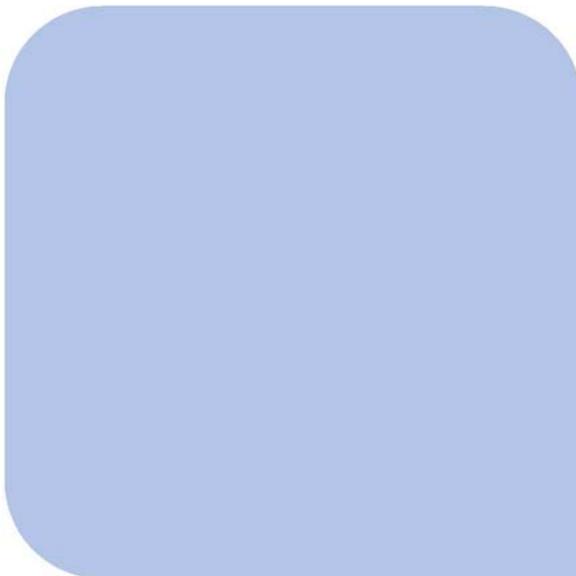


# Research into the impact of SCIE



The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) was established by Government in 2001 to improve social care services for adults and children in the United Kingdom. We achieve this by identifying good practice and helping to embed it in everyday social care provision.

We work to:

- disseminate knowledge-based good practice guidance
- involve service users, practitioners, providers and policy makers in advancing and promoting good practice in social care
- enhance the skills and professionalism of social care workers through our tailored, targeted and user-friendly resources.

# Research into the impact of SCIE

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# 1 Summary

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) is an independent organisation established by government in October 2001 to improve social care services for adults and children in the United Kingdom. SCIE achieves this by identifying good practice and helping to embed it in everyday social care provision.

SCIE has established a series of projects to measure its recognition and profile within the social care community, to integrate regular performance monitoring into its governance, and to understand the extent and nature of its impact on its stakeholders. The work is an integral part of SCIE's accountability to the public and to central government.

SCIE's long-term plan is to assess whether its work makes a difference to the experiences of adults and children who use services. Such differences might be termed 'final outcomes'. As a first step, however, SCIE wished to look at intermediate outcomes. This report presents the key findings of SCIE's impact research, which focuses on the extent of use of its resources by stakeholders, perceptions of quality and accessibility, and changes in knowledge, practice or policy linked to resources. SCIE consulted with its Partners' Council and Practice Partners' Network on the areas that should be subject to evaluation.

The research was carried out in 2006 by an independent consultancy, the Mersey Consortium working with GfK-NOP. It has been quality-assured by a SCIE advisory group including service users and researchers, and received approval from the Association of Directors of Social Services Research Group. This report is an abbreviated version of the technical report, by the Mersey Consortium, for SCIE.

The research has two components:

- **a survey** (mainly online) of stakeholders who have had some level of contact with SCIE and can use the internet, in 13 stakeholder categories. 1,394 questionnaires were received, giving a 34 per cent response rate.
- **case studies** which used qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate the impacts of (i) fostering dissemination events in 2005 (held in collaboration with the organisations research in practice, the Fostering Network, the Department for Education and Skills, and the Looked After Children Taskforce); (ii) a 'fostering collaboratives' action learning project with three fostering service providers; and (iii) resources promoting knowledge and best practice within social work education in five universities.

## 1.1 Key findings from the survey

The largest stakeholder categories among the 1,394 survey respondents were social work students (29 per cent of the sample), middle managers (15 per cent), senior managers (11 per cent), practitioners (10 per cent) and social care educators (10 per cent).

People in contact with SCIE use both its research and practical tools. Practice guides and knowledge reviews were the most commonly used text resources, with about 50 per cent of survey respondents reading or using each type of resource in the previous year. People in different stakeholder categories had different levels of use. For example, 84 per cent of educators had read or used a knowledge review and 78 per cent had read or used a practice guide, whereas 45 per cent of practitioners had read or used a knowledge review and 53 per cent had read or used a practice guide.

The great majority of survey respondents reported that its resources are easy or very easy to understand and were associated with positive impacts. For example, 76 per cent of people using a practice guide said it was easy or very easy to understand, 23 per cent that it was neither easy nor difficult ('OK'), and only one per cent that it was difficult or very difficult to understand. Eighty-one per cent of people using a practice guide reported improved knowledge/understanding, 50 per cent reported reflections on or changes in their own practice, and 19 per cent said that the guide had supported a change in their organisation's practice, policy or services. Four per cent or less of respondents using any text resource reported no impact, and three per cent or less reported a negative impact.

A high proportion (about 90 per cent) of the survey respondents had visited the main SCIE website, and about 60 per cent had visited Social Care Online. These figures are influenced by the fact that the survey was primarily web-based, and most respondents had email addresses and therefore internet access. Sixty-five per cent of visitors to the main SCIE website found it easy or very easy to use, with 33 per cent finding it OK, and only two per cent finding it difficult or very difficult to use. The main reason for not visiting Social Care Online was not being aware of it.

Some people in contact with SCIE value printed copies of resources in preference to online access. For example, eight per cent of survey respondents suggested that SCIE could produce more hard copies of resources and make less use of interactive formats.

Almost two thirds of survey respondents said that SCIE's London base has no impact or no negative impact, or has a positive impact, or they did not know that SCIE is in London. Respondents in North Wales, North West England, North East England, South Wales and Scotland were most likely not to be able to attend London meetings or said that it is difficult to meet with anyone

face to face, although SCIE arranges meetings and events both in London and other geographical areas.

Between 10 per cent and 17 per cent of respondents in South Wales, Northern Ireland and South West England said that SCIE is not in touch with what is happening in their locality. In contrast, only three per cent of those in North Wales said this, suggesting that locating a practice development post there has had a positive impact.

Fifty-nine per cent of survey respondents (including 12 out of 16 service users) agreed that SCIE is at the forefront of good practice in supporting service users, three per cent disagreed, and the remainder neither agreed nor disagreed. Forty-nine per cent of practitioners agreed that SCIE listens to them when planning and delivering its services, 31 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed, and 20 per cent said they did not know.

Between 60 per cent and 70 per cent of respondents said that SCIE's overall performance is excellent or good in relation to accessibility (61 per cent), usefulness (66 per cent), overall quality (68 per cent) and being up-to-date (68 per cent), with nearly all the remaining respondents using a rating of OK. Fifty-eight per cent of black and minority ethnic respondents and 61 per cent of disabled respondents viewed SCIE's overall performance on accessibility as excellent or good, compared with 61 per cent of all people in contact with SCIE.

When asked to rate their overall impression of SCIE services, social care educators (80 per cent) were the stakeholder category most likely to say very good or good, and policymakers (50 per cent) were the category least likely to say this. Thirteen out of 17 service users, 13 out of 24 carers, and 70 per cent of practitioners said that their overall impression of the services was very good or good. The stakeholder categories with more than three per cent of survey respondents saying that their overall impression of the services was poor or very poor were policymakers (seven per cent), service user representatives (seven per cent), and researchers (five per cent).

Thirty per cent or more of respondents suggested that SCIE could improve publicity and marketing, and could produce (i) more user-friendly summaries, (ii) more information on best practice, (iii) examples of social care policy from other countries, and (iv) case studies of the use of products in practice. Thirty-seven per cent of service user representatives, seven out of 17 service users, 11 out of 24 carers, and 11 out of 29 carer representatives would like more information for service users and carers on SCIE's website.

## **1.2 Key findings from the case studies**

The case studies give in-depth evidence of the processes of achieving resource use and impact among social care practitioners and managers, social work educators and social work students. They investigated whether,

and how, SCIE products are used, at the level of the individual and the organisation. In addition, the case studies gathered information on how resources might be improved in content, presentation, dissemination and implementation.

SCIE decided that these case studies should be in the areas of fostering practice and social work education. This was to cover SCIE resources that offer different levels of evidence to back them up, and to demonstrate a range of methods of engaging with the social care community.

Interviews with 13 participants at the 2005 fostering dissemination events (out of about 1000 people in total who attended the events) showed they valued the highlighting of key messages by speakers, the networking opportunities, and SCIE's collaboration with other organisations. Impacts included an organisation increasing education support for children in foster care, and the use of the SCIE fostering practice guide for service audit.

Ten of the 13 participants interviewed had not accessed the online SCIE fostering practice guide because of a dislike of computers, difficulties in using the SCIE website, no time, or preference for hard copy. The guide was highlighted in a presentation at the event, and participants were informed how to access it from the SCIE website, but no hard copies were produced.

The collaboratives project used an 'action learning' methodology in three service provider agencies, to support practice change in relation to the SCIE fostering practice guide. The three sites had very different experiences of the project, suggesting that the collaboratives methodology is not yet a replicable approach. There were common themes of wanting greater clarity from SCIE about the aims, methods, working process and role of the on-site coordinators.

The site with the most positive impacts already had an evidence-informed learning culture. Practitioners said that the work had reinforced their confidence and ability to advocate, leading to organisational impacts, for example changes in contracts with providers. Some practitioners would like the work extended to include other practitioners, foster carers, children and young people.

Few of the social work students, who took part in a case study of SCIE's impact at five social work degree institutions, had a high level of familiarity with SCIE resources. For example, some students remembered the introductory pack but had made little use of its contents. There was a higher degree of familiarity with SCIE among the 11 educators in the study, but limited experience of dialogue between SCIE and the social work education community.

Educators and students said that SCIE resources are competing for attention in a crowded marketplace of information, and suggested that SCIE should

develop personal relationships with them, target its resources, and explain its distinctiveness and independence. Students who had used the resources did so most often because of a recommendation by a tutor.

The social work educators who used the resources tended to like them and reported moderate impacts. Although over 40 per cent of the student survey respondents could not rate the extent of impact of SCIE resources, a similar proportion of these students reported impacts on their knowledge of social work, their understanding of social work, and their learning.

Students and educators appreciated the blend of electronic and hard copy resources, the integration of research and practice issues, and that resources are easily accessible, up-to-date and can point to new directions. Social Care Online was especially valued, but improvements were requested to the SCIE website, including a student chat room.

Taken together, the evidence from the case studies provides good examples of impacts, but indicates that more effort is required to achieve visibility and use before achieving impact. It is often difficult to isolate the impact of SCIE's work from other factors influencing practice and organisational change.

### **1.3 Implications**

The knowledge from this research equips SCIE to adapt its resources for different stakeholder groups, and shows impacts of SCIE in terms of intermediate outcomes. It also facilitates more effective dissemination and translation of SCIE resources into changed practice, learning and teaching in social care.

## 2 Introduction

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) is an independent organisation established by government in October 2001 to improve social care services for adults and children in the United Kingdom. SCIE achieves this by identifying good practice and helping to embed it in everyday social care provision.

SCIE works to:

- disseminate knowledge-based good practice guidance
- involve service users, practitioners, providers and policy makers in advancing and promoting good practice in social care
- enhance the skills and professionalism of social care workers through tailored, targeted and user-friendly resources.

SCIE has established a series of projects to measure its recognition and profile within the social care community, to integrate regular performance monitoring into its governance, and to understand the extent and nature of its impact on its stakeholders. The work is an integral part of SCIE's accountability to the public and to central government.

SCIE's long term plan is to assess whether its work makes a difference to the experiences of adults and children who use services. Such differences might be termed 'final outcomes'. As a first step, however, SCIE wished to focus on what might be termed intermediate outcomes:

- the extent of use of its resources by stakeholders
- changes in knowledge, practice or policy linked to use of resources
- perceptions of the quality and accessibility of its services
- perceptions of how SCIE works in partnership with others
- the processes by which SCIE may be influencing practice and social work education.

SCIE consulted with its Partners' Council and Practice Partners' Network on the areas that should be subject to evaluation. The research was carried out in 2006 by an independent consultancy, the Mersey Consortium working with GfK-NOP. It has been quality assured by a SCIE advisory group including service users and researchers, and received approval from the Association of Directors of Social Services Research Group. The research design was subject to review by the Liverpool Carers and Parents Forum.

The research has two components:

- **an impact questionnaire survey** of 1,390 stakeholders who have had some level of contact with SCIE in 13 stakeholder categories. This survey was mainly online, with a postal component for service users and carers without email addresses. The impact survey complements SCIE's recognition survey, which looked at the profile and visibility of SCIE among a larger population of stakeholders, including those who are not already using SCIE services or in contact with SCIE.
- **case studies** which used qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate the impacts of (i) fostering dissemination events in 2005, including the fostering resources made available at these events; (ii) a 'fostering collaboratives' action-learning project with three fostering service providers in 2005; and (iii) resources promoting knowledge and best practice within social work education in five universities.

This report is an abbreviated version of the technical report by the Mersey Consortium for SCIE.

The knowledge that SCIE has gained from this research enables it to consider how it can tune resources for different stakeholder categories, and provides evidence on impacts. It also facilitates more effective dissemination and translation of SCIE resources into changed practice, learning and teaching in social care.

## 3 Key findings from the survey

### 3.1 Survey aims and methodology

#### 3.1.1 Summary of survey objectives and design

The impact survey provides quantitative data about use, perceptions and impact of SCIE services among a large sample of people in contact with SCIE, mainly those with internet access. The research questions for the survey were:

- how far do people in contact with SCIE use its resources and products?
- what are their perceptions of the quality and accessibility of resources and products? What are their perceptions of how SCIE works in partnership with others, especially its relationship with service users and practitioners?
- do people in contact with SCIE identify changes in knowledge, practice or policy linked to use of SCIE resources?
- what effect, if any, is there as a result of SCIE having a London base?

The survey population was people in contact with SCIE in 13 defined stakeholder categories (see Table 1). SCIE sent an introductory letter to individuals on its Contacts Management System to tell them about the research and enable them to opt out of the research if they wished.

The Mersey Consortium then sent an email link to the online survey to all Contacts Management System contacts with current email addresses within these stakeholder categories (as coded on the Contacts Management System), excluding those who had opted out of the survey. It also posted a letter, questionnaire and stamped addressed envelope to about 90 service users and carers on the Contacts Management System who did not have email addresses. There were alternative formats of the questionnaire available on request, such as a hard copy version, telephone interview, large print, and translations into Braille and other languages.

Following two email/postal reminders and reminder telephone calls, the Mersey Consortium received 1,394 questionnaires (including 44 postal questionnaires) out of the 4,081 sent out, giving a 34 per cent response rate.

The stakeholder analysis presented in this report is by self-defined primary stakeholder category, region, ethnicity and gender, and for survey respondents who self-defined as disabled. Respondents were given the opportunity in the questionnaire to define themselves into primary and secondary stakeholder categories (their roles in relation to social care). Analysis by the primary stakeholder category was prioritised because, although some people in contact with SCIE may have a secondary role, their survey responses may be largely based on their primary role. For example, there was a different pattern of responses between people who self-defined

primarily as a service user or carer and those who chose such a category as a secondary role.

Where sub-samples consist of fewer than 30 respondents (e.g. service users, carers, service commissioners, people in Scotland), results are presented in terms of sample numbers (e.g. 4 people out of 24) rather than as percentages. At the time of the survey, SCIE did not have a formal role in Scotland, and so there are fewer stakeholders from Scotland on SCIE's Contacts Management System and in the impact survey sample than from the other countries of the UK.

### **3.1.2 Characteristics of the survey sample of people in contact with SCIE**

The largest primary self-defined stakeholder categories among the 1,394 respondents who took part in the impact survey were social work students (29 per cent of the sample), middle managers (15 per cent), senior managers (11 per cent), practitioners (10 per cent) and social care educators (10 per cent) (see Table 1). The high number of students reflects SCIE's work in 2005-06 to establish social work students as a major stakeholder group for SCIE, in particular giving them an opportunity to register with SCIE to receive email updates.

Thirty-nine per cent of the sample also defined themselves into a secondary stakeholder category. The stakeholder categories most likely to be secondary roles were carers, practitioners and social care educators.

There was a great diversity of organisational sectors in the sample. Reflecting the largest stakeholder categories, the organisational categories with the greatest number of survey respondents were local/national/regional government (17 per cent of the sample), statutory social care service providers (14 per cent), higher education institutions (nine per cent), voluntary social care service providers (seven per cent) and private/independent social care service providers (five per cent). The regions with the greatest number of survey respondents were London (14 per cent), South East England excluding London (12 per cent), North West England (12 per cent) and Yorkshire and Humber (11 per cent).

The sample also included:

- 997 women (72 per cent) and 397 men (28 per cent)
- 255 people from black and minority ethnic groups (18 per cent)
- 138 people (10 per cent) who self-defined as disabled or had some form of impairment or long-term health problem which affected their day to day activities.

**Table 1: Self-definitions of survey respondents into stakeholder categories in relation to social care**

	Percentage defining into category as primary role	Percentage defining into category as secondary role	Number in survey sample in stakeholder category (primary role)
Social work students	29%	2%	411
Middle managers (in organisations providing services)	15%	2%	204
Senior managers (in organisations providing services)	11%	1%	160
Social care educators	10%	4%	145
Practitioners (in organisations providing services)	10%	5%	139
Researchers or members of the development community ('researchers')	8%	3%	108
Service user representatives (involved in or working for a service users' group or representative organisation)	3%	3%	43
Policy makers	3%	3%	42
People working in the registration and inspection industry regardless of role ('registration and inspection')	3%	Less than 1%	40

**Table 1 continued**

Carer representatives (involved in or working for a carers' group or representative organisation)	2%	2%	29
Carers or supporters of a person using social care services ('carers')	2%	7%	24
Users of social care services ('service users')	1%	3%	17
Service commissioners	1%	2%	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>1,394</b>

Base: all survey respondents (percentages do not add to 100 per cent as one per cent of respondents answered 'do not know')

## 3.2 Key findings from the survey

### 3.2.1 Use of SCIE resources

As context for the findings in this section, 41 per cent of survey respondents had first been in touch with SCIE in the previous 12 months, and 16 per cent over three years before the survey.

People in contact with SCIE use both its research and practical tools. The main SCIE website ([www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk)) was the resource most likely to be visited or used by survey respondents in the previous year. This figure is influenced by the fact that the survey was primarily web-based, and most respondents had email addresses, and therefore internet access. Practice guides and knowledge reviews were the most commonly used text resources, with about 50 per cent of respondents reading or using each type of resource in the previous year. These figures are likely to reflect factors such as preferences for different types of resource, the relative numbers of resources of different types produced by SCIE, and the popularity of the topics chosen for each type of resource.

People in different stakeholder categories had different levels of use. For example, Tables 2 and 5 show that 84 per cent of educators (in contact with SCIE) had read or used a knowledge review and 78 per cent had read or used a practice guide, whereas 45 per cent of practitioners had read or used a knowledge review and 53 per cent had read or used a practice guide.

Tables 2–4 show the stakeholder categories most and least likely to have accessed each service type in the previous year. Among the groups of respondents, social care educators and (although there were only small numbers of them in the survey) service commissioners were especially likely to have read or used text resources (practice guides, knowledge reviews, SCIE reports, resource guides, research briefings and position papers). Social work students and (although there were only small numbers of them in the survey) carers were least likely to have read or used text resources.

In contrast to their relatively low use of text resources, social work students and practitioners were, along with social care educators, the respondent groups most likely to have visited or used Social Care Online in the previous year. As to be expected, social work students were most likely to have received or read the introductory pack for students.

Among the groups of respondents, carers, service users and policy makers were most likely to have had personal contacts with SCIE through projects, events, talks and exhibitions. Practitioners and social work students were least likely to have had these types of personal contacts with SCIE.

Table 5 looks at the data in a different way, showing the resources most likely to be accessed by people in each stakeholder category in the previous year.

**Table 2: Extent of use of text resources in the previous year among survey respondents**

	<b>% of whole sample using or reading resource</b>	<b>Stakeholder categories most likely to use or read resource in previous year (% shows proportion of category using or reading resource)</b>	<b>Stakeholder categories least likely to use or read resource in previous year (% shows proportion of category using or reading resource)</b>
Practice guide	52%	Social care educators (78%) Service commissioners (9 out of 13) Senior managers (61%)	Social work students (38%) Service users (6 out of 16) Carers (5 out of 19)

**Table 2 continued**

Knowledge review	51%	Social care educators (84%) Service commissioners (9 out of 13) Researchers (65%)	Practitioners (45%) Social work students (38%) Carers (8 out of 19)
SCIE report	43%	Policymakers (64%) Service users (10 out of 16) Social care educators (62%)/ service commissioners (8 out of 13)	Carers (6 out of 19) Practitioners (31%) Registration and inspection (31%)
Resource guide	39%	Social care educators (65%) Service commissioners (7 out of 13) Policymakers (48%)	Registration and inspection (29%) Carer representatives (7 out of 29) Carers (4 out of 19)
Research briefing	39%	Social care educators (70%) Service commissioners (8 out of 13) Researchers (57%)	Service user representatives (31%)/service users (5 out of 16) Social work students (28%) Carers (4 out of 19)
Position paper	19%	Policymakers (40%) Social care educators (36%) Service user representatives (33%)	Middle managers (14%) Social work students (8%) Practitioners (5%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,330</b>		

Base: all survey respondents asked about use of resources

Tables 3–5 are based on a total of 1,330 survey respondents, which is fewer than the total of 1,394 respondents used in Table 1 and later in the report. This is because a few survey respondents who said that they had not contacted SCIE were not asked these questions about use of resources, but went straight to the later questions about perceptions of SCIE’s overall performance.

**Table 3: Extent of access to SCIE websites and the introductory pack for students in the previous year among survey respondents**

	<b>% of whole sample accessing resource</b>	<b>Stakeholder categories most likely to access resource in previous year (% shows proportion of category accessing resource)</b>	<b>Stakeholder categories least likely to access resource in previous year (% shows proportion of category accessing resource)</b>
Main SCIE website (visited or used)	74%	Social care educators (87%) Social work students (83%) Researchers (76%)	Practitioners (61%) Service users (8 out of 16) Carers (9 out of 19)
Social Care Online (visited or used)	46%	Social care educators (59%) Social work students (58%) Practitioners (50%)	Service user representatives (28%) Policymakers (24%) Carers (4 out of 19)
Introductory pack for students (received or read)	27%	Social work students (65%) Practitioners (28%) Service users (3 out of 16)	Middle managers (4%) Senior managers (3%) Registration and inspection (0%)
Total	1,330		

Base: all survey respondents asked about use of resources

**Table 4: Extent of personal contacts with SCIE in the previous year among survey respondents**

	<b>% of whole sample using resource</b>	<b>Stakeholder categories most likely to have contact in previous year (% shows proportion of that category having this kind of contact)</b>	<b>Stakeholder categories least likely to have contact in previous year (% shows proportion of category having this kind of contact)</b>
Attended SCIE launch or event	19%	Carers (10 out of 19) Service users (6 out of 16) Policy makers (38%)	Researchers (25%)/ senior managers (25%) Practitioners (11%) Social work students (2%)
Participated in project with SCIE	12%	Service users (8 out of 16) Researchers (30%) Policy makers (26%)	(Service commissioners (1 out of 13) Practitioners (7%) Social work students (0%)
Attended presentation or talk or exhibition given by SCIE	12%	Carers (6 out of 19) Carer representatives (7 out of 29) Service user representatives (21%)	Service commissioners (1 out of 13) Practitioners (5%) Social work students (3%)
Total	1,330		

Base: all survey respondents asked about use of resources

**Table 5: Resources/services (excluding the main SCIE website) most likely to be accessed in the previous year by each stakeholder category**

	<b>Number in stakeholder category asked question about use of resources</b>	<b>Resource/service most likely to be accessed or used by stakeholder category excluding main SCIE website (% shows proportion of category accessing or using resource)</b>	<b>Resource/service next most likely to be accessed or used by stakeholder category excluding main SCIE website (% shows proportion of category accessing or using resource)</b>
Social work students	399	Introductory pack for students (65%)	Social Care Online (58%)
Middle managers	196	Practice guide (56%)	Knowledge review (51%)
Senior managers	151	Practice guide (61%)	Knowledge review (50%)
Social care educators	141	Knowledge review (84%)	Practice guide (78%)
Practitioners	127	Practice guide (53%)	Social Care Online (50%)
Researchers	106	Knowledge review (65%)	Research briefing (57%)
Service user reps	39	Knowledge review (54%)	SCIE report (51%)
Policy makers	42	SCIE report (64%)	Practice guide (60%)
People working in the registration and inspection industry	35	Knowledge review (54%)	Practice guide (43%)

**Table 5 continued**

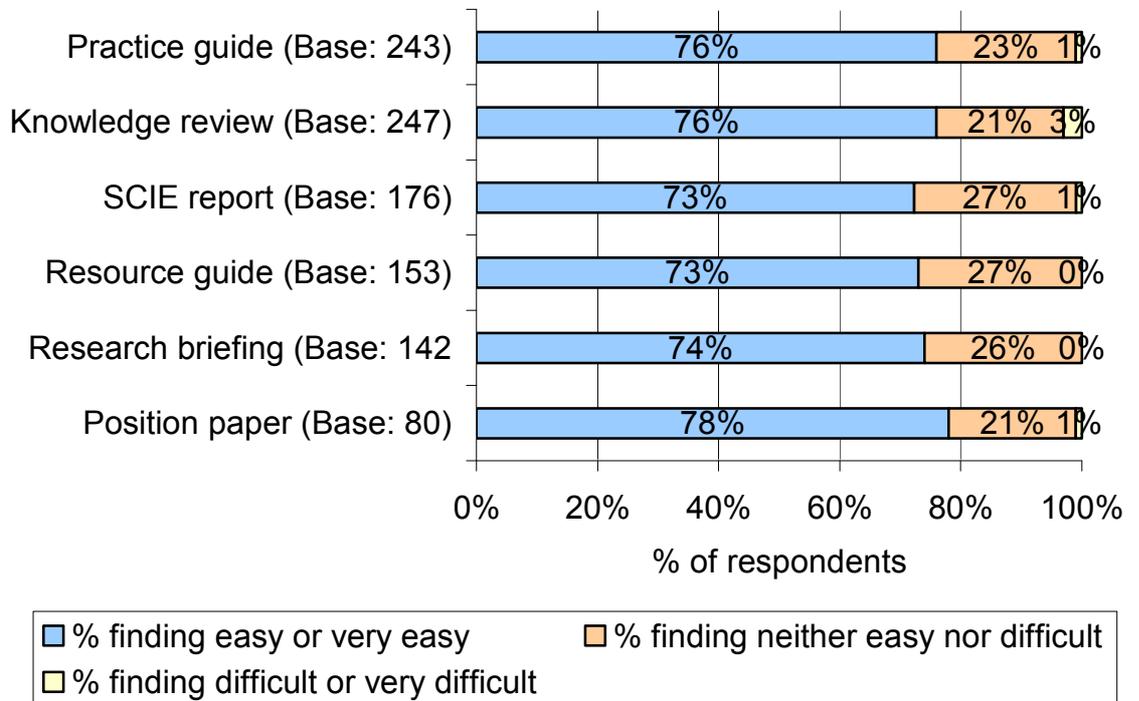
Carer representatives	29	Knowledge review/practice guide/ SCIE report (15 out of 29)	Research briefing/ Social Care Online (10 out of 29)
Carers or supporters of people using social care services	19	SCIE event (10 out of 19)	Knowledge review (8 out of 19)
Service users	16	SCIE report (10 out of 16)	Knowledge review/ participated in SCIE project (8 out of 16)
Service commissioners	13	Knowledge reviews/ practice guides (69%)	Research briefing/ SCIE report (62%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,330</b>		

Base: all survey respondents asked about use of resources

### 3.2.2 Perceptions and impacts of different SCIE resources

The great majority of people in contact with SCIE reported that its resources are easy or very easy to understand (see Chart 1). For example, 76 per cent of people using a practice guide said it is very easy or easy to understand, 23 per cent that it is neither easy nor difficult, and only one per cent that it is difficult or very difficult to understand.

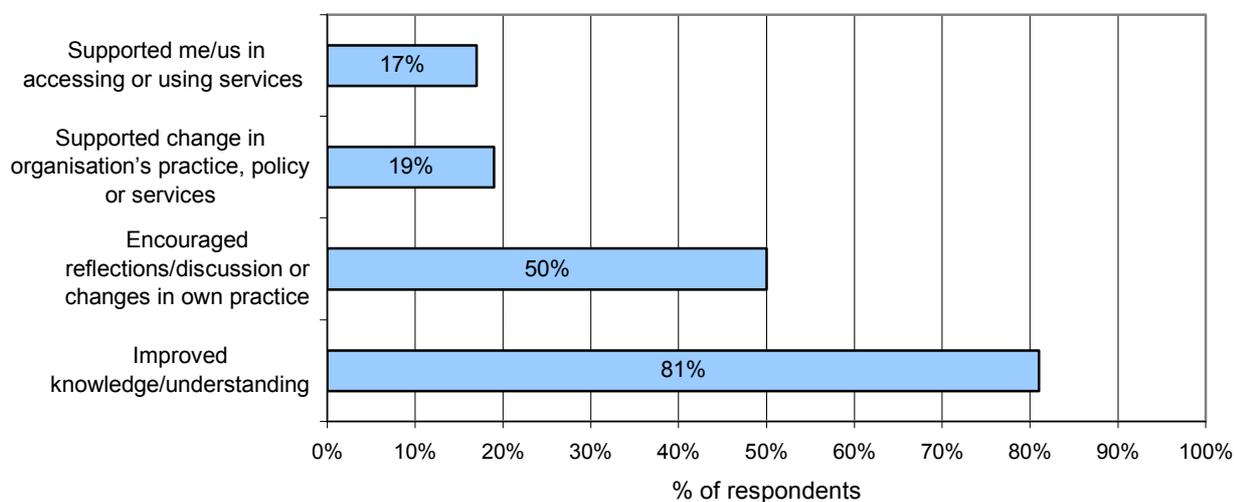
**Chart 1: Ease of understanding of text resources**



Base: survey respondents using this resource who were randomly selected to be asked further questions about this specific resource

The great majority of survey respondents also reported that SCIE resources are associated with positive impacts. For example, 81 per cent of those using a practice guide reported improved knowledge or understanding, and 19 per cent that the guide supported a change in their organisation’s practice, policy or services (see Chart 2). Only one out of the 29 people saying that the guide supported access to or use of services was a service user, with the others being practitioners, researchers, educators, social work students and managers. This implies that this impact has been interpreted by respondents in its widest sense, for example accessing services on behalf of service users.

**Chart 2: Range of impacts of practice guides**



Base: 151 survey respondents using a practice guide who were randomly selected to be asked further questions about this specific resource.

The resources most likely to be perceived as influencing practice were position papers, resource guides and presentations or talks or exhibitions (see Table 6). The resources most likely to be associated with changes in an organisation's policy, practice or services were research briefings, SCIE reports, practice guides, events and projects.

Four per cent or less of respondents using any text resource reported no impact, and three per cent or less reported a negative impact. However, 15 per cent of those receiving or using the introductory pack for students reported no impact. The social work education case study showed that a high proportion of social work students receiving the pack had not used it.

**Table 6: Impacts associated with use of resources and personal contacts with SCIE**

<b>Resource and impact</b>	<b>No of people asked this question</b>	<b>Reflections/ discussion/ change in own practice</b>	<b>Reflection/ discussion on colleague's or org's practice</b>	<b>Change in org's practice, policy or services</b>	<b>No effect</b>	<b>-ve effect</b>
Practice guide (read or used)	151	50%	30%	19%	2%	0%
Knowledge review (read or used)	156	53%	22%	13%	1%	1%
SCIE report (read or used)	104	47%	21%	19%	4%	0%
Resource guide (read or used)	77	58%	34%	14%	1%	3%
Research briefing (read or used)	92	46%	25%	21%	2%	0%
Position paper (read or used)	56	61%	43%	16%	4%	0%
Intro pack for students (received or read)	104	22%	10%	4%	15%	1%
Attended SCIE launch or event	60	43%	25%	20%	7%	3%

**Table 6 continued**

<b>Participated in project with SCIE</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>6%</b>
Attended presentation or talk or exhibition given by SCIE	34	35%	41%	12%	3%	3%

Base: survey respondents using this resource who were randomly selected to be asked further questions about this specific resource

Note: Percentages in this table show the percentage of people using each resource/service who said it was associated with this impact.

### 3.2.3 Websites

Table 3 shows that 74 per cent of survey respondents, when asked to select the services they had used in the previous year from a list of services, said that they had visited or used the main SCIE website. Forty-six per cent had visited or used Social Care Online. Those who said they had not visited or used these websites in the previous year were asked again later in the questionnaire whether they had visited the main SCIE website and/or Social Care Online (not necessarily in the previous year). Combining data from both these questions, the total proportion of survey respondents who had visited the main SCIE website was about 90 per cent, and the total for visits to Social Care Online was 60 per cent (see Tables 7 and 8).

These figures are influenced by the fact that the survey was primarily web-based, and most respondents had email addresses and therefore internet access. The fostering case study and social work education case study show that some of SCIE's stakeholders prefer not to use websites or request improvements to the SCIE websites.

Sixty-five per cent of visitors to the main SCIE website found it easy or very easy to use, with 33 per cent finding it OK, and only 2 per cent finding it difficult or very difficult to use. Similar percentages said that downloading from the main website was easy or very easy, OK, and difficult or very difficult (see Table 7). Fifty-seven per cent of Social Care Online visitors found this website easy or very easy to use, with 40 per cent finding it OK, and three per cent finding it difficult or very difficult to use (see Table 8). Satisfaction statements like these are likely to reflect both the service received and the expectations of those using SCIE services.

The main reason for not visiting Social Care Online was not knowing about it, whereas the main reason for not using the main SCIE website was that the person did not need to use it (see Tables 7 and 8). Seventy two per cent of 113 social work students not visiting Social Care Online said that they did not know about this website. Only about six per cent of non-visitors to the main website said that they do not use the internet, although it is likely that this figure again reflects that the survey sample completed an online survey.

Some survey respondents value printed copies of resources in preference to online access. People most likely to have received written documentation following a telephone or internet enquiry were social care educators (40 per cent), service commissioners (5 out of 13), policymakers (32 per cent), researchers (32 per cent) and middle managers (31 per cent). Eight per cent of all respondents suggested that SCIE could produce more hard copies of resources and make less use of interactive formats. This suggestion was most likely among service users (three out of 17) and social care educators (12 per cent).

**Table 7: Respondents visiting main SCIE website**

<b>Proportion:</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number of people asked this question</b>
(of all survey respondents) who had visited SCIE website	91%	1,330
(of website visitors) found it easy or very easy to use	65%	1,210
(of website visitors) downloaded information	67%	1,210
(of those downloading information) found this easy or very easy to do	64%	810
(of non-visitors to main SCIE website) did not need to use it	46%	100
(of non-visitors to main SCIE website) said they were unaware of this website	14%	100

**Table 8: Respondents visiting Social Care Online**

<b>Proportion:</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number of people asked this question</b>
(of all survey respondents) who had visited Social Care Online	60%	1330
(of Social Care Online visitors) found it easy or very easy to use	57%	801
(of non-visitors to Social Care Online) did not need to use it	37%	509
(of non-visitors to Social Care Online) said they were unaware of this website	52%	509

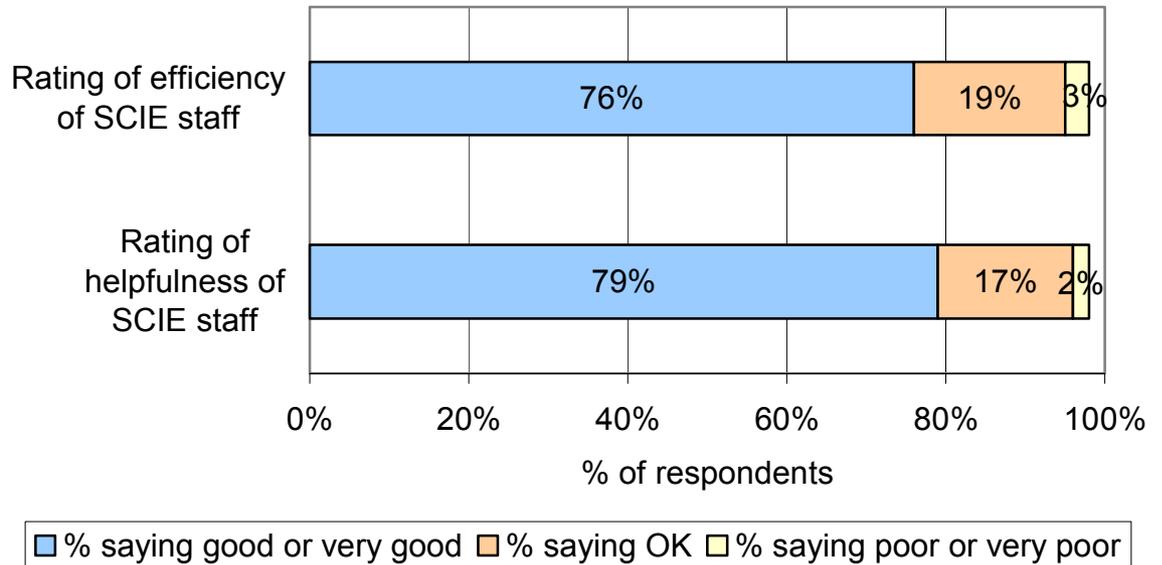
### **3.2.4 Enquiries to SCIE**

Table 4 shows that only 5 per cent of survey respondents said that they had made a personal enquiry to SCIE when asked to select, from a long list, the services they had used in the previous year. People who had not selected 'personal enquiries' were asked again, later in the questionnaire, whether they had made a personal enquiry (not necessarily in the previous year). Combining data from both these questions, 30 per cent of respondents had made a personal enquiry.

An analysis of these combined responses by stakeholder category shows that researchers (53 per cent), social care educators (48 per cent), policy makers (45 per cent) and carer representatives (13 out of 29) were most likely to have made a personal enquiry. Service users (five out of 16), practitioners (25 per cent) and social work students (10 per cent) were least likely to have made a personal enquiry.

The great majority of people making personal enquiries to SCIE said that the efficiency and helpfulness of SCIE staff was good or very good (see Chart 3).

**Chart 3 Views of survey respondents on personal enquiries**



Base: 400 survey respondents making an enquiry (percentages do not add to 100 per cent as a small proportion of survey respondents answered ‘do not know’)

**3.2.5 Impacts of SCIE having a London base**

Almost two thirds of survey respondents said that SCIE having a London base has no impact (20 per cent) or no negative impact (16 per cent), or has a positive impact (seven per cent), or that they did not know SCIE is in London (19 per cent). SCIE arranges seminars and meetings both in London and in other geographical areas. Respondents in North Wales, North West England, North East England, South Wales and Scotland were most likely not to be able to attend London meetings or said that it is difficult to arrange to meet with anyone face to face (see Table 9).

Two thirds of survey respondents did not know whether SCIE is in touch with what is happening in their country or region (see Table 10). Between 10 per cent and 17 per cent of people in South Wales, Northern Ireland and North West England said that SCIE is *not* in touch with what is happening in their locality. In contrast, only three per cent of those in North Wales said this, suggesting that locating a SCIE practice development post there has had a positive impact. It is interesting to note that Northern Ireland has the highest proportion of respondents (60 per cent) saying that SCIE is in touch with what is happening in their locality.

**Table 9: Extent of difficulties with attending and arranging meetings due to SCIE having a London base**

	<b>% saying they cannot attend seminars/ meetings in London, or that it is difficult to arrange to meet with anyone face to face</b>	<b>Number of people asked this question</b>
North Wales	62%	34
North West England	39%	165
Scotland	[9/27]	27
South Wales	32%	46
North East England	32%	69
South West England	28%	134
Northern Ireland	28%	63
All survey respondents asked this question	22%	1,310

Base: all survey respondents asked this question

**Table 10: Respondents' views on whether SCIE is in touch with what is happening in their region/country**

	% saying yes	% saying no	% saying don't know	Number of people asked this question
East Midlands	16%	2%	81%	85
East of England	22%	2%	76%	50
London	45%	3%	52%	191
Mid Wales	[2]	[1]	[1]	4
North east England	23%	6%	71%	69
North Wales	38%	3%	59%	34
North west England	25%	10%	65%	165
Northern Ireland	60%	11%	29%	63
Outside United Kingdom	[0]	[2]	[3]	5
Scotland	11%	15%	74%	27
South east England (excluding London)	34%	2%	64%	161
South Wales	24%	17%	59%	46
South West England	22%	6%	72%	134
West Midlands	23%	3%	74%	122
Yorkshire and Humber	18%	3%	79%	151
Total	28%	6%	66%	1,310

Base: all survey respondents asked this question

### 3.2.6 Meeting the needs of service users and practitioners, and partnership working

Table 11 presents the perceptions of people in contact with SCIE (all stakeholder categories) about SCIE working in partnership with stakeholders. Fifty nine per cent of survey respondents (including 12 out of 16 service users) agreed that SCIE is at the forefront of good practice in supporting service users, and 50 per cent that SCIE listens to practitioners when planning and delivering services. Few survey respondents (six per cent) thought that SCIE fails to place the needs of service users ‘first and foremost’ when planning and delivering products.

**Table 11: Perceptions about SCIE working in partnership with stakeholders**

Attitude statement	% agreeing or strongly agreeing	% neither agreeing nor disagreeing nor saying do not know	% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing	Number of people asked this question
At forefront of good practice in supporting service users	59%	37%	3%	1,310
Does NOT place needs of service users first and foremost when planning and delivering*	6%	39%	55%	1,310
Listens to practitioners when planning and delivering	50%	48%	2%	1,310
Welcomes partnerships with other organisations	61%	38%	1%	1,310

Base: all survey respondents asked these questions

\* This statement is negatively phrased to avoid survey respondents getting into a pattern of automatically responding in the same way to every attitude statement.

Additional analysis by stakeholder category gives the following findings:

- Supporting and working in partnership with service users

> 12 out of 16 service users, and 7 out of 18 carers, agreed that SCIE is at the forefront of good practice in supporting service users. One service user disagreed, another neither agreed nor disagreed, and two said they did not know.

> 71 per cent of service user representatives agreed that SCIE is at the forefront of good practice in supporting service users, and eight per cent disagreed. 21 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed, or said they did not know.

> No service users, and 11 per cent of service user representatives, thought that SCIE fails to place the needs of service users first and foremost when planning and delivering products and resources.

- Listening to practitioners

> 49 per cent of practitioners agreed that SCIE listens to them when planning and delivering services. None disagreed, 31 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed, and 20 per cent did not know.

> 50 per cent of middle managers agreed that SCIE listens to practitioners, and 5 per cent disagree. Twenty eight per cent neither agreed nor disagreed, and 17 per cent did not know.

- Partnership working

> 66 per cent of senior managers, and 71 per cent of service user representatives, agreed that SCIE welcomes partnerships with other organisations. Two per cent of senior managers, and 5 per cent of service user representatives disagreed, with the remainder neither agreeing nor disagreeing, or said they did not know.

### **3.2.7 Perceptions of SCIE's overall performance**

Between 60 per cent and 70 per cent of survey respondents said that SCIE's overall performance is excellent or good in relation to accessibility (61 per cent), usefulness (66 per cent), quality (68 per cent) and being up-to-date (68 per cent), with nearly all the remaining respondents using a rating of 'OK' (see Table 12).

**Table 12: Perceptions of SCIE’s overall performance**

	<b>% saying excellent or good</b>	<b>% saying OK</b>	<b>% saying poor or very poor</b>	<b>% saying do not know</b>	<b>Total (number of survey respondents)</b>
Quality	68%	16%	1%	16%	1,394
Accessibility	61%	23%	2%	14%	1,394
Being up-to-date	68%	14%	1%	17%	1,394
Usefulness	66%	17%	2%	14%	1,394

Base: all survey respondents

SCIE is committed to equality and diversity, and it is important to look at how different groups of stakeholders experience its services.

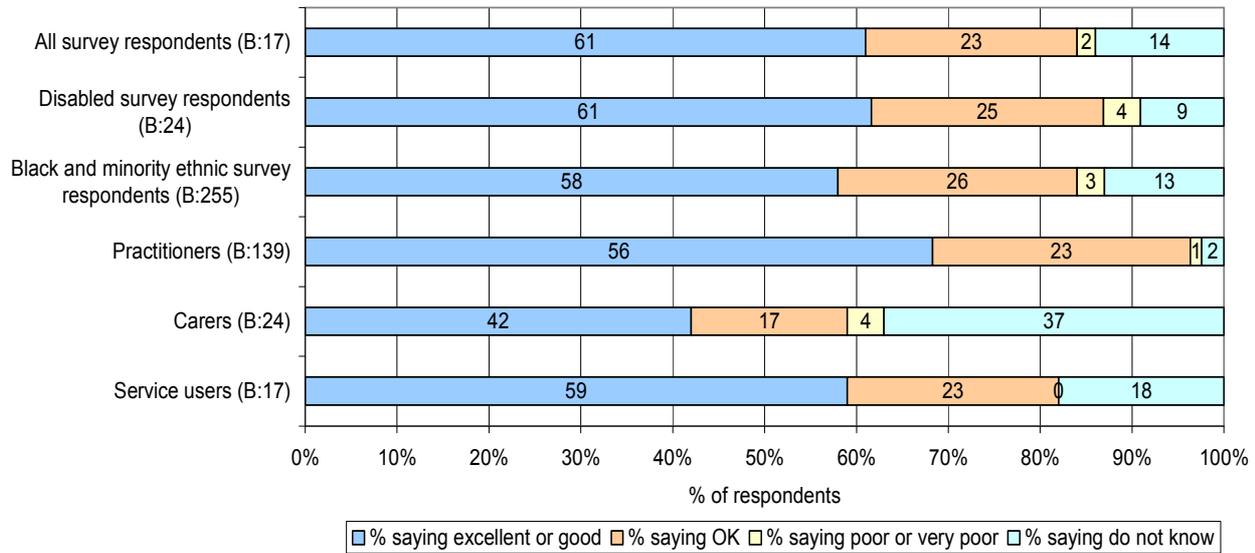
- 58 per cent of black and minority ethnic respondents and 61 per cent of disabled respondents viewed SCIE’s overall performance on accessibility as excellent or good, compared with 61 per cent of all survey respondents (see Chart 4).
- 56 per cent of practitioners, 10 out of 17 service users and 10 out of 24 carers viewed SCIE’s overall performance on accessibility as excellent or good (see Chart 4). The respondent group most likely to view this as poor or very poor were service user representatives (9 per cent), although these were also one of the groups most likely to view the accessibility as excellent (23 per cent).
- 65 per cent of practitioners, 68 per cent of researchers and 83 per cent of educators viewed SCIE’s overall performance as excellent or good in terms of being up-to-date. Service user representatives were the respondent group most likely to view this as poor or very poor (12 per cent).
- 72 per cent of social work students, 64 per cent of practitioners, 11 out of 17 service users, 9 out of 24 carers, and 45 per cent of policymakers viewed the overall performance as excellent or good in terms of usefulness. Researchers (6 per cent), policymakers (7 per cent) and service user representatives (9 per cent) were the respondent groups most likely to view this as poor or very poor.

When asked to rate their overall impression of SCIE services, social care educators (80 per cent) were the respondent groups most likely to say very good or good, and policy makers (50 per cent) were least likely to say this (see Chart 5). Thirteen out of 17 service users, 13 out of 24 carers, and 70 per

cent of practitioners said that their overall impression of the services was very good or good.

The stakeholder categories with more than three per cent of survey respondents saying that their overall impression of SCIE services was poor or very poor were policy makers (7 per cent), service user representatives (7 per cent), and researchers (5 per cent).

**Chart 4 Perceptions of SCIE’s overall performance on accessibility**

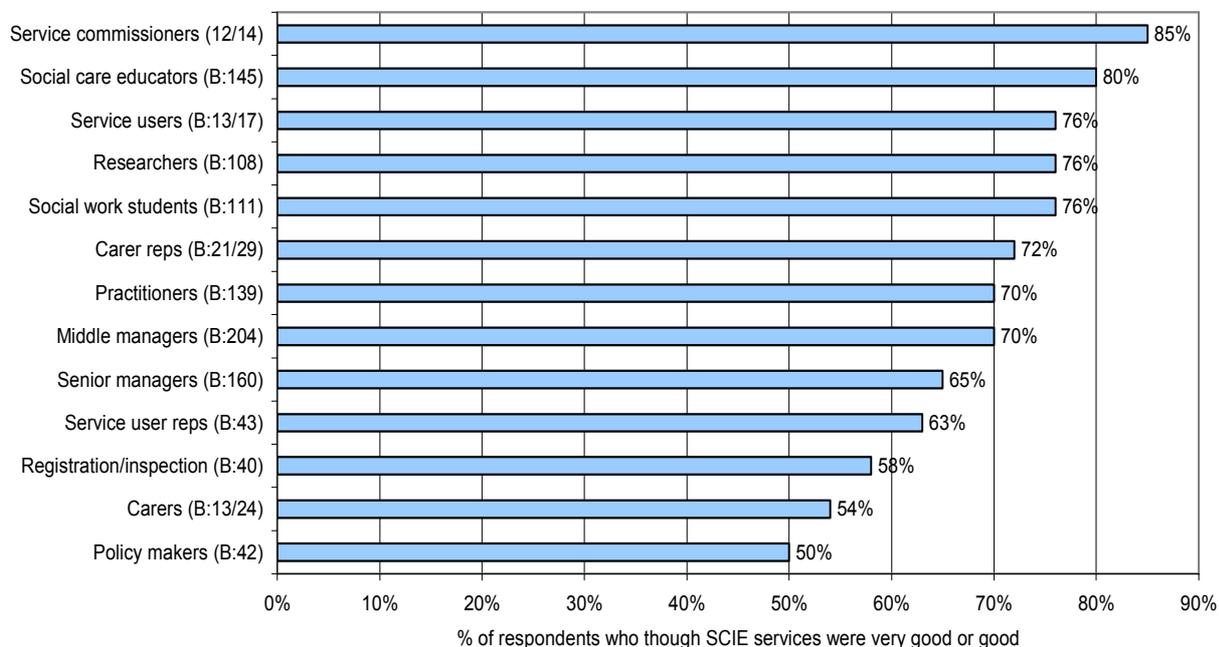


**Table 13: Overall impression of SCIE services**

	<b>% saying very good or good</b>	<b>% saying OK</b>	<b>% saying poor or very poor</b>	<b>% saying do not know</b>	<b>Total (no of survey respondents)</b>
All survey respondents	71%	18%	2%	8%	1,394
Black and minority ethnic survey respondents	69%	22%	2%	7%	255
Disabled survey respondents	69%	24%	3%	4%	138
Men	68%	19%	4%	9%	397
Women	73%	18%	1%	8%	997

Base: all survey respondents

**Chart 5: Overall impression of SCIE services, for different stakeholder categories**



Thirty per cent or more of survey respondents suggested that SCIE could improve publicity and marketing, and could produce:

- more user-friendly summaries (especially senior managers, service users, service user representatives, policy makers and service commissioners)
- more information on best practice (especially middle managers, social care educators and service commissioners)
- examples of social care policy from other countries (especially social care educators, policy makers and service commissioners)
- case studies of the use of products in practice (especially service users).

Some stakeholder categories were especially likely to select particular suggestions. For example:

- 37 per cent of practitioners would like more information on best practice on the SCIE website.
- 40 per cent of service user representatives, nine out of 17 service users, and 11 out of 29 carer representatives would like resources to be more practical and less academic – but only 23 per cent of practitioners said this.
- 37 per cent of service user representatives, seven out of 17 service users, 11 out of 24 carers, and 11 out of 29 carer representatives would like more information for service users and carers on SCIE's website.

- 33 per cent of senior managers and 35 per cent of middle managers would like more online audit tools.
- 50 per cent of policymakers would like SCIE to link its services to performance management frameworks.

## 4 Key findings from the case studies

These case studies give in-depth evidence of the processes of achieving resource use and impact among social care practitioners and managers, social work educators and social work students. They investigated whether, and how, SCIE products are used at the level of the individual and the organisation. SCIE's work on research use (*Knowledge review 7: Improving the use of research in social care practice*) suggests the need to consider three models of research use – the research-based practitioner model, the embedded research model, and the organisational excellence model. In addition, the case studies gathered information on how resources might be improved in content, presentation, dissemination and implementation.

SCIE decided that these case studies should be in the areas of fostering practice and social work education. This was to cover SCIE resources which offer different levels of evidential authority within the knowledge base, and to demonstrate a range of methods of engaging with the social care community.

SCIE's work on fostering is a specific element of the theme on services to children and families, based on several linked projects including a practice survey of independent fostering agencies (*Knowledge review 4: Innovative, tried and tested*) and a knowledge review of outcomes (*Knowledge review 5: Fostering success*), a practice development project using the collaboratives approach underway in three agencies (Sheffield, Denbighshire and Broadstairs), and SCIE's Practice guide to fostering. This is an area of work in which the knowledge base is sufficient to recommend aspects of practice, and on which SCIE is actively leading implementation. Having case studies of the fostering work also enables investigation of two different approaches to dissemination and implementation: fostering dissemination events and a multi-site collaboratives project.

SCIE has developed a range of resources for social work education, working in partnership with social work educators. The aim is to underpin teaching and learning in the main curriculum areas of qualifying social work programmes. Publications to date have focused on the teaching and learning of communication skills, law, assessment of service users and carers' needs, partnership work and communicating with children. In 2005–06, SCIE provided all social work students on the social work qualifying course with an introductory pack, including a CD of its resources. This was part of wider SCIE promotion activity to encourage social work students to register with SCIE for email updates and use its resources.

In contrast to the work on fostering, SCIE's work on social work education is primarily channelled through other agencies, supporting educators by providing resources rather than recommending practice or policy. This approach also reflects the more limited knowledge base in terms of outcome-based studies of educational effectiveness. Unlike the impact survey and the

fostering case studies, the social work education study included stakeholders (social work students) not already in contact with SCIE or using its resources.

## **4.1 Fostering dissemination events**

### **4.1.1 Summary of case study objective and design**

In collaboration with the organisations research in practice, the Fostering Network, the Department for Education and Skills, and the Looked After Children Taskforce, SCIE held 11 events across England, Wales and Northern Ireland during 2005 to disseminate a variety of resources on fostering and launch the SCIE fostering practice guide. The events were called *Tools for change: Promoting good practice in fostering*, and their aim was to show links between practice material and research findings. This is because practitioners often say that they are bewildered by the range of information they receive, find it difficult to judge quality, and presume that materials from various sources are competing rather than complementing or strengthening findings.

Each event was attended by between 60 and 100 delegates, who included practitioners, managers, students and foster carers. Presentations focused on the SCIE practice guide, research findings, practice and policy issues, and messages from young people in care and foster carers. The resources included SCIE's online fostering practice guide (no hard copies), SCIE knowledge reviews (hard copies), and non-SCIE research and practice resources (hard copies). The fostering practice guide provides key research findings, details of relevant legislation, guidance and standards, and practice examples.

The objective of this case study was to explore perceptions, use and impacts of the fostering dissemination events and the disseminated materials (including the SCIE practice guide) among those who had attended the events.

The Mersey Consortium carried out semi-structured telephone interviews in September 2006 with 13 event participants, using a topic guide. To gain these 13 interviews, they had sought contact with 84 people purposively selected from a SCIE database of 658 event participants to achieve sample variation in terms of job title, region, organisational sector, ethnicity and disability. SCIE had already sent an introductory letter to these individuals to tell them about the research and enable them to opt out of the research if they wished. It was not possible to include foster carers in the sample as no telephone numbers for them were available due to protection of personal data. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analysed thematically.

### 4.1.2 Characteristics of the research participants

Out of the 13 interviewees:

- 4 self-defined as disabled or with an impairment or long-term health problem.
- 3 were from black and minority ethnic groups.
- 3 were male.
- 10 were from England, two from Wales, and 1 from Northern Ireland.
  
- 7 worked for local authority social services, 2 for a voluntary agency, 2 for an independent fostering agency, 1 for an inspectorate, and 2 in research and development.
  
- 2 were directors or assistant directors, 5 were managers, 2 were social workers, and 4 were senior practitioners or officers or development workers.

### 4.1.3 Key findings

Interviews with 13 event participants (out of about 900 people in total who attended the events) showed they valued the highlighting of key messages by speakers. Most of these event participants found the events useful, supportive and well organised.

‘I think it [the event] was really making us aware and I think another thing I felt at the time was you know this is good. There is more of a government-backed approach, trying to support people in the social care profession.’

‘Useful to meet colleagues from other authorities and found it helpful to share pieces of good practice.’

#### **Positive aspects of the dissemination events mentioned by research participants**

- the presentations ‘brought (the research) alive’ and included locally-based research
- the literature acted as a back-up resource
- the informal events provided a networking opportunity, and good practice could be shared between delegates
- SCIE collaborated with other organisations (government, universities, other voluntary organisations and practitioners) in a coordinated way in organising the events.

SCIE resources were liked by the interviewed participants, who valued the range of materials, the easy-to-read writing style in 'plain English', and the highlighting of key messages.

There was a perception among interviewees (practitioners and managers) that SCIE's work shared, reinforced and updated existing knowledge and understanding, rather than leading on good practice. One participant said that the information presented was too basic for experienced practitioners and needed more context.

'Actually going beyond what's already there would have been helpful for us.'

'We do have excellent practices; the practice guide just reinforced the things that we were doing already.'

Ten of the 13 participants interviewed had not accessed SCIE's online fostering practice guide because of a dislike of computers, difficulties in using the SCIE website, no time or pressure of work, or preference for hard copy. The guide was highlighted in a presentation at the event, and participants were informed how to access it from the SCIE website, but no hard copies were produced.

'No I haven't accessed the website, that's largely because I hate computers, I prefer to deal with a book. I mean I do use a computer because I have to but not by choice. So no I haven't actually accessed any of the websites.'

'I think some of the time you come away [from an event like this] and you're full of good ideas, but then you go back to your job and nothing is done ...'

Several positive impacts of the event and resources were identified, both for individuals and organisations. One practitioner went back to her organisation, an independent fostering agency, to advocate internally for changed practice on the basis of the research evidence in a presentation that had been relevant to her region. Her organisation increased the amount of education support given to children in foster care.

In another example, a local authority development worker used the SCIE practice guide to inform a service audit by the whole team, identifying what was working well and what was not. As a result, she recommended a strategic review of issues in family placements to senior management.

However, it was difficult for other participants to separate out the impacts of the event and resources from other factors influencing practice change. Some fostering agencies had processes in place to continually improve and update their knowledge base including SCIE materials, regulations and other information sources.

### **Impacts of the dissemination events and resources**

- Provided a reference resource
- Increased practitioners' knowledge and understanding
- SCIE practice guide used as a tool for service audit
- Research review (non-SCIE) used to aid business planning
- Organisation increased education support for children in foster care as a result of a (non-SCIE) research presentation at the event
- Reinforced child-centred practice
- Hard copy resources distributed to colleagues (although not always specific impacts of this)

## **4.2 The fostering collaboratives project**

### **4.2.1 Summary of case study objective and design**

The project was based on the Breakthrough Series Collaborative Method for Organisational Improvement developed by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement in the USA. A Collaborative is an improvement method that relies on the spread and adaptation of existing knowledge to multiple settings to accomplish a common aim. The collaborative model involves selecting a topic for improvement, convening a planning group, identifying measures for changing practice, mapping the existing processes and identifying problems. A series of learning sessions are planned, interspersed with action periods. Progress in changing practice is then measured to see whether improvements have been achieved.

SCIE's collaboratives project in three service provider agencies (in Broadstairs (Kent), Denbighshire and Sheffield) in 2005 used an 'action learning' methodology to support practice change in relation to the 'contact' section of SCIE's fostering practice guide. The knowledge available regarding contact shows this to be a broad and complex area of practice whilst outcomes for children are difficult to determine.

The project included regular collection of data on contact, regular group discussions within the project team at each site about contact, and two events for all three sites to share learning. Each site had a local project co-ordinator, with SCIE providing overall project co-ordination, and there was a password-protected website for the project teams to use. This is an example of a project in which SCIE has had an active input into the translation of its resources into practice development.

The objective of this case study was to explore perceptions and impacts of the collaboratives methodology and SCIE practice guide in social care settings. The Mersey Consortium carried out face-to-face interviews and focus groups during a visit to each project site in September and October 2006 with the practitioners and managers who had been involved and were still in post. Data collection at one of the sites was substantially limited by staff turnover. Topic guides were used as a basis for data collection. The interviews and focus groups were recorded, transcribed, and analysed thematically.

#### **4.2.2 Characteristics of the three project sites**

The Kent site was a voluntary agency with nine fostering support social workers supporting young people and families across South East England. The Denbighshire and Sheffield sites were local authority social services departments, one with 79 children and young people in foster care, and the other with 650 looked after children and young people.

#### **4.2.3 Key findings**

The three sites had very different experiences of the project, suggesting that the collaboratives methodology is not yet a replicable approach. There were common themes of wanting greater clarity from SCIE about the aims, methods, working process and role of the on-site local coordinators.

‘I never felt clear enough, early enough about what the project was about.’

‘At the beginning we thought that the aim of the project was to collect data, which SCIE would collate and analyse. It is now unclear what has happened to the data or what the data was for.’

Practitioners valued the group discussions within their project team, which highlighted issues internally and enabled sharing of practice. Some said that they did this anyway, and that it was difficult to attribute changes specifically to the project or the SCIE practice guide.

‘Getting a group of people to sit down and discuss with some time and space, with some shared interests and dilemmas, is never going to be anything but helpful.’

‘What happened throughout the project is that you raised the profile of contact for that period of time. How it actually impacted in a practical sense I’m not sure we would have any evidence of that. It was nice to have some time just talking about a specific issue.’

The project sites mentioned a number of barriers to greater impact, including insufficient input from senior management.

‘With hindsight we would have managed it and supported it very differently and we as an organisation would have involved managers and maybe had a service manager as a champion.’

### **Barriers to greater impact of the project**

- insufficient understanding of aims and method of project
- insufficient clarity and feedback (e.g. on use of data collected) from SCIE
- staff turnover within project teams
- local project team too narrow in membership. In particular, insufficient involvement by senior management and partner organisations
- poor communication at times between local project teams and their site co-ordinator
- limited record keeping within local project team which did not record group discussions in sufficient detail.

The site with the most positive impacts already had an evidence-informed learning culture. Practitioners said that the work had reinforced their confidence and ability to advocate and challenge practice, for example with senior management, local authorities and in court.

‘It has made me more assertive in questioning or in asking the local authorities themselves about why they are making certain decisions about contact arrangements.’

Other impacts in one or more of the three project sites are shown in the box below, including a continuing organisational impact in one site on contracts with providers.

‘It just left me at the end of the presentation with an absolute desire to do something, because it just gave me that insight. In their presentation they talked about the cases and some of the issues ... so I said can you let me have something bullet pointed, give me the issues and then I was able to use that in the training with providers. Another thing is that I did a briefing paper outlining the main issues and that went to our senior manager and executive director.’

Some practitioners would like the work extended to include other practitioners, foster carers, children and young people.

‘We need to incorporate young people much more...and the project model would be a good way for us to actually make a plan to do that.’

### **Impacts of the fostering collaboratives project**

- reinforced practitioners' confidence and ability to advocate, for example in court, and with senior management
- changes in contracts with providers, with more thought given to who is involved in contact arrangements, for example support workers
- practitioners developed their research skills and their ability to use evidence to inform practice change

## **4.3 Social work education**

### **4.3.1 Summary of case study objectives and design**

The case study objectives were to:

- investigate what impact SCIE resources make in promoting knowledge and best practice within social work education and in the delivery of social work qualifying programmes
- assess perceptions among educators about whether the impact of SCIE resources and products is greater as a result of having been developed in dialogue with the social work education community.

The research for this case study was carried out in November and December 2006 in five institutions offering the BA and/or MA social work degree programme which had distributed SCIE's introductory pack to students. The research methods consisted of:

- a questionnaire survey of social work educators involved in teaching on the social work qualifying programmes, administered by the course leaders – only 11 educators returned questionnaires, despite course leaders encouraging their colleagues to complete the survey
- a questionnaire survey of final year BA and MA students, administered by the institutions on behalf of the Mersey Consortium – 85 students returned questionnaires out of approximately 260 circulated
- 8 follow-up telephone interviews with course leaders and placement coordinators to explore in greater depth the survey responses
- 3 focus groups and one open meeting with students, course leaders and placement coordinators to consider ways in which SCIE materials and products might be improved in terms of content and quality and what gaps they feel could be addressed.

The interviews and focus groups were taped, and the data were transcribed and thematically analysed.

The small samples of educators and students who returned questionnaires give indicative evidence about these stakeholder groups, as the research

participants are not necessarily representative of all educators and students on social work qualifying programmes. The students in this case study survey are a different population from the students in the impact survey as the latter are a group of students already in contact with SCIE.

### **4.3.2 Characteristics of the research participants**

Three of the institutions were in England (North West, Midlands and South East), one was in Northern Ireland, and one was in Wales.

The students were either in the third year of a BA programme or on an MA programme. Of the 85 students who returned survey questionnaires, over three quarters were female (64) and the majority described themselves as white (62). In one institution, there was a sizeable number of students (10 out of 25) who described their ethnicity as other than white.

### **4.3.3 Key findings**

Few of the social work students who took part in the case study had a high level of familiarity with SCIE resources. Thirty-three per cent of the 85 students who responded to the survey were not familiar at all with SCIE products, and only 6 per cent were very familiar. The resources most likely to be used by the students were the SCIE website, Social Care Online, and the introductory pack, which is consistent with the impact survey findings reported earlier. Some students in the focus groups remembered the introductory pack but had made little use of its contents.

‘I’m not familiar enough with SCIE’s stuff, so I wouldn’t know if there were gaps at all.’

‘Since being in the college I haven’t seen anything, anywhere, that says SCIE.’

There was a higher level of familiarity with SCIE resources among the educators in the study. There was a perception among educators of the existence of dialogue between SCIE and the social work education community, but limited experience or knowledge of this dialogue. Consequently, few educators could comment on whether this dialogue had influenced impact. Likewise, few could comment on the extent of SCIE’s responsiveness in incorporating suggestions from social work educators into its work.

Educators and students said that SCIE resources are competing for attention in a crowded marketplace of information, and so SCIE needs to improve its profile.

'[SCIE products and resources] isn't something I would specifically pick out. I would certainly say it is a terrific resource for students, but there is a whole range of other things that they might be heading towards too.' (educator)

'Students are bombarded with information, and don't necessarily know enough to pick the wheat from the chaff.' (educator)

Students who used SCIE resources did so most often because of a recommendation by a tutor, but also through reading lists and recommendations from peers. Suggestions were that SCIE could:

- develop personal relationships with educators and students (for example through conferences and visits to institutions)

'Social worker lecturers don't change jobs very often and there aren't that many of us.'

'It needs to have a more proactive relationship, not just a sort of passive one where the resources are there or maybe they are sending out the packs, but maybe at the very beginning have someone come along to do an induction.'

- target resources in line with the individual interests of educators
- explain its distinctiveness and independence
- produce resources specific to Northern Ireland, and give greater emphasis to differences between the countries of the UK.

The educators and students who used SCIE resources tended to like them in terms of quality. They valued:

- the blend of electronic and hard copy resources
- the integration of research and practice issues

'From my perspective as Practice Development Tutor I find [SCIE resources and products] particularly useful in making [students] ready for practice and in teaching practice teachers.' (educator)

- that resources are easily accessible, up-to-date and can point to new directions.

'Very accessible and user-friendly. I always recommend Social Care Online to students, as it is so accessible and doesn't require a password.' (educator)

One educator however made the following comment:

'They seemed dumbed down and contained too much boring organisational and management concerns and not enough research evidence on social work practice.' (educator)

Social Care Online was especially valued by students.

'The one bit of it I use is Social Care Online, which I use extensively and I can compare that because I use a lot of databases for research and find it very good. I think it's really user-friendly.' (student)

Students requested that improvements are made to the SCIE website, including more interactive features such as a student chat room.

'I don't think their internet sites are user-friendly. They could improve it by simplifying it and putting in more links. It needs an advanced search.'  
(student)

Educators and students also had specific suggestions for the introductory pack having more take-up and impact, such as use of a memory stick, distributing later than the first term, and providing induction talks and posters.

'Maybe providing the introductory pack for students at the start of the course isn't the right time to do it. It might have more impact towards the end of the first term or the start of the second, something like that.'

The social work educators who use SCIE resources reported moderate impacts on teaching, understanding and knowledge in their institution.

'I think that anyone accessing SCIE products and resources will gain a greater understanding of social work and the social worker's role.'  
(educator)

'I have used material that drew together research and practice issues. This was easily accessible and came at the right time for us to plan and change our practice.'  
(educator)

'They [SCIE resources and products] are used from time to time, but they are not central to our teaching here.'  
(educator)

Although over 40 per cent of the student survey respondents could not rate the extent of impact of SCIE resources, a similar proportion of these students reported some level of impact on their knowledge of social work, their understanding of social work, and their learning.

'I found it very helpful. I remember in practice using it and thinking, God! That is really good! It was very easy to read and they made it very easy to understand and maybe put the link to practice and theory and stuff.'  
(student)

## 5 Implications for SCIE

The evidence from the case studies provides good examples of impacts of SCIE in terms of the intermediate outcomes of use, perceived quality and accessibility, and linked changes in practice. The use of SCIE resources, and participation in SCIE events and projects were associated in the survey and case studies with improved knowledge, and with practice and organisational changes. In particular, practitioners and managers could identify positive effects on professional development, particularly increased confidence in difficult or testing situations. It was sometimes difficult, however, for research respondents to isolate the impact of SCIE's work from other factors influencing practice and organisational change.

Those who use SCIE products generally have positive perceptions of their quality and of SCIE's overall performance. Where stakeholders are using its products or attending its events, SCIE needs to actively support them to translate the knowledge into practice and policy change. This includes supporting service delivery organisations to be receptive to evidence-based materials and to develop a learning culture.

The research indicates that SCIE needs to put greater input into achieving visibility and use of resources before achieving greater impact, for example among social work students. SCIE's audience of stakeholders is large and complex, although there are important interrelationships, such as between educators and students, and between managers and practitioners. SCIE currently has few service users and carers (as distinct from service user and carer representatives) on its Contacts Management System. The evidence suggests that it also needs to reach out more to practitioners, who are unlikely to have had personal contacts with SCIE.

SCIE needs to tune and target the resource content and formats for different stakeholder categories, and develop relationships with key stakeholders. Although there are only small numbers of service commissioners in the impact survey, the results indicate that they may be a receptive stakeholder category. Policy makers, people working in registration/inspection, and service user representatives tend to be the least satisfied stakeholder categories, and SCIE might think carefully about what materials could be provided to these groups. The research implies that where stakeholders feel actively engaged with SCIE, they turn to and value its resources. A key issue is how to create and maintain that sense of active engagement.

There were specific implications for particular resources. For example, SCIE might consider whether it needs to improve dissemination of information about Social Care Online and to explore the potential relevance of this website to people not currently accessing it. There may be potential for the main SCIE website to be changed so that the content matches the self-defined identity of the user. SCIE might also consider where the provision of hard copies of

resources is essential to achieve impact, and when to produce hard copies of practice guides. SCIE has already implemented some of the suggestions made by educators and social work students for the 2007 introductory pack.

SCIE is considering what further research it may conduct on impact in the context of its communications and implementation strategies.

## Appendix 1: Impact questionnaire

(This is a document showing the questions and routing in the impact survey, which was delivered to respondents in an interactive web format)

### **Survey about the impact of the Social Care Institute for Excellence**

We would like to invite you to complete this online questionnaire about your experiences of resources and services offered by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE). You may know us as SCIE (pronounced SKY), but we shouldn't be confused with the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI). We would be very grateful if you would please take 10 to 15 minutes to complete this questionnaire.

This is part of a nationwide study that the Mersey Consortium and GfK NOP (independent research organisations) are undertaking on behalf of SCIE into the impact that SCIE's products and resources have on social care practice and policy. The study findings will be used to inform thinking about future SCIE products and services and its contribution to informing knowledge in the social care sector.

This study has been recommended and approved by the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS). Your contribution is vital and will help to inform future products and resources produced by SCIE, and their dissemination.

The closing date for the questionnaire is 18th October. Please click on the link below to go to the survey: [http:](http://)

All respondees who complete the questionnaire will be entered into a free prize draw with the opportunity to win £25 worth of High Street Shopping Vouchers.

If you do not wish to participate, please respond to this email and we will take you off the database.

If you have any difficulty completing the on line questionnaire and would prefer either a telephone interview, paper copy or different format including Braille, large print or alternative language then please contact Kath Hennell on [kath@shipshape.uk.com](mailto:kath@shipshape.uk.com) or 0151 709 2181.

All individual responses are strictly confidential and will not be seen by SCIE staff, nor any third parties.

Thank you!

## **Opening screen**

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey.

Before you begin, you need to make sure that your browser is maximised (i.e. that it covers your whole screen). If necessary, you can do this by clicking the maximise button in the top, right-hand corner of your browser.

It's very easy to navigate through the questionnaire: just click on the answer or answers that apply and click on the 'Next' button. If you wish to change an answer, click on the 'Previous' button until you reach the required question.

Please avoid using the browser buttons. You may need to use the scroll bar if you cannot see the whole screen at once.

To start click on the 'Next' button below or view our [privacy policy](#).

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<b>Section 4</b>	How SCIE listens to practitioners and service users: Questions 27–29
<b>Section 5</b>	Staff welcome and receptiveness to enquiries: Questions 30–33
<b>Section 6</b>	London base: Questions 34–36
<b>Section 7</b>	Views on the SCIE work programme and finally!: Questions 37–42

### Key:

- mc multi-coded questions
- sc single code questions

## Section 1 About you

**Q1 Please tell us which of the following roles best describes you in relation to social care? If you feel you fit into more than one category then please tell us what your primary role is and then your secondary role in relation to social care.**

**If no secondary role click N/A**

	Primary role	Secondary role
	1a	1b
A user of social care services	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
A carer or supporter of a person who uses a social care service	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
A social work student	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
A middle manager in an organisation providing services (SCIE classifies a middle manager as providing a linking function between strategy and frontline practitioners. Middle managers lead the organisation in translating policy into practice)	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
A senior manager in an organisation providing services (SCIE classifies a senior manager as having the day-to-day responsibilities of managing an organisation, either solely or as a part of a team. It includes managers with higher levels of responsibility, such as Chief Executives)	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
A practitioner in an organisation providing services	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>
A policy maker	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>
A researcher or member of the development community	8 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>
A social care educator	9 <input type="checkbox"/>	9 <input type="checkbox"/>
A service commissioner	10 <input type="checkbox"/>	10 <input type="checkbox"/>

- |   |                             |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| In the registration and inspection industry<br>(If you work in the registration and inspection industry, for example CSCI and this is your primary role when accessing SCIE services, please tick this box regardless of your role [e.g. middle or senior manager]) | 11 <input type="checkbox"/> | 11 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Involved in or work for a carers' group or representative organisation  | 12 <input type="checkbox"/> | 12 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Involved in or work for a service users' group or representative organisation   | 13 <input type="checkbox"/> | 13 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't know  | 14 <input type="checkbox"/> | 14 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Not applicable  | 15 <input type="checkbox"/> | 15 <input type="checkbox"/> |

If ticked 1, 2 or 3 in question 1a and 1b or NA in 1b, then route question 3

**Q2 sc Which of these best applies to the organisation for which you work?**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Funder<br>1 <input type="checkbox"/>   | Umbrella group<br>10 <input type="checkbox"/>                                |
| Carer group<br>2 <input type="checkbox"/>  | A statutory health service provider<br>11 <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| Local/National/Regional Government<br>3 <input type="checkbox"/>                 | Inspectorate/regulator<br>12 <input type="checkbox"/>                        |
| Research/consultancy<br>4 <input type="checkbox"/>                               | A voluntary sector health service provider<br>13 <input type="checkbox"/>    |
| A voluntary sector social care service provider<br>5 <input type="checkbox"/>    | Training or education organisation<br>14 <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Service user group<br>6 <input type="checkbox"/>                                 | A private/independent health service provider<br>15 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A private/independent social care service provider<br>7 <input type="checkbox"/> | A higher education institution<br>16 <input type="checkbox"/>                |
| Self employed<br>8 <input type="checkbox"/>                                      | Not applicable<br>17 <input type="checkbox"/>                                |
| A statutory social care service provider<br>9 <input type="checkbox"/>           | Other (Please specify)<br>18 <input type="checkbox"/>                        |

**Q3 sc Where are you based?**

**i.e. where you work (not necessarily head office), or for service users and carers - where you live, or for students - where you study**

- 1  North East England
- 2  North West England
- 6  South West England
- 4  South East England  
(excluding London)
- 5  London
- 6  East Midlands
- 7  West Midlands
- 8  East of England
- 9  Yorkshire and Humber
- 10  North Wales
- 11  South Wales
- 12  Mid Wales
- 13  Northern Ireland
- 14  Scotland
- 15  Outside United Kingdom
- 16  Don't know

**Q4 sc Are you?**

- 1  Male
- 2  Female

**Q5 sc Please could you tell us how you would describe your ethnicity?**

- 1  White – British
- 2  White – Irish
- 3  Any other white background
- 4  Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
- 5  Mixed – White and Black African
- 6  Mixed – White and Asian
- 7  Any other mixed background
- 8  Asian/Asian British – Indian
- 9  Asian/Asian British – Pakistani

- 10  Asian/Asian British – Bangladeshi
- 11  Any other Asian background
- 12  Black/Black British – Caribbean
- 13  Black/Black British – African
- 14  Any other Black background
- 15  Chinese
- 16  Any other background
- 17  Prefer not to answer

**Q6 sc When did you first make contact with SCIE or use their services or products?**

- 1  Within the last 6 months
- 2  Within the last 12 months
- 3  Between 1 and 3 years ago
- 4  Over 3 years ago
- 5  Didn't know I had!
- 6  Don't know

**Q7 sc We would like to use the information you provide in section 1 to update SCIE's database.**

**This information will be separated from the rest of the questionnaire and neither SCIE nor any other third party will be able to link up your details with the responses you provide. If you are not happy for your details to be updated on SCIE's database please tick the appropriate box below and we will assure you that we will not pass this information to SCIE.**

- I am happy for information in section 1 to be passed to SCIE 1
- I am not happy for information in section 1 to be passed to SCIE 2

If option 5 at question 6 is ticked, participants will be routed to section 7 (question 37) after responding to question 7

## Section 2: Which products make the most impact and why

**We are now going to ask you some questions relating to your experiences and use of SCIE products/resources.**

[CAWI Please randomly select one from Q8 to use in subsequent questions]

**Q8 mc Please tick which of the following forms of contact you have had with SCIE or which SCIE resources you have used in the past year**

### Resource/product

- 1  I read/used a knowledge review  
(Knowledge reviews pull together knowledge from service user, research and practice. They describe what knowledge is available, highlight the evidence that has emerged and draw practice points. Available both in hard copy and online)
- 2  I read/used a practice guide  
(Practice guides are a free online resource which bring together information, research and current good practice about particular areas of social care)
- 3  I read/used a resource guide  
(Resource guides direct people to information about a particular area of social care, especially where there is a lot of information. Available both in hard copy and online)
- 4  I read/used a position paper  
(Position papers present a summary of a particular policy question, for example whether service user involvement has made a difference to social care services. Available both in hard copy and online)
- 5  I read/used a research briefing  
(A research briefing is a summary of information on a particular topic to update practice at the health and social care interface)
- 6  I read/used a SCIE report  
(SCIE produces reports from time-to-time about various areas of social care. Available both in hard copy and online)
- 7  I visited/used the SCIE Website  
([www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk))
- 8  I visited/used Social Care Online Website  
([www.scie-socialcareonline.org.uk](http://www.scie-socialcareonline.org.uk))

- 9  I received/read SCIE's Social Work Introductory Pack  
(Introductory pack for social work students)
- 10  I participated in a project with SCIE  
(SCIE runs or takes part in collaboration with other bodies and  
organisations from time to time)
- 11  I attended a SCIE launch or event
- 12  I made a personal enquiry
- 13  I attended a presentation/talk/exhibition by SCIE
- 14  I have never contacted SCIE  
(route to question 37)
- 15  Other (Please specify)  
(route to question 16 if this is only code selected)
- 16  Don't know  
(route to question 16)

If any of the first six options above are ticked, respondents are asked question 11 (regardless of whether they are chosen as the random response, see question 9 below). If none of the first 6 are ticked, q11 is not asked as it doesn't make sense for all other options.

**Q9 mc or sc if no effect or negative effect. What effect do you think your use of (Insert randomly select response from question 8 – not codes 14/15) has had, if any?**

**Please tick as many as you agree with.**

If more than one response is ticked at q8, one option is randomly selected for question 9 and a further random selection is made for question 11

- 1  Positively changed my knowledge/ understanding/ attitudes/  
expectations  
go to Q11
- 2  Encouraged reflections/ discussion or change in own practice  
go to Q11
- 3  Encouraged reflections about colleague's or organisation's practice  
go to Q11
- 4  Supported me/us in accessing or using services  
go to Q11

- 5  Supported change in organisation's practice/policy/services  
go to Q11
- 6  Improved my understanding & knowledge  
go to Q11
- 7  Negative effect
- 8  No effect

**Q10 mc Why do you feel your use of (Insert randomly selected negative response from question 9) has had a negative/no effect?**

- 1  I don't feel I learnt anything new
- 2  I found it too difficult to read/understand
- 3  There was too much text
- 4  I found it dull/uninteresting
- 5  I only read/used it a few times
- 6  I think a one off event doesn't provide enough information
- 7  I don't know
- 8  Implications for practice or policy not clear enough
- 9  No time to read or think through implications of what I read
- 10  Not relevant to me or my work
- 11  Other (Please specify)

**Q11 sc You told us earlier that you read/used [text replace according to answer at Q8] a SCIE resource (Insert randomly select response from question 8 NOT codes 7–15)**

**How easy was it to understand the information you received?**

- | Very easy                  | Easy                       | Neither easy nor difficult | Difficult                  | Very difficult             |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> |

Route to question 13 if 1, 2 or 3.

**Q12 mc Please can you tell us why you found it difficult/very difficult (omit according to response given at q11) to understand?**

- 1  Lots of technical words and jargon
- 2  Small writing made it difficult to read
- 3  Lots of text
- 4  Dull to read/listen to
- 5  Too much information
- 6  Not enough information
- 7  I knew most of it already
- 8  Poor layout/design
- 9  Other (Please specify)
- 10  Don't know

Q13 asked of all except if codes 14 or 15 or 16 only at Q8

**Q13 sc Have you received any written documentation from SCIE, if yes, how did you receive it?**

(all then go to Q16)

- 1  Yes, accessed or downloaded from the website.
- 2  Yes, literature sent out following telephone request.
- 3  Yes, literature sent out following internet/electronic enquiry.
- 4  Yes, other (Please specify).
- 5  Yes, attended a launch or event
- 6  Yes, worked in partnership with SCIE
- 7  No, I haven't received any written documentation
- 8  Don't know

### Section 3: SCIE website & Social Care Online

DO NOT ASK Q16 if code 7 at Q8 was selected – Go to instruction before Q18

#### Q16 sc Have you visited the SCIE web site (www.scie.org.uk)?

1  Yes      2  No

Route to question 18 if 1. Route to question 17 if 2

#### Q17 mc Why have you not visited the SCIE web site?

(Route to question 21 for all responses to this question)

- 1  I don't use the internet  
 2  I don't have access to the internet  
 3  I am unaware of the website  
 4  I have never needed to use the website  
 5  Don't know  
 6  Other (Please specify)

(If code 7 at Q8 randomly selected insert text - You told us earlier that you have used SCIE's website...)

#### Q18 sc How easy do you find it to use?

Very easy      Easy      OK      Difficult      Very difficult  
 1       2       3       4       5

#### Q19a sc Did you download any information from the website?

1  Yes      2  No

If Yes at Q19a, got to 19b. If no, route to 19d

#### Q19b sc How easy was it to find the relevant resource?

Very easy      Easy      OK      Difficult      Very difficult  
 1       2       3       4       5

**Q19c sc How easy did you find it to download the relevant product/resource?**

- Very easy    Easy    OK    Difficult    Very difficult  
1     2     3     4     5

**Q19d sc How often do you use the SCIE website (www.scie.org.uk)?**

- 1  Daily  
2  Once a week  
3  Fortnightly  
4  Monthly  
5  Every 3 months  
6  Less than every 3 months  
7  Rarely

DO NOT ASK question 21 if code 8 selected at Q8 - go straight to instruction before question 23

**Q21 sc Have you visited Social Care Online (www.scie-socialcareonline.org.uk)?**

- 1  Yes    2  No

Route to question 23 if 1. 22 if no

**Q22 mc Why have you not visited Social Care Online?**

(Route to Q27 first q in next section for all responses)

- 1  I don't use the internet  
2  I don't have access to the internet  
3  I am unaware of the website  
4  I have never needed to use the website  
5  Other (Please specify)

If code 8 randomly selected at Q8 insert text - You told us earlier that you have used Social Care Online...

**Q23 sc How easy do you find it to use**

Very easy      Easy      OK      Difficult      Very difficult  
 1       2       3       4       5

**Q25a sc How often do you use Social Care Online (www.socialcareonline.org.uk)?**

- 1  Daily
- 2  Once a week
- 3  Fortnightly
- 4  Monthly
- 5  Every 3 months
- 6  Less than every 3 months
- 7  Rarely e improve social care online?

Ask Q26 if answered yes at Q21

**Q26 mc What impact, if any, has Social Care Online had on your working practices?**

- 1  Positively changed my knowledge/ understanding/ attitudes/ expectations
- 2  Encouraged reflections or discussion about my own practice
- 3  Encouraged reflections about colleague's or organisation's practice
- 4  Supported me/us in accessing or using services
- 5  Carried out additional website searches/accessed additional information sources
- 6  Supported change in own practice
- 7  Supported change in organisation's practice/policy/services
- 8  Other (Please specify)
- 9  Has had no impact
- 10  Don't know

#### Section 4: How SCIE listens to practitioners and service users

Please tell us to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements

**Q27 sc SCIE is at the forefront of good practice in supporting users of services**

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>

**Q28 sc SCIE does not place the needs of service users first and foremost when planning and delivering products and resources**

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>

**Q28a sc SCIE listens to practitioners when planning and delivering products, resources and services**

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>

**Q29 sc SCIE welcomes partnerships with other organisations**

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>

## Section 5: Staff welcome and receptiveness to enquiries

DO NOT ASK Q30 if answered option 12 at Q8 - go straight to instruction before question 31

**Q30 sc Have you made an enquiry to SCIE either in person, by post, electronically or by telephone?**

- 1  Yes  
2  No (route to Q34)

INSERT the following TEXT IF randomly ANSWERED OPTION 12 AT Q8:  
You told us earlier that you have contacted SCIE

**We would like you to rate the level of service you have received from SCIE. Please can you indicate how you rate the performance of SCIE staff from very poor to very good for each category.**

**Q31 sc How do you rate the performance of SCIE staff in relation to the following areas?**

	Very poor	Poor	Ok	Good	Very Good	Don't know
Q31a.						
Efficiency	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>

Route to question 32 if 1 or 2

Q31b.

Helpfulness	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>
-------------	----------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------

Route to question 33 if 1 or 2, route to (q34) if 3,4,5 or 6

**Q32 mc Why do you think SCIE was inefficient in relation to your enquiry?**

- 1  It took a while to get the information I had requested by email/phone  
2  No response to my email enquiry  
3  Took a while to respond to my email enquiry  
4  Too bureaucratic  
5  Received product later than expected  
6  Received wrong product  
7  I never received the product that I asked for, as a paper copy was not available

8  I never received product requested

9  Other (Please specify)

**Q33 mc Why do you think SCIE was unhelpful in relation to your enquiry?**

1  Abrupt phone manner

2  Sounded helpful but never rang back/sent information

3  Couldn't address my enquiry

4  Other (Please specify)

## Section 6: London Base

**We would like to know the effect of SCIE being based in London. Please tick the statement which is closest to how you feel in response to each question.**

**Q34 sc What impact, if any, does SCIE being based in London have on your relationship with them?**

- 1  Difficult to arrange to meet with anyone face to face
- 2  Seems like a London focused organisation
- 4  Cannot attend any seminars/committee meetings held in London as is either too far to travel or too expensive
- 5  As I'm based in London I find SCIE also being based here helps
- 6  SCIE being based in London does not have a negative impact on my communications with them
- 7  I did not know that SCIE is based in London
- 8  No impact
- 9  Don't know
- 10  Other (Please specify)

**Q35 sc Is SCIE in touch with what is happening in your region/country?**

- 1  Yes (route to question 37)
- 2  No (route to question 36)
- 3  Don't know (route to question 37)

**Q36 mc Why do you feel SCIE isn't in touch with what is happening in your region/country?**

- 1  No representatives are based in my region/country
- 2  SCIE has little knowledge about my region/country
- 3  Don't know
- 4  Other (Please specify)

## Section 7: Views on the SCIE work programme

**Q37 Using the scale below please rate the overall performance of SCIE from very poor to very good under each category.**

	Very poor	Poor	Ok	Good	Excellent	Don't know
Q37a.						
sc Overall Quality	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>
Q37b.						
sc Accessibility	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>
Q37c.						
sc Overall being up-to-date	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>
Q37d.						
sc Overall Usefulness	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>

**Q38 sc What is your overall impression of SCIE's services?**

Very poor	Poor	Ok	Good	Very Good	Don't know
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>

ASK ALL

**Q40 mc How do you think SCIE can improve and enhance its services and products?**

- 1  Improve publicity/marketing
- 2  Less use of interactive formats/more hard copies
- 3  Make more relevant to practitioners
- 4  Shorter reports/publications
- 5  Produce more user friendly executive summaries
- 6  Produce more user friendly versions of all reports
- 7  Include more information on best practice in my field on the website
- 8  More information for users/carers/supporters on website
- 9  Include examples of social care policy from other countries on website
- 10  Link services to performance management frameworks
- 11  Link services to professional qualifications framework more directly
- 12  Include more online audit tools
- 13  Make resources more practical and less academic

- 14  Include detailed case studies of use of products in practice
- 15  Other (Please specify)
- 16  Don't know

**Q41 sc Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person, or have any form of impairment or long term health problem which affects your day to activities?**

- 1  Yes
- 2  No
- 3  Prefer not to answer

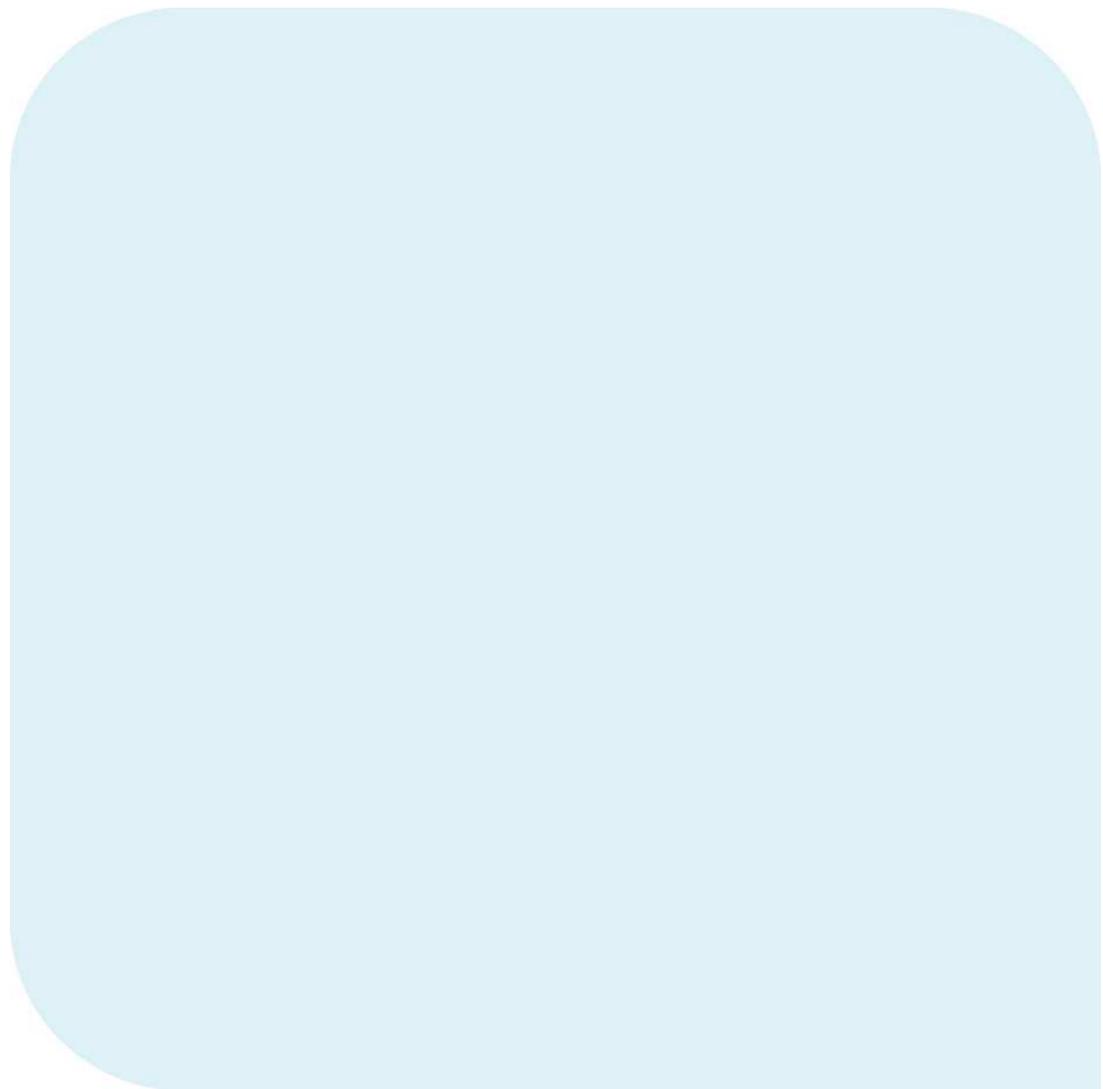
**Q42 sc Finally, we would like to know your thoughts on this questionnaire so we can improve it in future:**

- 1  It was ok
- 2  Far too long!
- 3  Most was irrelevant to me
- 4  Difficult to understand
- 5  Poor layout/design
- 6  It was long but I understand why
- 7  Other specify

Thank you very much for agreeing to take part. If you have any comments or queries about this questionnaire then please contact Kath Hennell on 0151 709 2181/ **kath@shipshape.uk.com** OR Kelly Hunt on 0151 707 8000/ **kellyhunt@innercitysolutions.co.uk**

To exit the questionnaire you can either navigate to another website or close this window

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