

ASCOT
adult social care outcomes toolkit

Measuring the outcomes of social care.

Ann-Marie Towers, June 2021.

Aims of adult social care

Adult social care aims to provide essential care and practical support to adults who are having difficulties with activities of daily living (e.g. washing, dressing, cooking, shopping).

It is often (not always) long-term and compensatory in function, meeting the needs of those unable to do this for themselves.

Client groups

Users of adult social care in England are often broken down into 'client groups':

- Older adults (age 65 years +)
 - Biggest users of adult social care
- Younger (or working age) adults (19-64 years)
 - Physical and sensory disabilities
 - Mental or physical illness
 - Intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Informal carers.

The ASCOT

- Adult Social Care Outcomes Toolkit (ASCOT)
- Measures of ‘social care-related quality of life’ for adults who use services *and* their carers
- Developed by researchers at the **University of Kent**
 - Rigorous development process
 - Involved service users, carers and professional stakeholders (local authorities, NHS Digital, DHSC)

The ASCOT measures

- Service user measures
 - Interview questionnaire
 - Self-completion questionnaire
 - Mixed-methods (care homes)
 - Easy Read
 - Proxy
 - Care planning/assessment and review
- Informal carers
 - Interview and self-completion questionnaire
 - Care planning/assessment and review



Future measures

- Easy Read for older adults
 - Seeking funding
 - High demand
 - Cognitive decline (and dementia) or very old age.
- Using ASCOT in Care Planning
 - Ann-Marie Towers and Nick Smith (user measures)
 - Stacey Rand (carer measures)

The ASCOT service user domains



Dignity

Control over daily life

Occupation

Social participation

Personal safety

Accommodation cleanliness

Personal cleanliness

Food and drink

Outcome states

- Each domain has **four** outcomes states
 - **Ideal** (person's wishes/preferences are met)
 - **No unmet needs** (it's ok, mustn't grumble)
 - **Some unmet needs** (affect QoL)
 - **High unmet needs** (affect mental/physical health)
- Conceptualised as 'response options'
- Person chooses which response option best suits their situation.
- Examples....

Food and Drink

Thinking about the food and drink you get, which of the following best describes your situation?

- I get all the food and drink I like when I want.
- I get adequate food and drink at ok times.
- I don't always get adequate or timely food and drink.
- I don't always get adequate or timely food and drink, and I think there is a risk to my health.

Food and drink

- I get all the food and drink I like when I want.
- I get adequate food and drink at ok times.
- I don't always get adequate or timely food and drink.
- I don't always get adequate or timely food and drink, and I think there is a risk to my health.
- Ideal State
 - Individual preferences are met.
- No (unmet) needs
 - Mustn't grumble.
- Some (unmet) needs
 - Affecting quality of life.
- High (unmet) needs
 - Health risk.

Social participation

Thinking about how much contact you have with people you like, which of the following statements best describes your social situation?

- I have as much social contact as I want with people I like.
- I have adequate social contact with people.
- I have some social contact with people, but not enough.
- I have little social contact with people and feel socially isolated.

Social participation

- I have as much social contact as I want with people I like.
- I have adequate social contact with people.
- I have some social contact with people, but not enough.
- I have little social contact with people and feel socially isolated.
- Ideal State
 - Individual preferences are met.
- No (unmet) needs
 - Mustn't grumble.
- Some (unmet) needs
 - Affecting quality of life.
- High (unmet) needs
 - Health risk.

ASCOT Scores

Social care-related quality of life (SCRQoL) scores derived from ASCOT:

- Current SCRQoL
- Expected SCRQoL
- SCRQoL gain

Current SCRQoL

- What the person's SCRQoL is like now.
- Can be asked at 'assessment', as a baseline.
- Often asked when services already in place.
- Provides a snapshot of the person's SCRQoL.
- All ASCOT tools measure this:
 - Self-completion questionnaires, interviews
 - ER, mixed-methods in care homes and proxy.
- 9 questions:
 - One question per domain (8) + a filter Q.

Measuring impact

- Really difficult to measure the impact of care and support.
- Lots of things can affect people's quality of life. How do we attribute it to the service?
- First step is to have domains that are sensitive to the impact of care and support (tick!).
- The second is to measure quality of life without services and support in place.....

The counterfactual

- This is what the person's life would be like without services and support.
- Often done using Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs).
- Not always practical for lots of reasons.
- Estimate it by asking the person to think about what their life would be like without services.

Expected SCRQoL

- Assumes no other help steps in.
- Highly correlated with the person's ability to meet their own needs.
- Only measured in the interviews and mixed-methods tools.
- Not recommended for self-completion.
- Best illustrated by an example...

Food and drink (current)

5. *Thinking about the food and drink you get, which of the following statements best describes your situation?*

Interviewer prompt: If needed, please prompt: *When answering the question, think about your situation at the moment.*

Please tick (☑) one box

I get all the food and drink I like when I want

I get adequate food and drink at OK times

I don't always get adequate or timely food and drink

I don't always get adequate or timely food and drink, and I think there is a risk to my health

Food and drink (expected)

6. *Imagine that you didn't have the support and services from <<EXAMPLE>> that you do now and no other help stepped in. Which of the following would then best describe your situation with regard to food and drink?*

Interviewer note: It is important that respondents do not base their answers on the assumption that any other help steps in; please emphasise this to interviewees.

Reassure if necessary: *Please be assured that this is purely imaginary and does not affect the services you receive in any way.*

Please tick (☑) one box

I would get all the food and drink I like when I want

I would get adequate food and drink at OK times

I wouldn't get adequate or timely food and drink

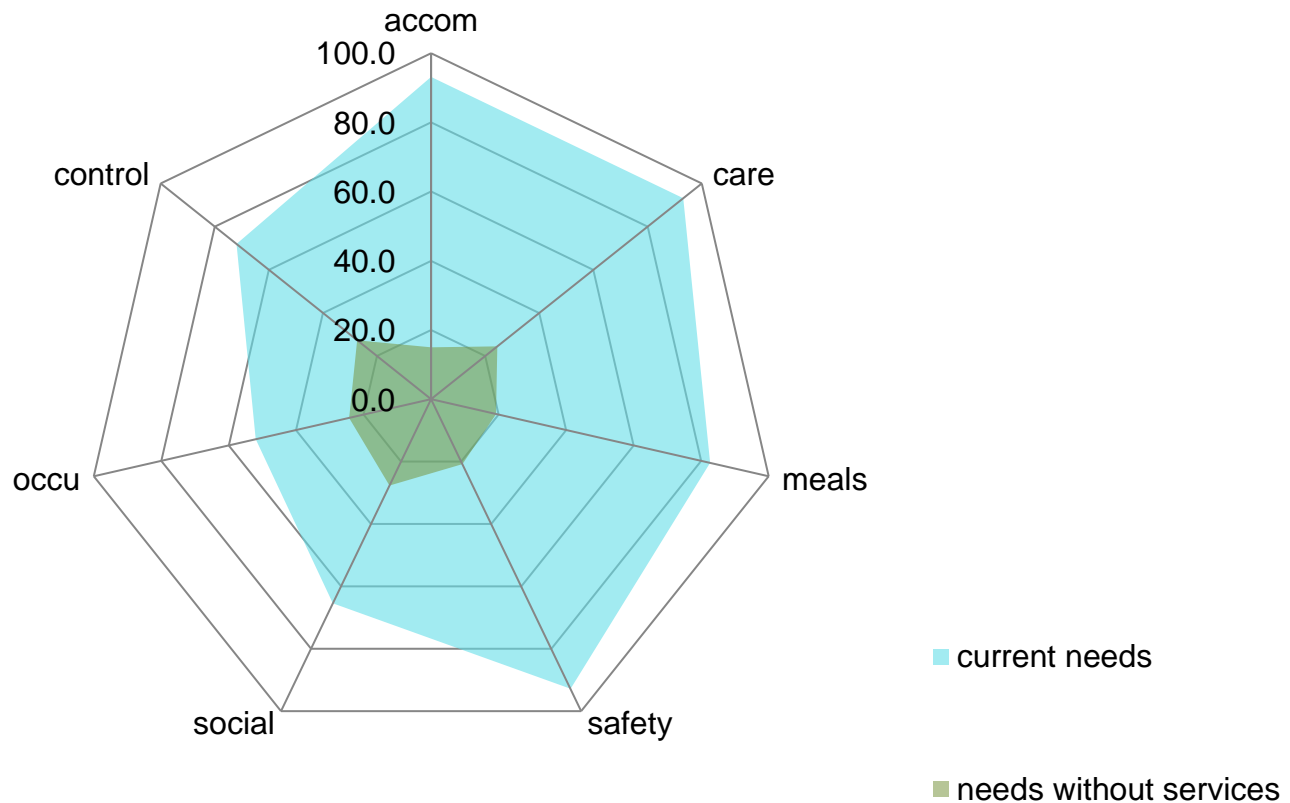
I wouldn't get adequate or timely food and drink,
and I think there would be a risk to my health

Estimating impact

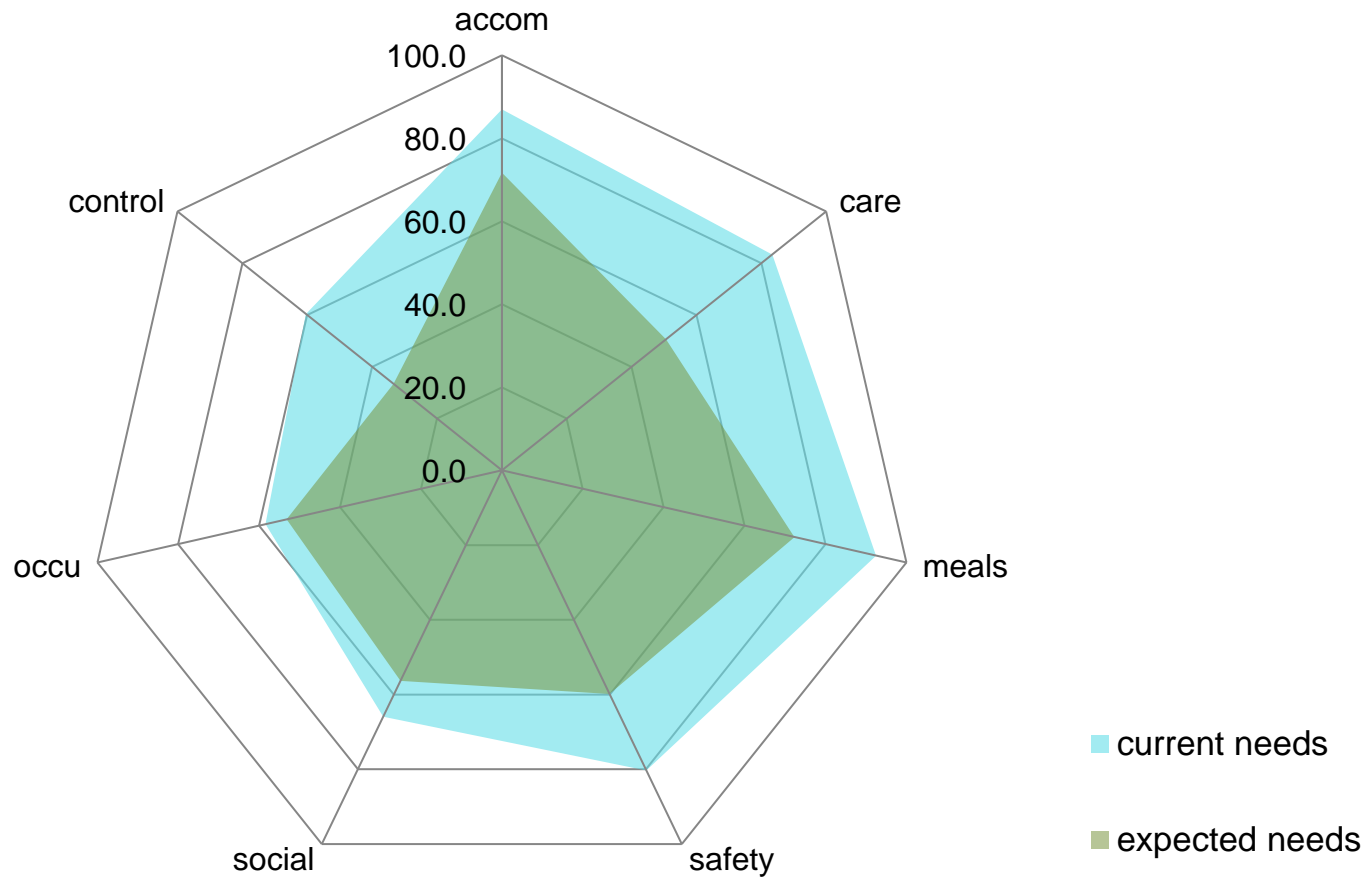
Current SCRQoL – expected SCRQoL = Gain

- This is a method for estimating the impact the service is having on the person's quality of life.
- Useful when it is not possible to have a control or comparison group.
- Helps to visualise this information....

Older care home residents' needs and outcomes in England



Older home care users' needs and outcomes in England



ASCOT summary

- All ASCOT tools can be used to measure current SCRQoL.
 - What a person's life is like now.
- The interviews and mixed-methods can be used to estimate expected SCRQoL.
 - What a person's life would be like without services.
- Together they can be used to estimate the impact of the service.

Use of ASCOT data in UK

- Social care research
<https://www.pssru.ac.uk/ascot/references/>
- UK policy and practice:
 - ASCOF indicators
 - Assessment and review in Northern Ireland
 - Assessment and review in some LAs in England
 - Plans to pilot in Scotland
 - By some providers (growing)

International use

- Australia, Japan, China, Italy, Austria, Finland, Denmark, Netherlands.
- Used in research and to inform policy
- Used in practice by providers in Australia
 - Care planning conversations in aged care
- If you are interested in using ASCOT for a research study or finding out more:
 - <https://www.pssru.ac.uk/ascot/frequently-asked-questions/>

Overview

- High levels of demand for social care around the world.
- Historically, very little in the way of outcome measurement in social care.
- Increase the evidence base for social care services and interventions.
- Overview of ASCOT
 - Example of the first (and only) outcome measure for social care world-wide. Developed here at Kent.



Thank you for listening

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