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Meeting local information needs with ASCS and PSS SACE data

What MAX found

The MAX project has generated a wealth of information on how local authorities (LAs) use the ASCS and PSS SACE surveys to inform their service development and policies in social care for adults and carers. All LAs used data from these surveys to complete their ASCOF returns.

We wanted to know

- what challenges the LAs faced
- what solutions they had found and
- how MAX could help support LAs to make more use of the survey data

ASCS: Adult Social Care Survey

PSS SACE: Personal Social Services Survey of Adult Carers in England

ASCOF: Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework

One hundred and thirty-nine people from 95 LAs have engaged in MAX activities between April 2013 and March 2014. One challenge identified by the LAs was analysing the survey data to address local questions.

- 60% wanted support in analysing local ASCS data
- 51% wanted support in analysing local PSS SACE data

While just over half of the participating LAs found analysing the local data to be a challenge, others had taken this forward locally. To get more details about the questions raised and the analysis they used, we re-interviewed LA analysts in three areas: a metropolitan borough, a county in the north of England, and an inner-London borough. Single-page case studies were developed for each LA and are included in a short report that can be accessed here [ADD LINK]

Can we analyse data to improve strategic planning?

Local Authority A gave two examples of how linking ASCS data with other information could provide a fuller picture. This LA was interested in identifying the benefits of Direct Payments (DP) and increasing the number of residents using them. They analysed DP recipients' comments and benchmarked ASCOF scores against other areas that appeared to be more successful in implementing DPs.

This LA was also interested in informing strategic planning by identifying instances of good practice in services for carers and service improvements. The analyst mapped PSS SACE respondents' comments onto *Think Local Act Personal* statements and rated them as positive, negative or neutral.

Can we analyse data to reduce outcome variations inside the LA?

Local Authority B was particularly interested in outcome differences within their boundaries. They generated district-level ASCS/ASCOF scores to serve as a springboard for discussions about probable causes and possible actions. They also combined information from ASCS with their own data to explore the links between rural living, social isolation and poor transportation. Findings from this analysis helped them think about the types of services that would provide opportunities for activity and inclusion in smaller towns.

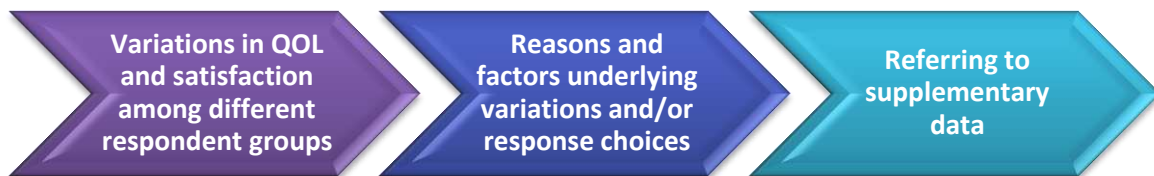
Can we analyse data to help understand clients' quality of life?

Local Authority C looked at their ASCS data to identify what might be associated with social care related quality of life (SCRQOL) and whether there were any client group differences in SCRQOL. The LA had been monitoring changes in SCRQOL over several years and, while there had been improvements in satisfaction, SCRQOL scores had not improved. This LA also used cross-tabulations and analysed comments recorded on ASCS to look at what factors might influence feelings of satisfaction and safety. Similar analyses were undertaken using the PSS SACE data.

How MAX can help

These three local authorities had identified issues that were of concern locally. They had then considered how their data – including ASCS and PSS SACE – might help them find answers. Commissioning and procurement teams, senior management teams, Safeguarding Adults Boards, and service design teams all benefited from the additional information.

How can this help the MAX project? The figure below identifies the three specific analytic tasks – rather than the topics – that the LAs have undertaken. These will help the MAX team to think about what would be helpful to put in a toolkit to support additional analyses.



Can you help the MAX team?

We are recruiting members for consultation panels that will help develop the toolkits. We will use workshops and an online forum: you can find more information here [ADD LINK AND DATES]. If you would like to take part in these discussions, or have any comments about these blogs, please do get in touch either by [email](#) or by calling Clara Heath on 01227 823963.

More information about the MAX project is available at www.maxproject.org.uk.

Disclaimer: The research on which this blog is based is commissioned and funded by the Policy Research Programme in the Department of Health. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Department.