home page) did it take you to get to the information about carers' assessments?



Q4 How easy/difficult was it to navigate to the information?

Fine

Quite easy

Not as easy as the HCC website, but quite straightforward

Not that easy but eventually taken to the HCC site.

Fairly easy if you know to use the key words carer's assessment.

Quite difficult. So many options. Easy to get lost.

Not clear, initial search on page became cyclical. Finally found info under Local Authority tab.

Not in local support where you would expect it.

Not straightforward

Could be easier. No mention of carers' assessments on the tab titles. Had to go through 'help from your Local Authority' tab.

Q5 Can you find out what a carer's assessment is from the information provided on the website?

Yes
62%

No
38%

Q6 How easy/difficult was the information on carers' assessments to understand?

- Reasonably simple.
- Fairly easy but no contact details on how to book and assessment?
- As this takes you to the HCC website, the same as on the HCC survey i.e., fairly straightforward.
- Same as for Hampshire Council as you are directed to their website.
- I was redirected back to the Hampshire County Council website.
- Quite easy - a good range of info is included.
- If you are a bit knowledgeable OK, but if you are new to the whole process it is a bit daunting in my view.
- The information is only in generic terms it could be quite easy for someone to assume that they would not be eligible (ie. "may help")

5 people skipped this question.

Q7 Can you find out what the eligibility criteria is for a carer's assessment?

Yes
50%

No
50%

1 person skipped this question.

Q8 If yes, how many clicks (from the home page) did it take you to get to the information?

- 8. Info is on another site and some people would not get that far. Needs to be part of the Carer's Assessment Page.
- 5
- 4
- 3 but it's located under 'What happens after assessment' and is an external link to the eligibility criteria. Not so obvious a location.

Q9 How easy/difficult was it to navigate to the information?

Fairly easy

It was ok.

Only by being redirected to the HCC website

The carer's assessment page clearly states that all carers are entitled to assessment although there are eligibility criteria for services.

Easy when you knew keywords, but a general enquiry would not find it.

Ended up on gov.uk. Site. It was not easy.

7 people skipped this question.

Q10 How easy/difficult was the information to understand?

- Fine but can be a little too generic.
- Quite easy.
- Fairly easy.
- Not very simple too involved and legal.

- Not difficult to understand, but maybe complex to calculate.
- Not easy. Could be clearer.

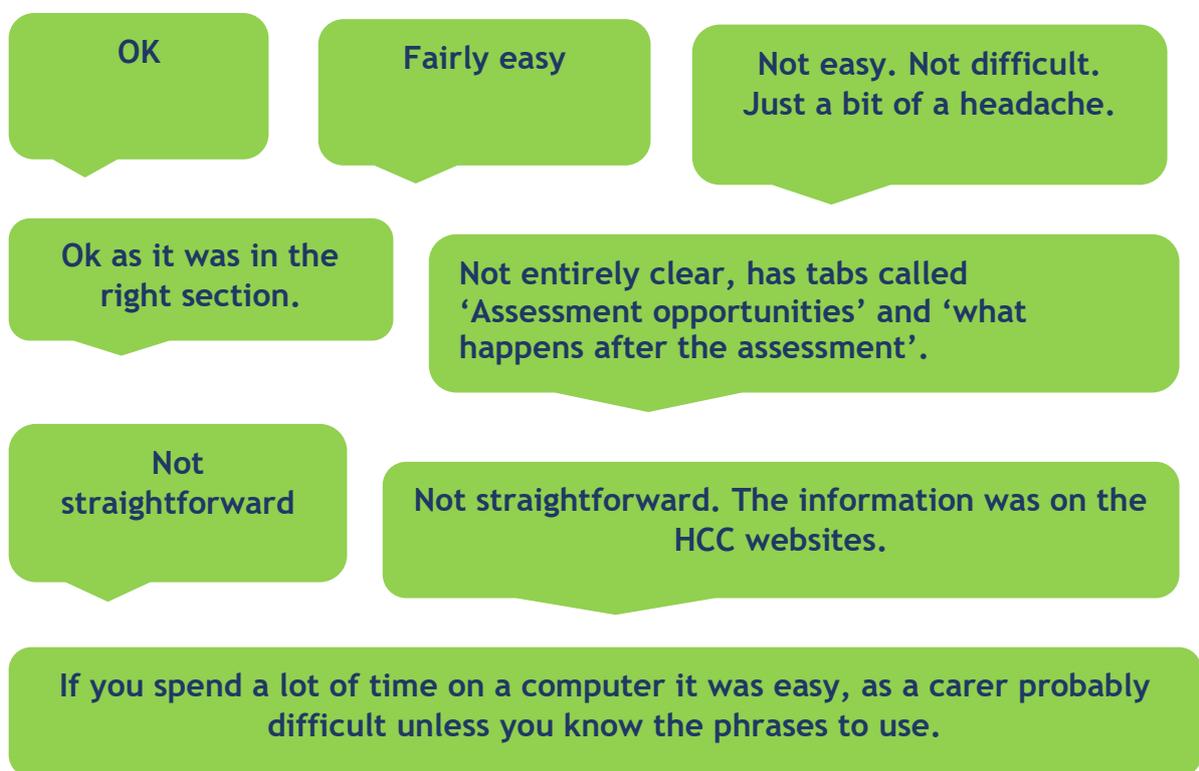
Q11 You want to find out what potential help the Local Authority could provide. Can you navigate to information relating to support you could be entitled to following an assessment?



Q12 If yes, how many clicks did it take you to get to the information?

- 5 clicks
- Too many
- Several (lost count!)
- 3
- 2 but listed as another link under "what happens after the assessment".
- 1

Q13 How easy/difficult was it to navigate to the information?



Q14 How easy/difficult was the information to understand?

- Easy
- OK
- It was ok.
- Easy as it's in bullet points, but brief.
- Fairly easy. Relatively easy to understand.
- Not easy - I couldn't make head or tail of what is 'chargeable' and what isn't.
- Linked to another webpage which was in a different graphic interface with a lot of options.

Q15 You would like to go ahead and organise a carer's assessment. Can you find a telephone number to contact the correct department to get this organised?



Q16 If yes, how many clicks did it take you to get to the information?

- 7
- 7
- 3
- Same as Hampshire Council

Q17 Any other comments on finding a telephone number to book a carer's assessment?

Found phone numbers but nothing said it was for booking a carer's assessment. Most seemed general numbers that take ages to answer or you have to queue for ages.

It was located under the 'I have another enquiry', then a 'contact us' link, and then a number at the bottom of the page.

You have to be persistent to find the number after finding a number of possible, but incorrect links - end even then you are encouraged to use an online form before you come to a number.

Couldn't find a search bar, so couldn't search for Carer's Assessment.

No telephone numbers readily available.

Could find everything except carers assessment or phone number.

There is only one mention of the carer's assessments, and it only leads to the gov.uk page.

The HCC site is designed to encourage you to use an online form. You have to scroll down to find the phone number.

No phone number

Q18 Due to your caring responsibilities, you find it easier to send an email to book a carer's assessment. Can you find an email address to contact the correct department to get this organised?

Yes

15%

No

85%

Q19 Any comments on accessing an email address?

- Appeared to be online form only.
- Couldn't find it.
- An email address found to invite you to subscribe to newsletters. Help chat icon appears.
- I was referred to the online form which required a lot of details. There wasn't an option to book an assessment so would need to use the 'other' field.
- Main Hampshire Council carer assessment site page did not have any phone numbers or email addresses what is point of this page. You have to jump through hoops to find any information! It also directs you back where you started at Connect & Support. Does anybody ever check their links?
- No email address to use.

- ☛ Despondent The site was very difficult to navigate on my phone. It took me a lot of time. I think if I were a carer I would just have to stop, put my head in my hands and cry with frustration I found it very difficult to navigate from the home page to info about carers. After 10 clicks I gave up I couldn't find info on the assessment at all.
- ☛ Same as Hampshire Council site.

Q20 From the information available on the website, are you confident you have the knowledge to go ahead and apply for a carer's assessment?



Overall Feedback About Connect to Support Hampshire Website

My caring duties mean I have few options other than to continue to do the best I can in difficult circumstances. The carer's assessment process seems very remote from my reality, probably because it is really all about what the council does not what I do...

Info on carer's assessment is accessible and quite good, but there is a lack of examples of the types of help available, and the linked gov.uk info is pretty impenetrable. The contact info is also rather inaccessible and off-putting.

Lots of different web avenues, some of the information (such as contact number, eligibility) should be at the beginning of the information, not at the end

No visible link to allow one to make a booking. Would have to revert to HCC switchboard number. Website should be designed for use by visually impaired users.

Too polite to say what I think.

I eventually found the right page by clicking on different links, took about 6 clicks but then couldn't find how to actually book as the final click took me back to the HCC site which did not have this information there either.

Although the website contains basically no information about carers' assessments, it is notable that the other information about possible support is largely the same (in the info given, and even webpage design), as it is under the Hants council website.

This website seems to be useful to signpost people to other websites for help, there is lots of information, but you have to dig deep to find it.

It's a very good website which I will be going back to look through but very difficult to find carers assessment info. Even tried the search function and couldn't get a clear direction.

Basic information is easy to navigate but could be clearer on eligibility criteria. Very difficult to find a contact number/email address to begin the process of a carer's assessment. Lots of links to different websites and going around in circles. Eventually I found a long enquiry form and general number to fill out on the 'Adults' Health and Care help and support' page, but this was not linked to the carer's assessment page so not easy to find.

Recommendations

- 1. Improve Search Terms for the Carer's Assessment Page** Even when respondents had the correct search term, they found it difficult to navigate to the Carer's Assessment page. If you were unsure of what a Carer's Assessment was it would be very difficult to find the information. Can improvements be made to the search terms to make it easier to find?
- 2. Clarify Eligibility Criteria** Feedback suggests that the eligibility criteria for accessing funded services is complicated and difficult to understand as the link takes you to the Care Act 2014. Can this be explained in clearer terms and put in a more prominent position on the site?
- 3. Explain What Help is Available** Respondents were unclear about what practical help could potentially be offered. Could this section be made clearer, and contain some practical examples/case studies?
- 4. Group Relevant Information Together** It was difficult to navigate to the section explaining how to organise an assessment. Our recommendation would be for this information to be on the Carer's Assessment page itself for ease of navigation.
- 5. Publish Contact Details Prominently** Our volunteers felt the generic contact information (main HCC phone number and web-form) was off-putting and didn't instil confidence that a response would be received. Preference for ease of contact would be a telephone number, and an email address for the department concerned. Can this be published on the same page?