

Carers of Adults with Learning Disabilities

Evaluation 2025/26

Introduction

Torbay Carers Service evaluated the experience of Carers of adults with a learning disability in winter 2025/26. Three questionnaires to cohorts of Carers aimed to understand the impact of support provided by Torbay Family Carers of Adults with Learning Disabilities (hereafter TFC), the experience of Carers of adults with learning disabilities who don't receive the specialist service from TFC, and finally Adult Social Care staff were asked about their experience of and relationship with the service.

Key findings

1. More than half of the people receiving support from TFC said the service helped to prevent their caring situation from reaching crisis point / breaking down.
2. 58% reported an improved relationship with Adult Social Care (ASC) due to support given by TFC (39% said it was much better).
3. Future plans for support for the cared for person were in place for 55% of respondents, but 25% said they were not and they need help with this.
4. Carers said that workers from TFC understood their needs extremely well on every occasion, compared to 40% extremely well and 30% quite well from ASC.
5. Staff from ASC were positive about the relationship with TFC and about outcomes when working with the team. Only 58% of respondents knew about TFC prior to completing the questionnaire though.

Method

This evaluation asked three separate groups for feedback on TFC or their needs as Carers. This was carried out online in an anonymous questionnaire and some physical copies were also received. The three groups questioned about the topic were:

- Carers receiving specialist support from TFC. 44 responses received.
- Carers registered on Torbay's Carers Register as caring for an adult with a learning disability who do not receive support from TFC. 64 responses received.
- Adult Social Care staff (both those who have and haven't worked with TFC). 35 responses received.

Each of the groups above provides a different angle to the wider picture about how well support to Carers of adults with learning disabilities meets the needs of Carers in Torbay. Key findings from each of the questionnaires are set out below and more detail appears in the appendices from page 5.

Summary:

Feedback from recipients of TFC gave a positive impression of the service's support for Carers. When asked how well the service has supported Carers in their caring role, the vast majority (63%) said the service answered 'completely', with a further 27% saying 'quite well'. 89% of respondents were either very happy with TFC's response times (79%) or quite happy (10%).

A key function of TFC is to support Carers' relationships with Adult Social Care (hereafter referred to as ASC). Carers reflected on TFC's impact on their relationship with ASC and 39% said it was 'much better', with a further 21% saying it is 'slightly better'. The remaining 42% said there had been no change.

TFC provided 96% of respondents with information they don't get from anywhere else, and the vast majority said the information supports their caring role.

38% of Carers reported that TFC's support helped prevent their caring situation from reaching crisis point 'completely', and 28% 'quite well'. This was achieved through problem solving and advice, talking to TFC/listening, talking to other Carers, and through providing information most commonly.

Carers found listening/being there and information, advice and signposting, and peer support the most valuable support.

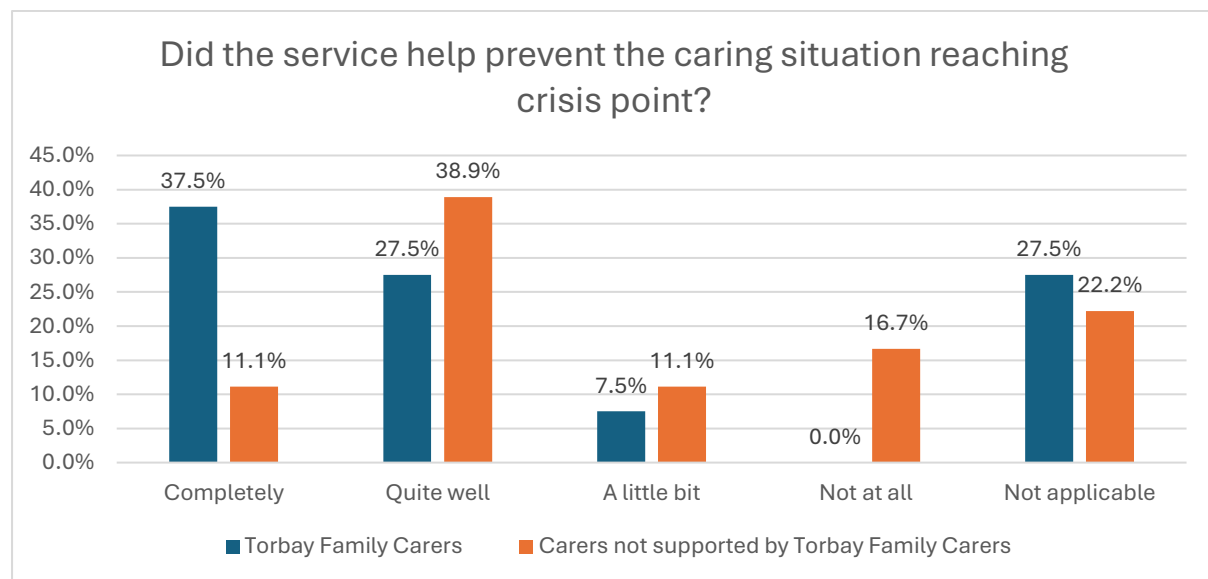
Carers Assessments offer a vital conversation to help Carers to take stock of their caring situation. Carers were asked if they had received an assessment from TFC and for their experience if they have had one. 39% of respondents had been offered and accepted an assessment. Feedback from those who had received the assessment were positive about it and with the follow-up afterwards.

Preparing for the future is a vital element of the support to Carers of adults with learning disabilities. 55% of Carers supported by TFC said they felt adequate plans were in place for the care of the person they support. 25% said they did not have adequate plans and they need support.

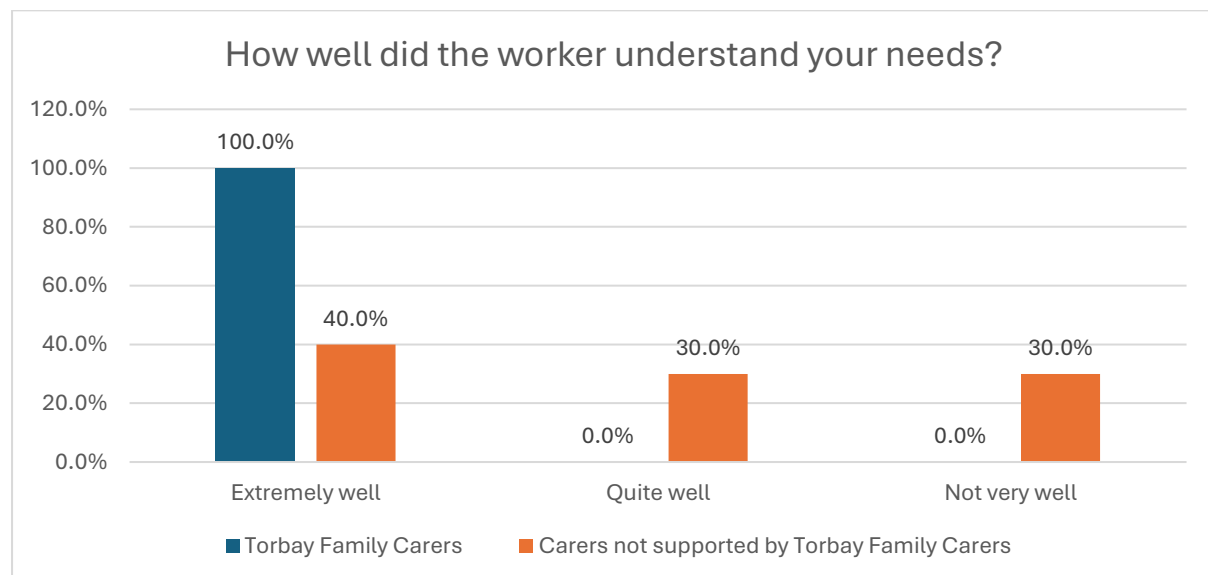
Carers of adults with learning disabilities who do not receive support from TFC fed back about their experience of general support received from Carers Services and ASC. A minority (38%) receive support from ASC and of this group the majority said their relationship with ASC was neither good or bad (53%), with 37% saying their relationship was either very good or good. Concerns with ASC focused on communication issues and positives were about having good people in ASC.

Carers were asked if ASC helped to prevent their caring situation reaching crisis point. The most common response (39%) was 'to some extent'. There is a comparative chart below with TFC and Carers supported by ASC, but not TFC below. It shows there is a

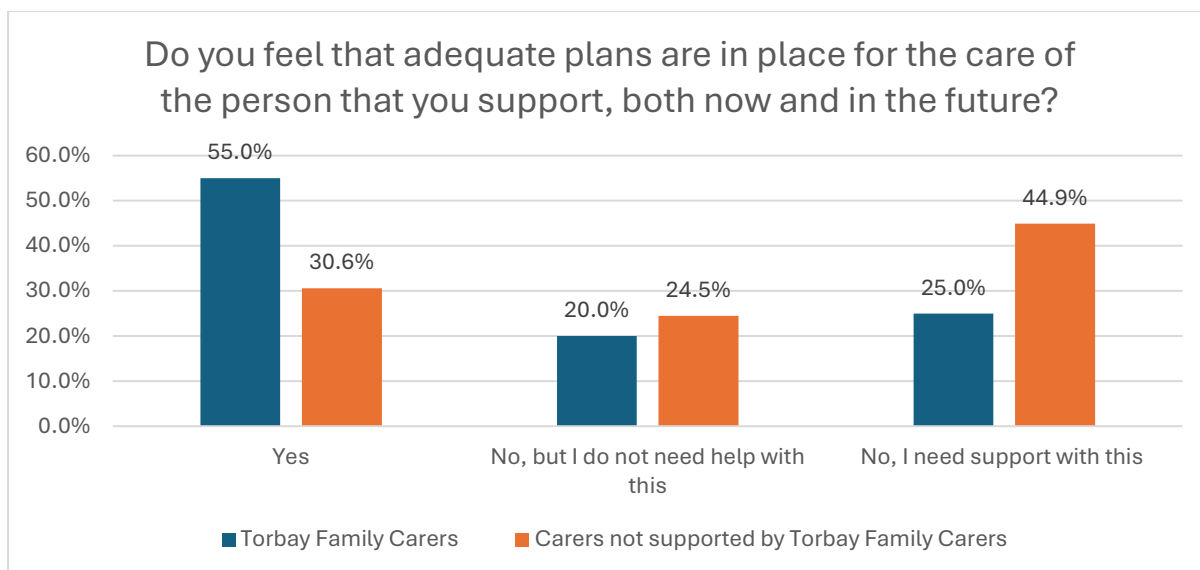
higher percentage of Carers receiving support that helps avoid reaching crisis amongst people receiving support from TFC.



A smaller percentage of Carers who received support from ASC were offered a Carers' Assessment (six out of 19 - 32% - from ASC compared to 17 out of 40 - 43% - from the TFC cohort). To compare how well Carers viewed the worker's understanding of their needs the following chart explains that Carers all felt the TFC workers understood their needs extremely well.



Carers were asked if there are adequate plans in place for the care of the person they support, both now and in the future. The chart below shows the findings, where TFC have a higher percentage of people who are satisfied with plans.



The staff survey explored the awareness of TFC from ASC team members, which showed just over half were aware of the team (58%). Those who had worked with TFC fed back positively about the service.

Feedback from ASC staff who had worked with TFC was mostly positive, saying outcomes were good (scoring 7.2 out of 10), and that positive partnership working took place (8.6 out of 10).

In summary, TFC received a lot of positive feedback from the people supported by the service and from professionals from ASC. The understanding of Carer experience from staff, and the avoidance of crisis were particularly positive reflections of the TFC service.

There were some areas that highlighted improvement opportunities, particularly with the profile of the service, frequency of Carers being offered assessments and future planning, so an action plan will be drawn up to address these.

If you would like to discuss this further, have any questions about the report or would like to view the more detailed report, please contact Rohan Davidson on 07909 873241 or rohan.davidson@nhs.net.