

Over A Brew Session

27 October 2023

Digital and the Human Touch
Self Assessments



**CURATORS
OF CHANGE**

directors of
adass
adult social services
eastern region

connecting innovating improving



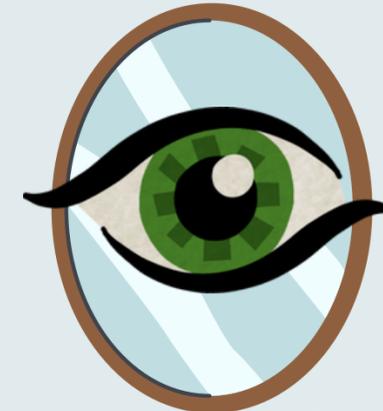
Guide

Grab a brew



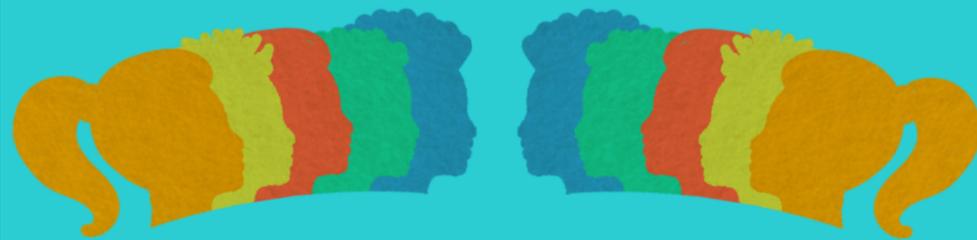
Once you have your brew,
ask someone to be the timer

Reflect



Each person has time to think
about the questions for ONE
minute

Have your say



Each take it in turns to say
your response
(TWO mins each)



Use the rest of the time to
reflect on what's been said
(no fixing)

Still got some time?



Talk about:
What's not been said?
What are your lasting thoughts?

INFUSED WITH THE CAMERADOS PRINCIPLES

MIX WITH PEOPLE WHO
ARE NOT LIKE YOU



ASK SOMEONE WHO IS
STRUGGLING TO HELP YOU



NO FIXING - JUST BE
ALONGSIDE ONE ANOTHER



IT'S OK TO DISAGREE
RESPECTFULLY



IT'S OKAY TO BE A BIT
RUBBISH SOMETIMES



TO BE SILLY IS TO
BE HUMAN



INTRODUCTION

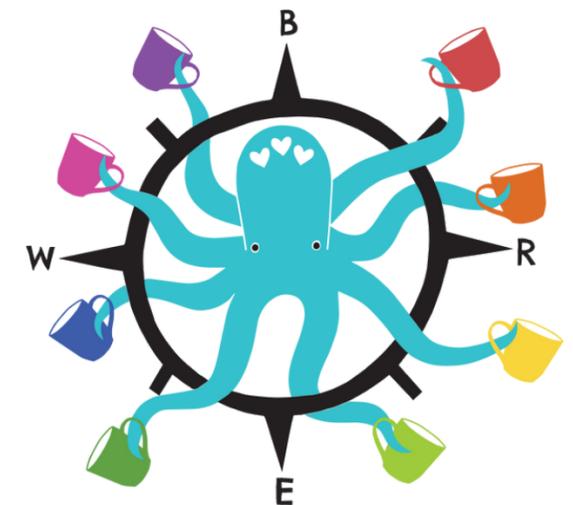
This Over A Brew session was driven by a desire to understand better how people feel about digital solutions to things like assessment and review and the ongoing conversations councils have about going ‘digital by default’

The OAB team decided to focus on a local authority online self assessment process, which included a series of short animated videos that explained each domain and sub-domain on the assessment. There were more than 30 videos embedded in the online assessment, along with an online version of a ‘standard’ assessment form.

The team presented the overall process and played one of the videos to participants which sparked some interesting discussions in breakout rooms about how it made people feel, the patronising nature of the videos, and an apparent lack of coproduction, or understanding of the diverse needs of people who may access an online self-assessment process.

This summary includes the feedback shared by people during the Over A Brew conversation, and on the flinga board, and concluded where many of these conversations concluded – what needs to change ‘is more about the human interaction – rather than a mechanistic process!’

It challenged local authorities present to work very closely with their involved public to ‘carefully design and test our self-assessment’



THE EXPERIENCES SHARED IN THE DISCUSSION FOCUSED ON:

33 people attended the session to share ideas, insights and views... Over a Brew



1

Don't digital by default

2

Start from the audience's point of view

3

Use co-production methods to consider CONTROL, FOCUS and TONE

4

Use co-production methods to TEST, REVIEW and IMPROVE approaches

1

Don't Digital by Default

Some people have an active preference for a digital offer - BUT

- A range of assessment approaches should be offered. Self assessment and digital should not be the only option, nor should it be hard to find the 'human' approach.
- Online assessments can be good as a complementary process but they can't replace face-to-face human assessments.
- Online assessments need to be more strength based, using open questions, for example *What a persons best life could look like ?*

From an accessibility point of view: not very engaging, lack of coproducing, not personalised, lack of engagement with people. Not very neurodiverse, Very authoritarian

It does need to be changed in the language and how this comes across and speaking as autistic person it is a terrible process.

EDI issues and maybe have different versions for e.g. young people, older people - so people can identify more with the process

People are individuals-one size doesn't fit all. Digital is complimentary not instead of human interaction

If you're in crisis you won't be able to consume or process this

What about people with complex needs, so this means EDS Autism and Complex PTSD

Needs very careful engagement, design and testing.)

Tough if it doesn't work for people with complex needs. We don't fit in boxes.

It feels that Autistic people are not involved in the whole future of self assessment

Feels like information overload



2

Start from the audience's point of view

Recognise the assessment itself is often a source of stress

Coproduce the approach with diverse groups of people to support better ways to meet the needs of a wide range of audiences.

Including :

- People in the midst of a crisis (online is not appropriate here)
- People with different disabilities including those who are neurodiverse
- People who are from diverse backgrounds and heritage
- Carers
- People who have negative experiences of 'authoritarian' approaches
- People with complex needs , ptsd, trauma responses
- People of different ages , genders and sexuality

I think we need to think about the audiences and how we make things accessible for them

Never on my watch would I have people in crisis having to self assess - we need a whole range of responses of which self assessment may be one

Thinking about accessibility in self-assessments e.g. for autistic people - 'typical' conversations may not work and digital might be better. It's an opportunity.

It's been a great reminder to not assume anything when working with our residents to 'co-produce' our online forms

Carers assessments - we need to explore this too

Need to start again - work with people who draw on services to make it more positive. Need to co-produce it.



3

Use co-production methods to consider **CONTROL, FOCUS and TONE**

Don't need to teach people e.g. if you don't drink water you'll be dehydrated.

The tone was a bit authoritarian

Focused on "getting a service not a life"

Lack of cultural competency

It is very patronising and insulting

Could there be real talking heads or some sort of lived experience of social care to explain the sort of things the assessment is looking for.

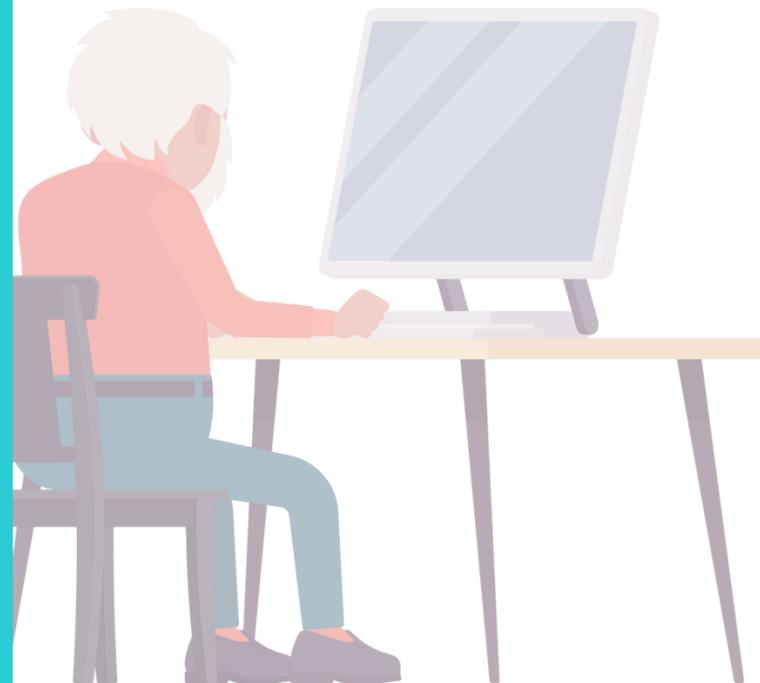
Well intended but comes across as patronizing

People aren't told they can take more control over their assessments. I don't let the social workers in my house - we meet in coffee shops. It means they have to take us as we are, no value judgements.

Lacks personalisation

It is crucial that:

- The person feels they are in the driving seat, they have **control**.
- **Focus is on enhancing a person's life and opportunities** - not getting a set of services
- **Tone** does not feel judgmental, exclusionary or authoritarian.
- Online and media has a high risk of feeling patronising to some.
- Online and media may be enhanced by real life stories and talking heads rather than 'characters, avatars, cartoons'



4

Use co-production methods to TEST, REVIEW and IMPROVE approaches

- Use learning from tests and naturally occurring incidents like Covid to continuously improve.

It is more about the human interaction – rather than a mechanistic process!

Move away from identifying someone as a medical condition and towards a human with passion, skills and gifts

During covid it was a disaster

We'll work very closely with our involved public to carefully design and test our self assessment (in the same way we have with other online forms)

If it's not co-produced it's not going to be good!

FINAL REFLECTIONS

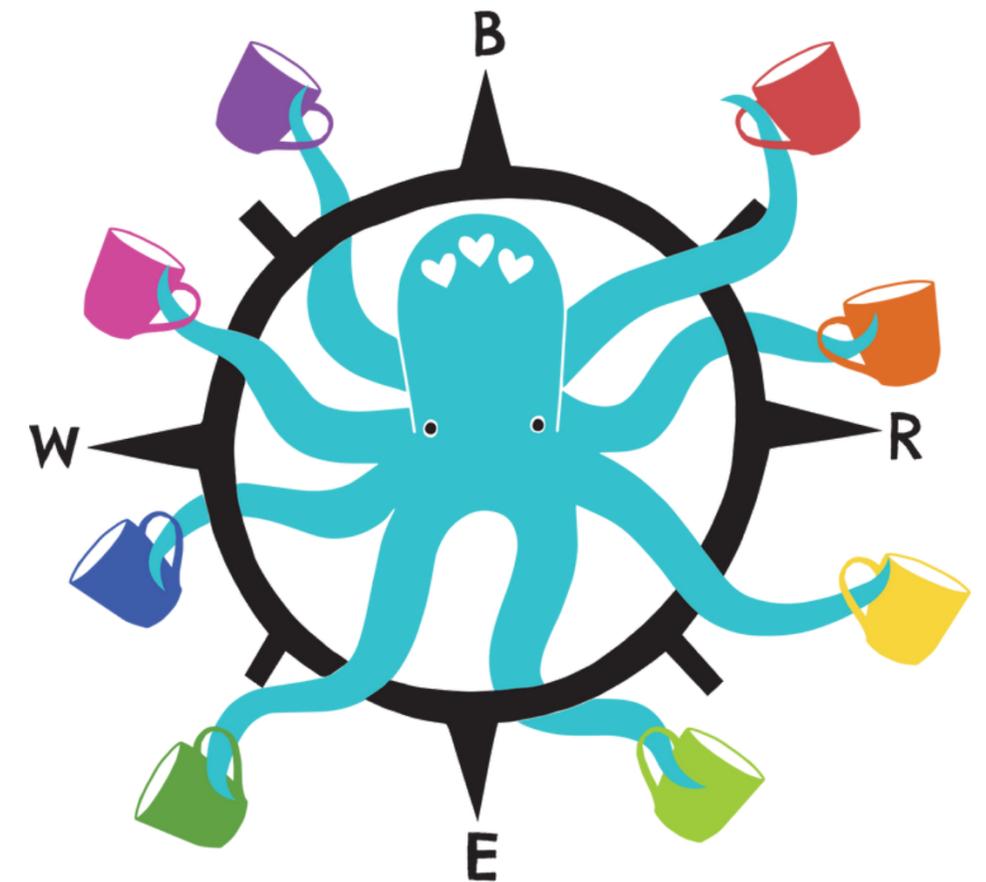
Services need to ask themselves:

- How can self assessments and digital solutions be more human and accessible?
- How can assessment approaches be co-produced from the point of view of the diverse people who need them?

We know that effective co-production can ensure:

- A decent level of control for the person assessed
- Focus stays on the person 'living a good life' rather than 'receiving a package of services'
- The right tone is used

Assessment processes should be subject to continuous improvement through methods that include co-production



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**Thank
You!**

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**Please join us for the next session on
Friday 24th November to talk about
Housing and the NHS... Over a Brew!**