SELF-FUNDERS NAVIGATING SOCIAL CARE

The problem?

Older people and family members paying privately for social care ('self-funders') say they want help when navigating the system. Currently, information on websites and leaflets is all that many people draw upon.

When making care choices, often in distressing circumstances, people may need extra support.

We do not know what sort of help self-funders actually want.

The **PRESENCE** study conducted an experiment of preferences for hypothetical "care navigation services" (like a travel agents, but for social care) with **182 people**, and undertook **follow-up interviews with 37 people** to ask how they approach decisions about care.

Findings

- Generally, most self-funders were willing to pay for help with care navigation.
- Self-funders valued *what* navigation support was on offer, more than *how* it was provided.
- Information about quality, and help to 'think things through', were the most important features of navigation support.

The study found that people's preferences for care navigation fell into one of four categories:

- **48%** wanted comprehensive help and were willing to pay
- **20%** wanted fast access to information
- **18%** wanted affordable help to 'think things through'
- **14%** just wanted information from their local council.

Approaches to decision-making formed a typology

MORE CONFIDENT

LESS CONFIDENT

LESS ENGAGED

MORE ENGAGED

Reactive: Confident in decision-making but not planning ahead, and preferring to react to circumstances and make-do with what can be found quickly.

Proactive: Confidently engaged with care decisions, planning ahead, and using recommendations, trial-and-error and other active strategies.

Passive: Lacking confidence and disengaged with the process, following the simplest course and may not know their options.

Trying: Attempting to plan and navigate, but finding the process acutely challenging and too much to manage.

Managing the process was far easier where people had 'navigation capital' such as:

- Experience of working in public services
- Had a supportive family network
- Experience of advocating on behalf of others
- Had sources of recommendations

The Team

The PRESENCE study team comprised Mark Wilberforce, Rowan Jasper, Kate Baxter, Kate Gridley and Yvonne Birks (University of York), Sarah Tonks and Rich Morfitt (Hull City Council), Stephen Rogers (expert by experience) and Stuart Wright (University of Manchester). For more information, please contact **mark.wilberforce@york.ac.uk**.

Acknowledgement

This document presents independent research funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) School for Social Care Research. The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the NIHR or the Department of Health and Social Care.

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