



# Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

## Introduction

This EqIA is for:

Further expansion of Assistive Technology (AT) to promote independence

Details are set out:

C08 Option for Change

Officers undertaking the assessment:

Mark Douglas, AT Manager

Assessment approved by:

Caroline Baria, Service Director, Strategic Commissioning, Access and Safeguarding

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The Public Sector Equality Duty which is set out in the Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The purpose of carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment is to assess the impact of a change to services or policy on people with protected characteristics and to demonstrate that the Council has considered the aims of the Equality Duty.

## Part A: Impact, consultation and proposed mitigation

### 1 What are the potential impacts of proposal? *Has any initial consultation informed the identification of impacts?*

The proposal will seek to provide cost effective care and improve the independence and dignity of vulnerable adults eligible for community care services. The nature of many assistive technology (AT) interventions means that older people with dementia will be particularly targeted by this initiative.

This approach is consistent with the aims of the Adult Social Care Strategy which has already been subject to consultation, and included specific references to the use of AT to provide cost effective care. AT is used to help increase the independence of vulnerable older people and people with dementia by reducing the need for more intrusive care and support, and as such, it should have a positive impact. However, some people may perceive the use of AT as resulting in a reduction in support.

The use of AT solutions to provide care and support will be dependent on each individual and their carers agreeing to the use of such equipment and therefore individual choice will be maintained. Where an individual is assessed under the Mental Capacity Act as lacking the ability to make a decision, a Best Interest Assessment will be undertaken.

**2 Protected Characteristics: Is there a potential positive or negative impact based on:**

Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Pregnancy & maternity	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Race <small>including origin, colour or nationality</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Sexual orientation <small>including gay, lesbian or bisexual</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact

**3 Where there are potential negative impacts for protected characteristics these should be detailed including consideration of the equality duty, proposals for how they could be mitigated (where possible) and meaningfully consulted on:**

How do the potential impacts affect people with protected characteristics <i>What is the scale of the impact?</i>	How might negative impact be mitigated or explain why it is not possible	How will we consult
<p>The use of AT is not fully understood – and it may be perceived negatively</p>	<p>Purpose of AT interventions is to increase independence. Individuals will need to consent to the use of AT and therefore will have the option to decline the service.</p>	<p>Individual consultation will take place with affected service users.</p> <p>Where a person is assessed as lacking capacity to make a decision a Best Interest Assessment will be undertaken.</p> <p>Two consultation events will be held on 29/01/16 with open invitation to carers and older people from the Older Persons Action Group, local carer groups, the Carers Implementation Group and carer registers held by NCC and the Carers Hub. Consultation at the Jan 2016 Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Board.</p> <p>Consultation published on the NCC website with widespread local publicity inviting direct comments from the public.</p>

## Part B: Feedback and further mitigation

### 4 Summary of consultation feedback and further amendments to proposal / mitigation

Comments were received that the use of Assistive Technology (AT) needs to be promoted more widely as some people do not know about it. A positive comment about increasing use of AT was made at the Learning Disability & Autism Partnership Board, "This is a good idea, it can help people be more independent".

A specific question was raised through the website consultation, "What measures will you put in place to ensure a person with dementia fully understands the implications of AT, and that they continue to understand the change?". Existing processes in adult social care mean that assessment staff will always assess if a person with dementia has the capacity to make an informed decision about the use of AT and will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that the person has been given several opportunities to demonstrate their understanding. Where it is assessed that the person lacks capacity to make a decision about use of AT, a Best Interest Assessment will be conducted under the terms of the Mental Capacity Act.

A further comment was made that, "if a person has been assessed as lacking capacity to make a decision, we do not agree that an assessment resulting in a reduction of in-person support and the use of AT would be in the best interests of the person - how will you monitor how the person is doing?". Where AT is used to manage risks at home (e.g 'wandering' at night, fires at home, falls) this can often be more effectively managed using AT because it can continuously monitor for these risks in a way that is not possible using periodic home care visits. AT can immediately identify risks as they occur and automatically notify a 24 hour monitoring service.

Existing processes and mitigating actions address the concerns raised through the public consultation. However, further action needs to be taken to review the marketing of AT, to more effectively promote its role in managing risks and improving independence for older people and people with disabilities.

Completed EqlAs should be sent to [equalities@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@nottsc.gov.uk) and will be published on the Council's website.