

Commissioning or Providing Day Services

March 2022

Introduction

The data in this report was collected between 23rd February and 11th March 2022 as part of an online survey sent to every Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) in England. Directors were asked to report 'the number of people who they could commission or provide day services for' at the time of completing the survey. The questions were broken down into six different types of services: day centres respite, short breaks, home-based respite support; community support schemes, Shared Lives provision and other day service schemes. These day services questions had been asked by ADASS on three previous occasions: February 2020, October 2020, and April 2021.

The diversity of day services relates to their breadth of purposes, from developing independent living skills and confidence, to providing access to work, leisure, community and wellbeing activities, to providing social contact for isolated people, to giving respite breaks to carers.

Response rates have remained broadly similar over the period of the survey. 101 councils responded in March 2022; 89 responded in April 2021. The number of councils answering the day services questions ranged from 68 to 41 in March 2022, and between 71 and 35 in April 2021. The data sample is therefore comparable and enables us to draw reasonable conclusions about trends, as well as current levels of commissioning and provision. Beginning just before the COVID-19 pandemic became established, the survey gives a picture of how day services have been affected by the different waves of the pandemic.

This report presents totalled capacity figures from council responses. It also gives *estimated national figures*, extrapolated from the responses in order to present what we believe to be a useful picture of the state of day services. Extrapolated figures have been calculated using the average (mean) of the responses, multiplied by the number of local authorities in England with adult social care responsibilities (152). These figures are for illustrative purposes, and should be treated with some caution, particularly given the wide and uneven spread of values within councils' responses, from low tens to low thousands, and the caveats provided by some responding councils that their figures are estimates, arrived at to fit the survey categories.

Day Services Breakdown

1. Day Services: community support schemes

Directors who responded (n.42) to the March 2022 survey reported the capacity to commission or provide community support schemes for 11,691 people. If this were to be replicated nationally, it would equate to 42,310 people across all local authorities.

In April 2021, directors who had responded (n.42) reported a capacity of 8,090, with an extrapolated estimate of 29,278 across all local authorities. The national estimated figure has

therefore increased by 44.51% - a significant rebound in capacity that more than recovers the position of February 2020 (31,177).

2. Day Services: home-based respite

Directors who responded (n.43) to the latest survey report that they were able to commission or provide home-based respite support for 6,500 people. If this was replicated nationally, it would equate to 22,952 people across all local authorities.

In April 2021, directors who had responded (n. 35), reported that they were able to commission or provide home-based respite support for 3,202 people, translating into extrapolated estimate of 13,906 across all local authorities. The national estimated figure has therefore increased by 65.24% since April 2021, and now stands considerably above pre-pandemic levels (4,905 in February 2020). The substantial scale of this increase lends weight to the observation made at the time of the last report, that directors appear to be investing heavily in home-based respite in part to substitute for other types of support.

3. Day services: respite/ short break facilities

In March 2022, Directors who responded (n.57) report that they were able to commission or provide respite/ short break facilities for 4,223 people. If this were to be replicated nationally, it would equate to 11,248 people across all local authorities.

In April 2021, directors who had responded (n. 55), reported that they were able to commission or provide respite/ short break facilities support for 4,035 people, with an extrapolated figure of 11,151 across all local authorities. The national estimated figure has therefore increased by 0.86% since April 2021.

4. Day services: other day service schemes

Directors who responded (n.41) to the March 2022 report that they were able to commission or provide other day services schemes for 6,539 people. If this were to be replicated nationally, it would equate to 24,168 people across all local authorities.

In April 2021, directors who had responded (n. 36), reported that they were able to commission or provide home-based respite support for 3,245 people, with an extrapolated figure of 13,331 across all local authorities. The national estimated figure has therefore increased by 81.85% since April 2021.

5. Day services: shared lives

Directors who responded (n.68) in March 2022 report that they were able to commission Shared Lives schemes for 3,057 people. If this were to be replicated nationally, it would equate to 6,840 people across all local authorities.

In April 2021, directors who had responded (n. 58), reported that they were able to commission Shared Lives schemes for 1,945 people, with an extrapolated figure of 5,097 across all local authorities. The national estimated figure has therefore increased by 25.48% since April 2021.

6. Day services: day centres

In March 2022, Directors who responded (n.67) recorded the capacity to commission day centre/services provision for 24,552 people. If this were to be replicated nationally, it would equate to 55,632 people across all local authorities.

In April 2021, directors who had responded (n.71) recorded the capacity to commission day centre/services for 27,382 people, with an extrapolated estimate of 58,621 people across all local authorities.

The data therefore shows a small decrease – 4.98% – in the availability of day centre places nationally in the ten months since April 2021. This suggests that the strong build up observed in the six months between October 2020 and April 2021, when day centres respite coming out of the first wave of COVID had been able to increase their capacity by 25.14%, has not been maintained, and directors are rather building capacity in other areas.

All local authorities' day service capacity	Apr-21	Apr-21 England (est.)	Mar-22	March-22 England (est.)	% Change in service availability from April-21
Day centres	27,382	58,621	24,552	55,700	-4.98%
Home-based respite support	3,202	13,906	6,500	22,978	65.24%
Community support schemes	8,090	29,278	11,691	42,310	44.51%
Other day service schemes	3,245	13,331	6,539	24,242	81.85%

Summary

The figures reported by this survey show that councils have re-built their day service support offer since April 2021, but that their offer is now less reliant on day centres. IPC limitations and uncertainty, and anxieties on the part of some families and service users have played a role in suppressing day centre 'recovery'. Many service users are still at heightened risk from COVID, and some of these are choosing not to re-engage with day centres.

The more fundamental reason for the shift away from day centre respite, however, is the long-standing desire to provide a more diverse and sustainable community-based offer. Although the pandemic brought serious disruption and hardship, it also demonstrated that it was possible to support people in better, and more personalised ways. The respite offered by traditional day centre service models is still important for some, but it forms a less significant element of an ambitious support offer. In the words of one council, 'respite is only a secondary by product of the main purpose' of day services – which is supporting people to engage in health-promoting activities, contribute to their community and develop independent living skills.'

ADASS

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Social Services 2020
18 Smith Square,
Westminster,
London
SW1P 3HZ
Charity Reg. No 299 154
Tel: 0207 664 3239

For all enquiries, please contact:
teams@adass.org.uk

Contact and Follow ADASS:

