



Listening to the Voice

Dr Rachael Newport

Preparing for data collection

- Think about group composition
- Understand communication preference
- Allocate contingency budgets
- Value expertise appropriately
- The Social Model of Disability
- Consent & Participant Information Sheets (PIS)

Visually Impaired Participants

Environment

- If possible, use naturally lit rooms.
- If in unnatural light check if the lighting needs to be adjusted to the needs of participants.
- Choose a location with low or no background noise.



Visually Impaired Participants



Visual Tools

- Provide large print for partially sighted (font type size 16 point, with minimal bold, styling). Do not use, Blocks of CAPITAL LETTERS, underlined or italicised text. Spacing should be a minimum of 1.5 or double.
- For text reader options use clear, formatted headings, to help screen reader users.
- Do not use images of text to convey information as they cannot be read by screen readers. Do not use text boxes.
- Ensure text can be resized and background and text colours can be modified to suit the reading preferences of users.
- Make sure links are written out to describe the document or resource they send the user to.
- Make sure information or explainer videos convey the same information in the audio voiceover as the images on a screen.
- Decorative images should have empty alt text so they can be ignored by screen readers. (tick for decorative purpose for screen reader to ignore)
- For Baille transcription. Documents need to be in work or plain text format. Photos or images require labelling and a description of content and significance of the image.
- Avoid text box use as screen reader will not pick up the text

Visually Impaired Participants

Participant Information Sheet Adaptations



Date: September 2025

**Title of document: Disability Sport Wales |
Focus Group Participant Information Sheet**

Frequently asked questions

Question: Who is carrying out the research

Answer:

- 1. Name, Title, Organisation**
- 2. Name, Title, Organisation**

Question: Why you were selected to participate

**Answer: You have been chosen because you, or
someone you care for, is living with a disability in North
Wales.**

Question: What do we want to know about

Visually Impaired Participants



Use of a Video

- Use audio description – either have a separate audio track describing what is happening on screen (traditional Audio Description) or use the narration or dialogue to tell a story that matches the visuals (integrated description- preference).
- Subtitles should be provided, preferably optional closed captions as provided by YouTube. Don't rely on the automatic function, always import a SubRip (SRT) subtitles file or edit the automatic captions manually. Otherwise, subtitles must be burned in at an accessible size relative to how the video will be viewed

Visually Impaired Participants



Online Focus Group

- Online Whiteboards – Such as a Miro board are not suitable for VI without adaptation for screen reader
- Ensure all participants microphones are unmuted - to prevent the VI participant wondering if people are still there.

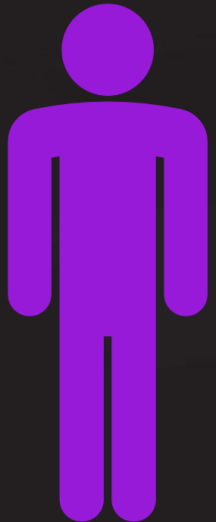
Hearing Impaired Participants

Focus Group/ Interview

- Hearing impaired participants may want or need a sign language interpreter present.
- Choose a location with low or no background noise.
- Prioritise locations with Hearing Loop functionality
- Allow extra time for translation and feedback. Keep focus groups short, check in with the participants regularly as to how tired they are providing several breaks to prevent tiredness.
- For accessible online workshops for people with hearing impairments, implement a combination of quality captioning, visual aids, clear communication protocols, and strategic planning. Different individuals have different needs, so offer a range of accommodations and ask for participants' specific requirements in advance.



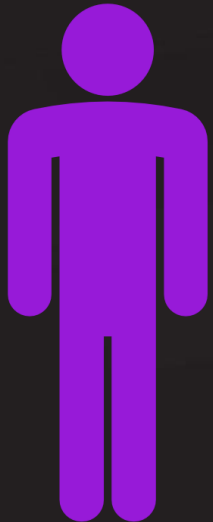
Cognitive Impaired Participants (Incl. Memory-loss, dementia, acquired brain injury)



Focus Group Communication

- Do not assume understanding of terms or approaches
- Ask prior to the focus group which tools they are familiar with using. Familiar tools are best. E.g. Some may have used stickers with happy and sad faces to indicate good and bad.
- Make sure terms are easy to understand. E.g. for Barriers, use 'what stops you'. Make examples clear and relevant to assist understanding.

Cognitive Impaired Participants (Incl. Memory-loss, dementia, acquired brain injury)



Consent and participant information sheets

- Adults who cannot consent for themselves should be included in research, if you do this in line with relevant legal frameworks and ethical principles.
- Ensure what capacity an adult has is optimised and used as far as possible to enable that individual to make decisions for themselves.
- The legal framework that governs the inclusion of adults not able to consent for themselves in research in England and Wales – is the Mental Capacity Act
- Provide a participant information sheet (PIS) in advance of any engagement. The PIS should have a reading age no greater than age 9-11(Equivalent school year 5/6).
- Detail in clear language who is leading the research. It is useful to add clear photographs and a brief bio to help participants feel more at ease.
- Explain the following:
 - Why they have been chosen
 - The location and its accessibility
 - What they have to do
 - How their contribution will be used
 - Where their information will be kept
 - Their right to withdraw
 - Their right to a copy of the outputs
 - Contact details for questions

Learning Impaired Participants (Incl. learning disability, dyslexia, Neurodivergent)

Prior to Engagement

- Autism Manchester undertook research to understand what is important to autistic participants in research. They recommend that meaningful impactful transparent research with an opportunity to inform both the design, process and reporting of the research is key.
- For transparency and to familiarise participants with the research team, provide introductory information such as photos, why the researchers are interested in autism perspective for research, what the perceived impact of the research will be on the autism community, and a brief biography about the key people running the research. Including explicit and accurate information about exactly what the participant is going to be asked to do.
- Use multimedia (videos and letters) as well as local contact/ key workers to inform participants what to expect.
- Send photos of the venue and room, but only if this is not going to be altered. As quick changes of plan can be challenging¹.
- For food and drink provided, seek preferences before the event.



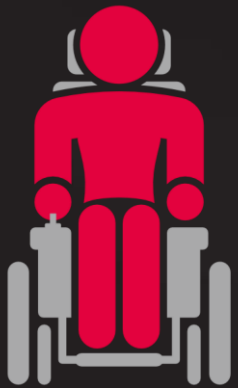
Learning Impaired Participants (Incl. learning disability, dyslexia, Neurodivergent)

Environment & on the day

- For the focus group select a quiet, bright and open area for the session adjacent to a comfortable, quiet relaxation area with subdued lighting.
- Autism presents in very varied ways; small or individual sessions best help the comfort of participants. If participants are nonverbal work alongside a trusted key worker or carer. Provide regular breaks and ensure participants can step away if they want to.
- A good way to avoid anxiety and reduce stress is to provide a taxi service or organise alternative transport. Having a person to meet and greet participants at the door of the building, transport station or a familiar place is considered useful.
- Stick to the plan as presented in the forward information. Recap on the approach, how it will be used and the opportunity to receive outputs, in varying forms as requested- video, written report, verbal feedback.



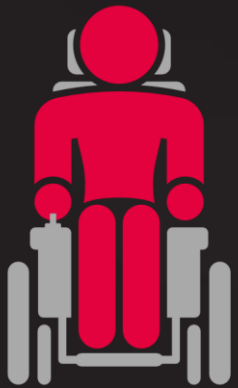
Physical disability (mobility impairments)



Prior to the day

- Make sure the venue is fully accessible, not just within the site, but has easy access to public transport links, accessible parking and enough facilities within the building to accommodate people with additional needs (adequate disabled toilet access).
- If possible, use a building already familiar to the group- for example, a community centre, organisation or fully accessible venue that already hosts events for the disabled.
- Provide clear instructions on the purpose of the day. As well as practical information of how to access the venue.
- Establish if it is easier to run the focus group in person, online or hybrid. Set up a miro board that online participants can access the same resources and interact.

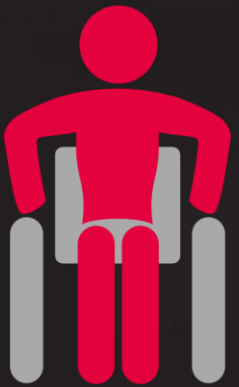
Physical disability (mobility impairments)



On the day

- Choose a room that can comfortably accommodate wheelchair users and people with other aides. If a round table is being used makes sure there are gaps for wheelchair users at each table and that the table is an appropriate height.
- Provide enough space for participants and support workers.
- If using physical resources such as handouts and post it notes, make sure all participants have their own copy.
- Provide regular and lengthy breaks to accommodate everyone's comfort.
- If food is being provided ensure preference and allergies are considered.

ALL Participants



After the engagement

- Always offer participants the opportunity to see a copy of the research outputs, and the outcomes. If the research is used to facilitate change in anyway feed this back. Including, supporting evidence for policy changes, submissions on local government proposals, or for any other system change opportunity. By creating a feedback loop of research impact, participants will gain trust in the organisation and will be more likely to engage in future research.

Qualitative Data Collection – 2-hour plan



- On arrival Drinks available and iPad with youtube clip to watch
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yVBeUXyuvxl&feature=youtu.be>
- Welcome Housekeeping - Welcome in Welsh
- Intros (facilitators and participants) – ice breaker (maybe introducing each other and or remembering a fact about each other)
- Consent Redistribute participant information sheets capture verbal or written consent.
- Outline recap What are we doing, why, how it will be used and consent to be included and for filming/ or audio recording.
- Session 1 Getting around and serving our needs- We could use photo-diaries of people's experiences for this. And expand from the barriers noted, to explore if others in the social model of disability were present
- Break Bathroom, stretch, etc.
- Session 2 Getting into nature (parks, beaches, greenspaces, canal/ river paths).
- Break Bathroom, stretch, etc.
- Session 3 Accessing groups - Organised sports and community groups
- This can be more focussed on amenities in the region. What's available, what's available but not accessible. Etc. Again- what are the barriers from the social model of disability
- Facilitator synthesis What we have heard, feedback, add anything else
- Wrap up Thank you, what's next, further information etc.

Qualitative Data Collection – Facilitator Check list



- All participants have a copy of the PIS in the most appropriate form to take away
- Consent to participate and to be audio recorded sought
- All participants have opportunity to view the video
- Check all needs are met, both in terms of the comfort of the environment (heat, light, access and withdrawal space) & accessibility including to workshop resources
- Food & drink available (check for allergies)
- Clear timeframes for each session- set timer
- Rule of focus group read out and displayed
- Online participants able to access resources and engage (check connection, sound, visual and any interactive tools -Miro)
- Facilitators understand their roles, note takers, support, tech & enquiry
- Reminder that participants can stop the session & withdraw at any point & there are no wrong answers
- Audio record session. If using a mobile phone set to flight mode to avoid disruption of recording
- At the end- check everyone is okay.
- Take details of those that want to receive outputs
- Reimburse on the day and provide an incentive thank you payment (cash or voucher- making sure vouchers are available for online shopping)

Focus Group Rules



Be curious and respectful- everyone's opinion is valid even if you don't share it



Allow people time to express their views



Avoid jargon & acronyms



Take space & make space. If you're usually quiet challenge yourself- if you usually speak try and leave room for other voices



No one knows everything - Together we know a lot



Try not to talk at the same time



Turn your phone to silent

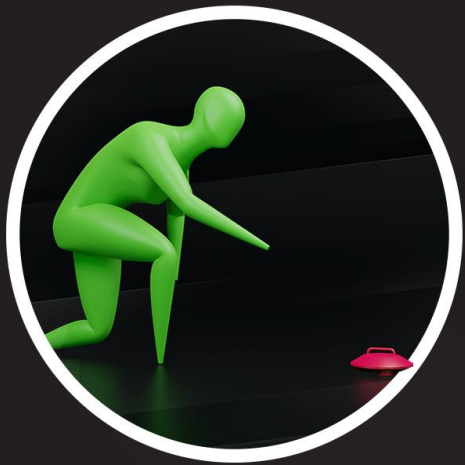


If you are unclear, ask for an explanation

Ice Breaker - Purpose

- Using an icebreaker at the beginning of a session serves several important functions:
- It allows the participants to get to know one another, and the facilitators
- Straightforward easy activities settle nerves and allow participants the opportunity to understand the group dynamic using information that is familiar to them. For example. There is no wrong answer to the question, what's your favourite type of food.
- Icebreakers allow the facilitator a chance to identify whether everyone is engaging, and if any adaptations made are meeting the needs of the participants. So that adjustments can be made before the data capture starts.
- The break allows the facilitator to check any data collection recorders are working
- They also give the group something to do if people are running late.

Ice Breaker - Ideas



- Basic Intros- suitable for all
- First person says their name and states one fact (this can be a theme such a favourite food, sport, hobby, TV show or colour etc.)
- Name Game (Suitable for when the group don't know each other all ready
- In a circle where they can see everyone else clearly. Pick someone at random to say their name out loud and their fact. The next person continues, but after saying their own name, they repeat the first person's name and fact. This continues with each person repeating one more name. Reassure people towards the end that it's ok if they get stuck & encourage the others to jump in to help if anyone is lost.

Physical barriers •

Things around us

Places aren't built for everyone. There might be steps without ramps, or information that's hard to understand.



• Economic barriers

Money worries

Many people with disabilities have less money because finding work is hard. And living with a disability can cost more - for equipment, help, or transport.



Social Model of Disability

Society's unwillingness to meet the needs of people with impairments is disabling

Social barriers •

How people treat us – this can be both the treatment by strangers- which can include intimidation or negativity. But can also include loved ones trying to protect us



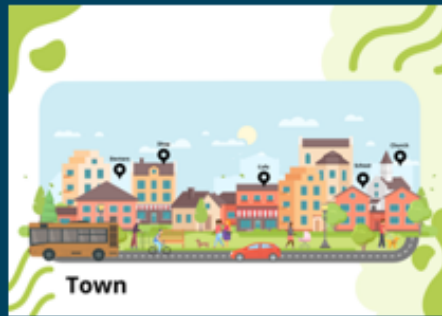
Psychological barriers

How we feel inside – This is based on our own sense of what we can achieve. This can be fear of trying the unknown or fear due to previous negative experiences.



Engagement Tools

Barriers to physical activity in day-to-day life



Physical activity is not just about engaging in sport.

Having accessible towns allows people to build physical activity into their day-to-day life, as well as accessing social and economic activities.

Barriers to physical activity in the natural environment



Wales has a beautiful natural environment, with beaches, hills, forests, rivers, parks and lakes.

Being physically active in natural environments is good for both physical and mental wellbeing.

Barriers to accessing organised physical activities



Organised physical activities can improve wellbeing and help people learn new skills and connect socially.

The GOGA strategy supports disabled and non-disabled people in activities together.

Social Model of Disability



Participants added stickers to indicate barrier they face.

Their experiences are captured using the social model of disability

Facilitator Synthesis

Town- summary
notes

Nature-
summary notes

Activities-
summary notes

Overall –What
have I heard?

Session wrap-up

- Discussion summary:** • A brief summary of the main items discussed during the retrospective
- What Went Well:** • Highlights of engagement.
- What Needs Improvement:** • Areas where to improve.
- Ideas for Improvement:** • Suggestions and ideas for what we can do differently moving forward.
- Outcomes:** • The key outcomes
- Action Items:** • A list of action items.
- Open Questions:** • Any unresolved questions or issues that need further discussion or clarification.
- Next steps**
 - What we will do with the data
 - What options are there for further involvement
 - Contact details for any outputs and updates
 - Thank you for time and present reward for involvement- voucher, cash, present



Diolch!