



Expanding the reach of reasonable adjustments

The Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG) Cancer Improvement Collaborative

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Reasonable adjustments in cancer care



Cancer care works for people with disabilities when services go beyond legal requirements and truly listen, adapt, and involve patients and carers



Reasonable adjustments, combined with personalised, compassionate care, enable equity for people with disabilities or long-term conditions and a cancer diagnosis

Why does this matter?

People with disabilities and long-term conditions often face additional barriers when accessing cancer care. Addressing these people's needs can be complex and multifaceted.

Previous research has focused on reasonable adjustments for individuals with learning disabilities or autism. This project broadens the scope to include physical disabilities, cognitive or sensory impairments and severe mental health conditions.

What we found

Areas for improvement:

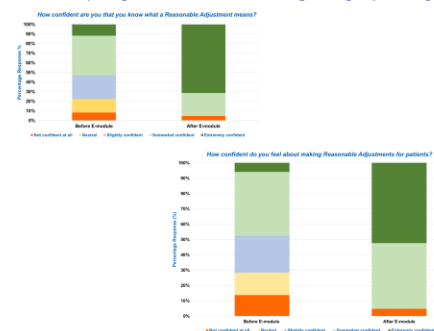
- Communication and coordination: Clearer signposting, longer appointments, better understanding of needs
- Support for family and carers: Tailored adjustments for caregivers, clearer explanations
- Compassion and empathy: Avoiding jargon, using accessible language, ensuring patients feel heard

Other key findings:

- ☐ Integrated approach to individual needs can ensure adjustments are accessible and effective
- ☐ Policies on reasonable adjustments must support both individuals' and their carers' needs, and recognise their dignity
- ☐ A first step to achieving this is to develop training for healthcare professionals to encompass a broader understanding of reasonable adjustments beyond legal categories.

Learning into action

200 staff responded to a survey measuring confidence before and after completing a 15-min e-module reflecting focus group learning:



Methods

- Thematic analysis
- Qualitative
- Coproduction

- ☐ Qualitative study involving 44 patients and carers across the South West
- ☐ Participants had experience of physical, cognitive, sensory, and/or severe mental health conditions
- ☐ Focus groups explored experiences before, during, and after treatment
- ☐ Training developed for staff in acute, primary and community services
- ☐ Key learning synthesised and condensed into a 15-minute e-module
- ☐ Impact evaluated via surveys involving over 200 professionals

This project was led by colleagues from North Bristol NHS Trust and University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust, part of the Bristol NHS Group. It was funded by the Somerset, Wiltshire, Avon and Gloucestershire Cancer Alliance, with support from the National Institute for Health and Care Research Applied Research Collaboration West and the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire ICB. It stemmed from an NHS England Cancer Improvement Collaborative initiative. Huge thanks to all who were involved, not least focus group attendees and our project team.

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Paper in Journal of Cancer Policy:



NIHR | Applied Research Collaboration West



Somerset, Wiltshire Avon and Gloucestershire Cancer Alliance



Bristol NHS Group Bristol | Weston

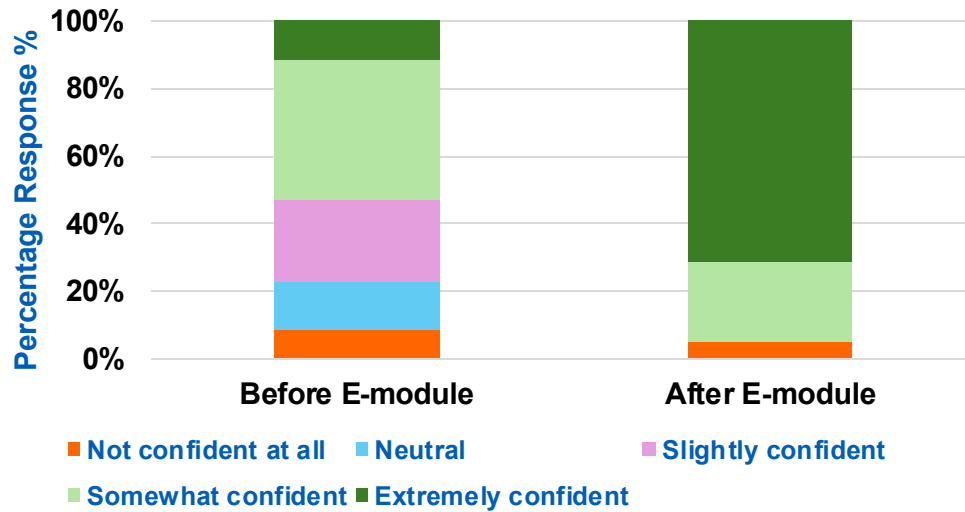
Learning into action e-module:



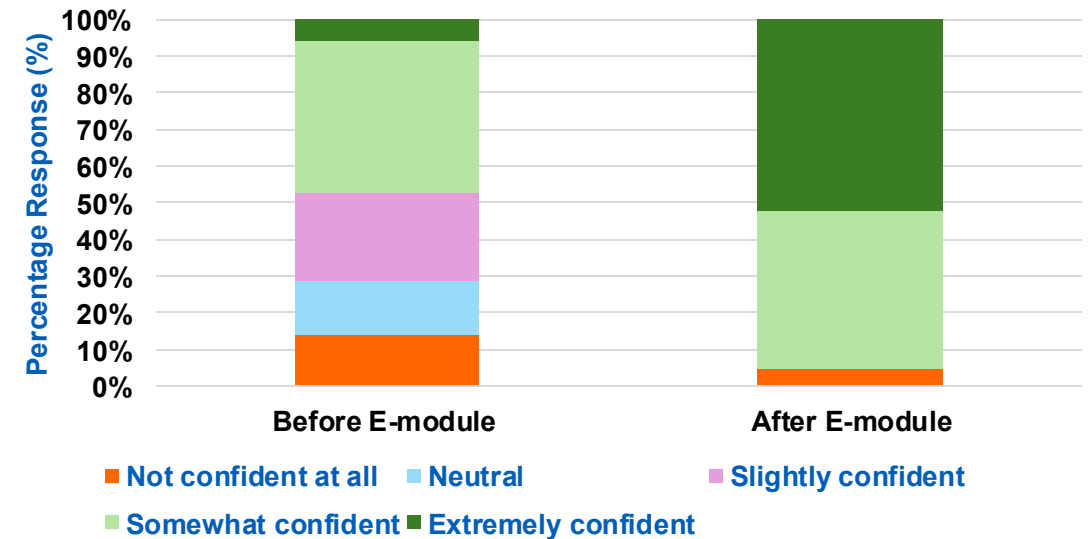
Learning into action

200 staff responded to a survey measuring confidence before and after completing a 15-min e-module reflecting focus group learning:

How confident are you that you know what a Reasonable Adjustment means?



How confident do you feel about making Reasonable Adjustments for patients?



Bristol NHS Foundation Trust Experience of Cancer Care Survey

77%

12) Do any of the following apply to you?

Please select all boxes that apply to you.

- ☐ I have a learning disability
- ☐ I am autistic
- ☐ I have a physical disability
- ☐ I have a cognitive impairment (such as dementia)
- ☐ I have a sensory impairment
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other or prefer to self-describe my disability (please state):

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Bristol NHS Foundation Trust Experience of Cancer Care Survey

81%

12a) Were you offered reasonable adjustments to meet your needs?

- ☐ Yes, definitely
- ☐ Yes, to some extent
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know/can't remember

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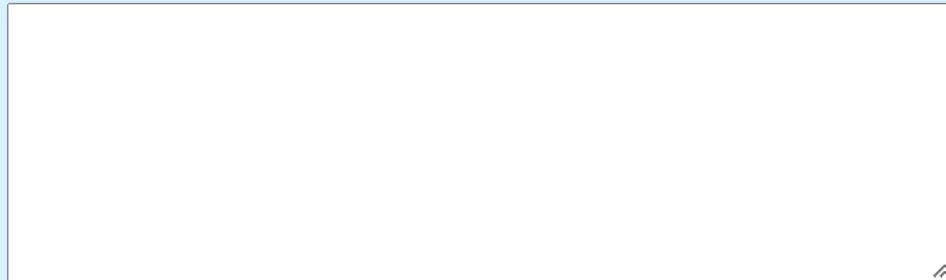
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Bristol NHS Foundation Trust Experience of Cancer Care Survey



88%

12b) What adjustments were helpful?

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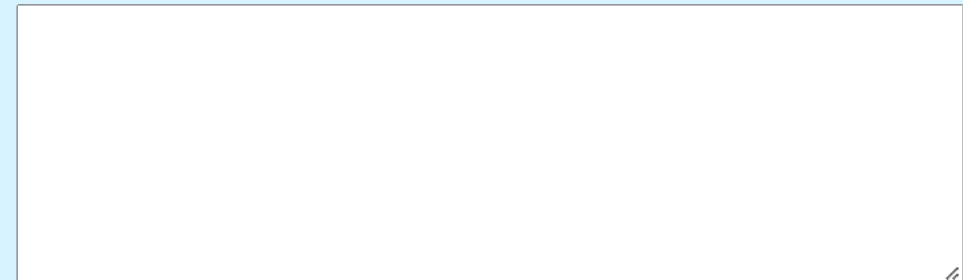
Bristol NHS Foundation Trust Experience of Cancer Care Survey



92%

12d) Is there anything we could have done to make services more accessible?

Going forward, please know that you are always welcome to ask for reasonable adjustments. Do let your team know what you need and they will do their best to support you.

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Ensure the equipment you're going to use
is appropriate,

Video example

Search '**Reasonable adjustments in cancer care**' on NHS Learning Hub or Google '**SWAG Reasonable Adjustments**'

A close-up photograph of a person's hand resting gently on the shoulder of another person. The hand is light-skinned and has short, clean fingernails. The person whose shoulder is being touched is wearing a grey t-shirt. The background is blurred, showing hints of a clinical or office setting with red and blue elements.

Thank you