Picking Your Pathway

Consultation Event Report
Northwich, 17 July 2008

INDEPENDENT LIVING ALTERNATIVES ila

ARC Association for Real Change

Picking your Pathway consultation event held in Northwich 17th July 2008.

19 people attended the consultation. 7 were PAs and 12 were service users or family carers responsible for support for a person with learning disabilities.

Feedback from Exercises

Skills, Knowledge and approaches

The groups were given cards with the following skills, approaches or knowledge and asked to say whether they were important, very important or most important.

	Important	Very Important	Most Important
Understands the social model of disability	1	6	12
Good sense of humour	5	6	4
Friendly	8	4	6
First Aid skills	7	3	6
Cheerful	5	5	8
Knowing my likes and dislikes	2	5	11
Treating me with respect	0	4	14
Confidentiality	1	5	13
Good at communicating	0	4	14
Good at listening	1	7	10
Honesty	0	5	12
Can help meet my cultural needs	1	5	3
A good cook	5	5	2
Moving and handling skills	9	1	2
How to look after my health	2	1	16
Good knowledge of community facilities	11	3	3
Good at record keeping	12	3	0
Knowing how to protect me from abuse	2	7	10
Budgeting skills	11	4	3
Good at support with continence	12	2	1
Nursing skills	6	0	1

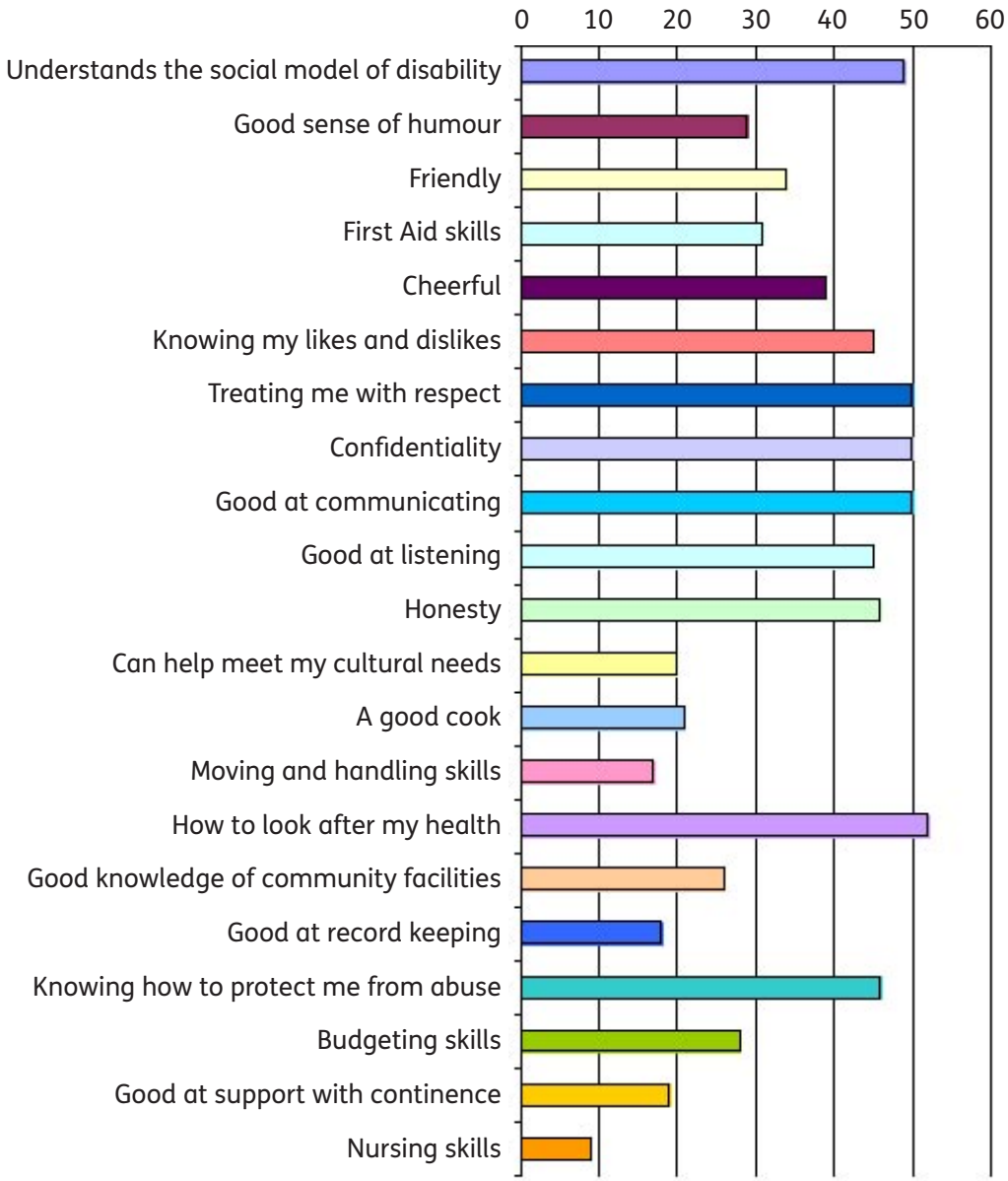
Most Important

'How to look after my health' was voted as high priority (16) 'Treating me with respect' and 'Good at communicating' were also considered high priority (14) with 'confidentiality' coming next with 13 votes.

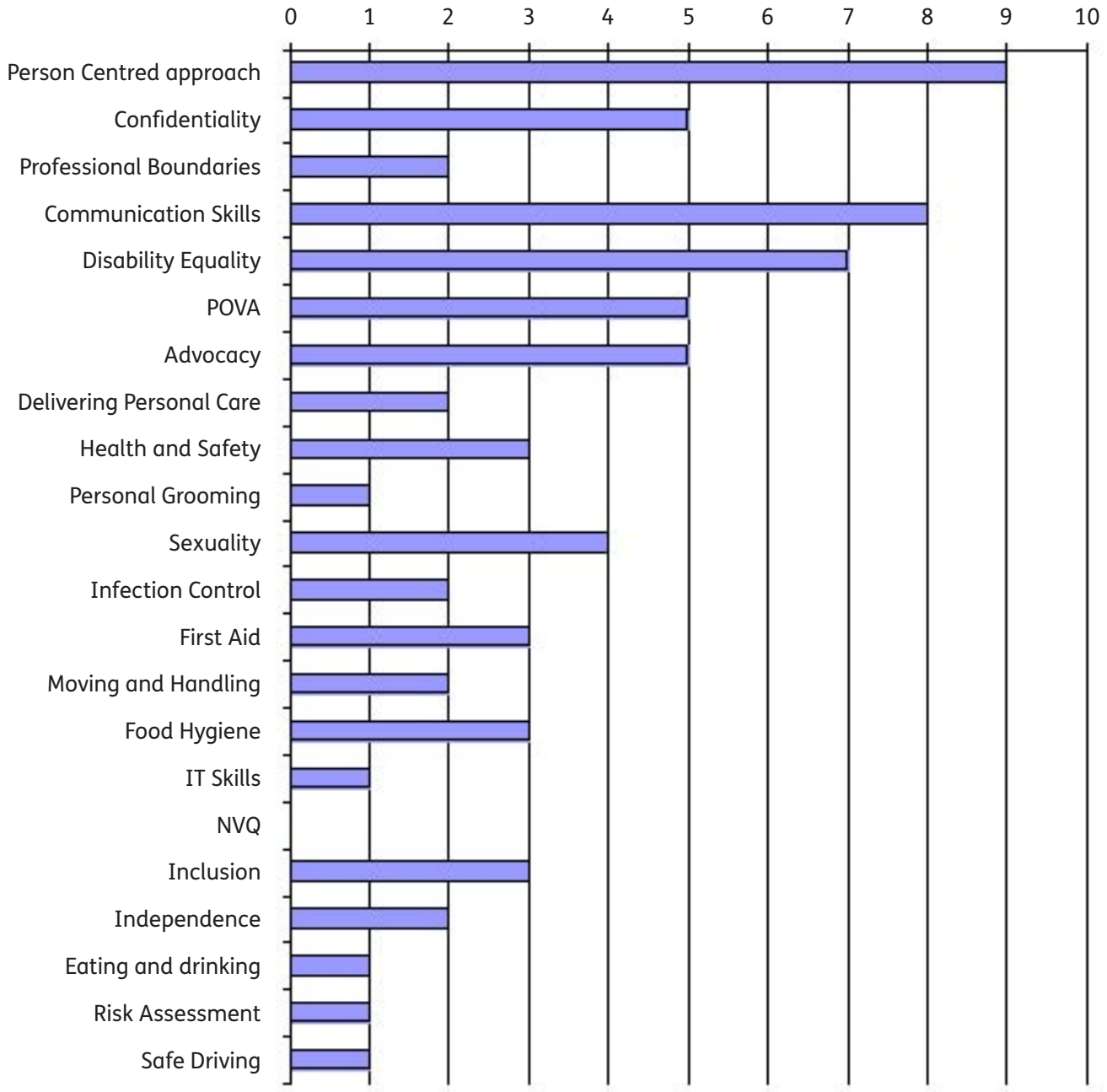
Very Important

'Good at listening' was considered 'Very Important' with 7 votes but this also earned 10 votes in 'Most Important'. 'Knowing how to protect me', 'honesty' and 'Understands the social model of disability' were also very high on the priorities list with many votes being split between 'Very Important' and 'Most important'.

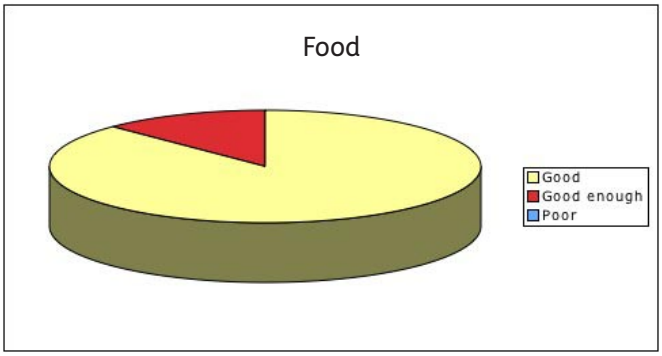
We gave points for each category – Most important = 3 points, very important = 2 points and important = 1 point.

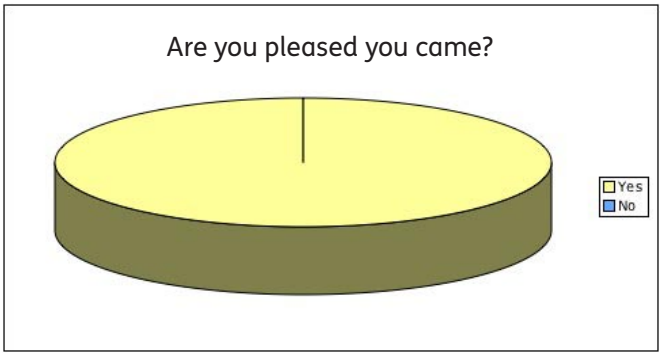


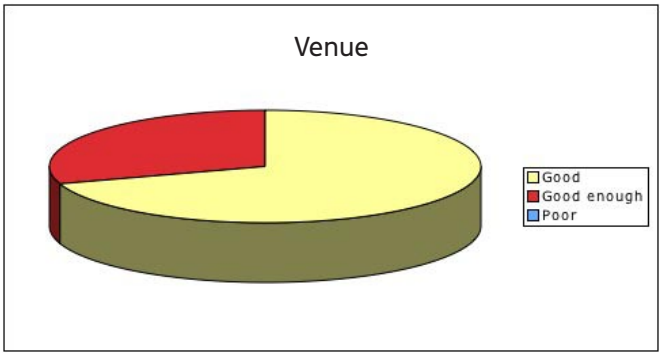
The groups were asked to consider the essential training needs for PAs on the prepared cards and complete blank cards for any that are missing. Form the cards into a diamond shape, with the most important at the top and the 2nd important below etc. Some groups thought that more than one category was the most important and so the diamond shape did not always evolve. We took the top 3 tiers from each group and gave them points. Tier 1 =3 points, tier 2 = 2 points and tier 3 = 1 point.

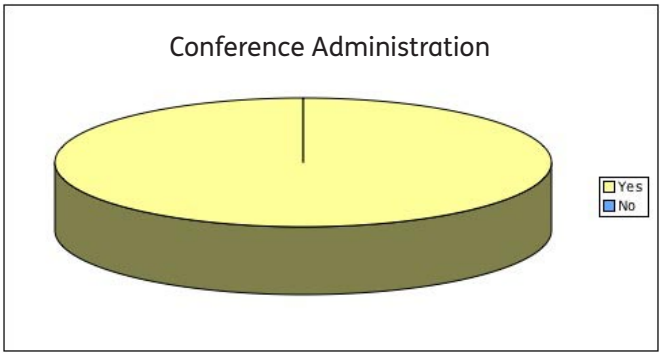


Evaluation of the event and comments









Comments

Best Bits: Discussing views with PA Users, Admin support, parents guardians and trainers: Helped build a bigger picture; All of it; Discussing different points of view to get a well rounded picture of what training is and could be available; Group discussions, sharing ideas/suggestions regarding PAs skills and qualities; Communication with other users and PAs opinions; Advice and guidance gained & also evaluating the importance of various training suggestions (the diamond); The fact that the meeting was relaxed.

Bits that should have been left out: None; It was all relevant.

Should have included: Not Sure.

Comments about the event: Hope my input has been useful to your research; Very good, I look forward to the report and its outcomes; Good day, informative; It was very informative, a lot of FAQs answered; Generally very good, felt comments were taken on board and learned a lot.

Is there anything ARC or ILA can help with? Training, information and advice is always very useful!; Training info please; Training.

Additional comments and issues

1) Performance review, assessment and supervision need to be included in Essential Training for PA Users/Employers.
2) Risk Assessment training needs to encourage risk sensitive but not risk averse behaviour.
3) All training must take place within ordinary life principles.
4) PA Users should be encouraged to attend training alongside PAs whenever possible.
5) A PA's personality is more important than their training.
6) A PA's person specification is more important than their job description.
7) Training should, wherever possible, be delivered by disabled trainers.
8) There needs to be a level playing field for funding training, e.g. local authorities provide free training for PAs employed by them, but independent PA Users/employers are not allocated a budget for training.
9) PA Users should deliver as much of their PAs training as they are capable of. This informal training needs to be recognised and valued.
10) PA Users should be encouraged to become accredited as trainers, coaches and mentors.
11) More schools need to be encouraged to provide appropriate vocational training, such as Diplomas and GNVQs.
12) A full range of training methods (e.g. distant, on line, etc.) need to be available.
13) PAs/PA Users need a forum in which they can network and share best training practice.