

➤ **Independent research and cost analysis of the use of Just Checking and the Just Right approach to identify appropriate levels of care for adults with learning disabilities.**

**Research by the University of Birmingham  
Financial Analysis by KPMG**



➤ **Just Right is an approach that makes use of Just Checking activity monitoring equipment to provide data about the activity of service users with learning disabilities, combined with advice about person-centred planning.**

**The data is used by care staff to discuss whether the current package of support is appropriate, or whether care can be reduced or adjusted to better meet the needs of the service user.**

## Summary of key research findings

➤ Just Checking and the Just Right approach provide information that can be used to design more appropriate packages of care for adults with learning disabilities or to confirm that packages of care are appropriate.

The Just Checking/Just Right approach is viable, acceptable and useful to service providers and commissioners of care for adults with learning disabilities.

The research identified that changes could be made to care packages in all nine local authorities taking part in the research.

KPMG undertook an independent financial analysis of the research results, to identify the costs associated with over or under-provision of care and the impact that the Just Checking/Just Right approach could have.

KPMG's financial analysis found that, where potential changes in care packages could be identified and where financial information could be supplied by care providers, the over-provision of care exceeded the under-provision of care. When extrapolated to a 12 month period there was a potential over-provision of care (potential savings) of £1.577 million and an under-provision of care of £692,000.

The KPMG analysis found that, even taking into account the need to remedy the under-provision, Just Checking would pay for itself within 9 weeks.

Providers reported a range of outcomes from being involved in the Just Right project including improved outcomes for service users, improved person-centred support and achievement of goals, greater independence and autonomy for service users, having objective data on which to base decisions, identifying previously unknown issues, ability to reconfigure the support to a more appropriate level, reassurance that current and new support packages are effective, changes in culture, policies and practice and building good relationships between commissioners and providers.

Successful implementation is dependent on how well stakeholders receive the approach. A holistic Just Right approach is needed to enable Just Checking to be used to best effect. A narrative around person-centred planning, identifying over-care, improving quality of life and increasing independence and autonomy, is needed to drive change.

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## Background

➤ Research illustrates that expenditure on adults with learning disabilities has increased substantially in recent years. The number of adults with learning disabilities is increasing, they are living longer and, in general, the level of care required increases with time. This trend translates to additional care costs for a local authority whose statutory duty it is to provide sufficient care to adults with learning disabilities. In 2014-15, the expenditure on care for adults with learning disabilities in England was almost £5bn which was approximately 30% of the £17bn gross expenditure on adult social care.

Movement monitoring service, Just Checking, made a successful application for a Small Business Research Initiative grant from SBRI Healthcare, a NHS England initiative which aims to promote UK economic growth whilst addressing unmet needs and enhancing the take-up of good practice. The grant was for a study, which had the aim of providing impartial evidence of the efficacy and economic case for using Just Checking and the Just Right approach in the care of adults with learning disabilities.

Just Checking had already developed a technology based service that was being used by 80% of local authorities to assess older people with dementia who were living alone. The technology is installed in the accommodation and sends data signals back to a remote unit from its sensors, allowing the activity of each adult to be monitored. It was proposed that this new technology could also support local authorities to evaluate the level and appropriateness of care in place for adults with learning disabilities.

**“In 2014-15, the expenditure on care for adults with learning disabilities in England was almost £5bn, which was approximately 30% of the £17bn gross expenditure on adult social care.”**

## The Just Right project

### ➤ Just Checking define the Just Right approach as:

'Just Right' builds on pioneering work in supported living and residential care of adults with learning disabilities. The Just Checking technology shows when service users are independent and when they call on care staff; the effect of staff actions; and the appropriateness of care plans. It highlights to NHS and adult social care commissioners where over-care exists, and how it can be changed to be more person-centred, leading to better outcomes for service users and more economical and sustainable services for commissioning bodies i.e. getting the care 'just right'.

#### **The Just Checking system has the following features:**

- Motion sensors which are placed in the homes of service users with learning disabilities
- Continuous monitoring and transmission of monitoring data to a central secure server
- A secure proprietary web based software that combines data collected from sensors and visually presents it in a graphical format to aid interpretation
- Secure portal that care managers can log in to and examine and print charts
- Customer support team that provides both technical support and assists care managers in the interpretation of data

#### **Objectives of Just Right project**

Demonstrate how information provided by Just Checking can be used:

- a. to provide improved understanding of the capability of individuals amongst care staff, commissioners, other interested professionals and family members;
- b. to identify over-care, proving where care is appropriate, or to provide evidence for making changes to improve care of individual service users
- c. as a tool for developing alternative ways of giving positive support to individuals and developing their independence.
- d. as a long term audit tool to ensure care remains appropriate and the person stays safe.

Demonstrate how the Just Right approach can contribute to changes in policies, working practices and culture.

Provide solid, reliable, conclusive and compelling evidence that is acceptable to social care commissioners (and service providers) to warrant their investment in activity monitoring to drive economic and care improvements.

## Methodology / sample

➤ Just Checking was able to secure the engagement of nine local authorities. The local authorities were asked to install the Just Checking technology into a sample of residential or supported living accommodation units in which adults with learning disabilities were accommodated. All nine local authorities outsource the accommodation and care requirements to external care providers.

The University of Birmingham was commissioned to undertake both a formative evaluation that would provide information on factors that determined the successful implementation of the Just Right approach and early impact assessment of the outcomes generated from the installation of Just Checking equipment in participating service providers.

The evaluation involved collecting both quantitative and qualitative baseline data before installation and follow-up data at six months.

Financial data was collected for a cost consequence analysis undertaken by KPMG to identify potential cost savings.

The nine participating local authorities were Birmingham City Council, Essex County Council, Herefordshire County Council, Liverpool City Council, London Tri-borough, Newcastle City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Oxfordshire County Council and Suffolk County Council.

Most individuals resided in supported living accommodation with shared tenancy agreements. The majority of tenants had a person-centred plan (89 per cent).

33 different providers took part in the Just Right project. Typically each local authority had three to four providers enrolled in the pilot. These included small (18 had less than 10 service users) and larger providers in terms of number of service users in the pilot. The average number of service users per provider was 12.6.

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## Research findings

### ➤ KPMG made the following observations:

- Providers identified no change in care provision for 38% of the tenants, a potential over-provision for 34% and a potential under-provision for 28% of the tenants.
- From the sample, there was £1.577 million of over-provision of care identified (potential savings) when extrapolated to a 12 month period and a potential under-provision of care, of £692k.
- The annual cost of hiring Just Checking for this sample was £144k. If this sample were representative of the adults with learning disabilities population, we would expect Just Checking to pay for itself within 5 weeks. Even after taking into account the additional cost of remedying the under-provision identified through the project of £692k, Just Checking would pay for itself within 9 weeks.
- All local authorities showed a potential over-provision of care. For the majority of local authorities (seven of nine) the potential over-provision identified was greater than the under-provision.
- The average cost of care was £991 per week.
- The most prevalent conditions/needs of the tenants recorded in the baseline surveys, in order of frequency, were “personal safety and self-harm”, “anxiety and distress”, “requires personal care and physical support”, “challenging behaviours” and “disturbed sleep pattern/walking in night”. It was common to see combinations of these conditions recorded for a tenant.
- There was no identifiable correlation between conditions/needs and potential under or over-provision of care (and therefore savings)
- There appeared to be no clear correlation between tenants residing in a single or a multiple accommodation unit and whether potential under or over-provision of care had been identified.

**“Just Checking would pay for itself within 9 weeks.”**

## Research findings

### ➤ Changing packages of care

The University of Birmingham research identified potential changes to care packages for one in five tenants (20 per cent). This figure varied between provider and between local authority.

For 80 per cent of service users no potential for change was identified. The overwhelming reason for this was that the Just Checking data had confirmed that the current level of support was appropriate. Other reasons why providers had not identified any potential changes included the level of care being specified by the local authority and the constraint of living in shared accommodation with shared support.

The University of Birmingham findings are based on 380 service users, including those where providers were unable to provide financial data on the support they received. The view of the University of Birmingham authors is that the figure of 20% (for which potential changes in packages in care were identified) would rise over time, with continued use of the Just Checking/Just Right approach.

This is because the project timescale of six months was not long enough for some providers to be able to use the data in a sophisticated way and some providers wanted more time to continue to assess the data.

KPMG undertook an independent financial analysis of the research results, to identify the costs associated with over or under-provision of care and the impact that the Just Checking/Just Right approach could have.

The KPMG figures are based only on those service users where care managers were able to provide financial data on the support received and where follow-up surveys were considered sound for analysis purposes. The KPMG figures are an analysis of 253 service users, across the nine local authorities.

**“The University of Birmingham research identified potential changes to care packages for one in five tenants.”**

## Research findings

### ➤ Outcomes achieved from the project:

#### **There were a wide range of outcomes that providers reported from being involved in the project, including:**

- Improved outcomes for service users
- Improved person-centred support and achievement of goals
- Supporting person-centred care planning
- Greater independence and autonomy for service users
- Having objective data on which to base decisions
- Identifying previously unknown issues
- Ability to reconfigure the support to a more appropriate level
- Reassurance that current and new support packages are effective
- Changes in culture, policies and practice
- Building good relationships between commissioners and providers

#### **Factors affecting the implementation of the Just Right/Just Checking approach**

- Fear of the technology
- Anxiety about assistive technology
- Obtaining consent
- Service user resistance (individuals with autism were less accepting of the equipment)
- Culture of dependency and risk aversion amongst care staff
- Concerns about cost cutting

- Narrative around Just Checking (if focused on cost cutting)
- Focus on the negative aspects of the data (if used to identify staff performance concerns)
- Concerns around interpreting the data
- Lack of knowledge of good quality alternative telecare offer (to help reduce packages of care)
- Lack of occupational therapy support / input

#### **Enabling factors that support the successful implementation of Just Right/Just Checking:**

- Keeping an open mind
- Communicating effectively with staff, service users and families
- Involving stakeholders
- Supporting staff to build understanding and confidence
- Taking a pragmatic approach to consent
- Quickly responding to tenants concerns (for example in placement of sensors)
- Understanding how best to use the equipment
- Commissioners and providers working in partnership.
- The importance of external support (providers praised the support they received from Just Checking and occupational therapists were also an important source of support)
- Mainstreaming the Just Checking reporting into weekly tasks

➤ This report is a summary of independent research undertaken by the University of Birmingham (produced October 2016) and independent financial analysis undertaken by KPMG (produced September 2016)

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