

# Summary report on a Survey Questionnaire piloting the use of video chat app to facilitate the delivery of Irish Advocacy Network peer advocacy services during the Covid Pandemic.

The Irish Advocacy Network's (IAN) response to the isolating effects of Covid restrictions, first introduced March 2020, was to ensure weekly schedules to deliver peer advocacy services in approved centres went uninterrupted. It was acknowledged that the use of technologies whilst delivering the IAN's peer advocacy service remotely was not fully utilised and that key resources would be required if the technologies were to be further exploited. Technology that would maintain some semblance of face-to-face contact IAN peer advocacy staff have with clients was pursued. The IAN purchased iPads (as advised by our IT systems support, LegalTech) to pilot peer advocacy through the video chat app technology. There was a need to monitor and evaluate this service over a specific period. Below is a summary report of the findings from a survey questionnaire on the use of video chat app delivered through iPads provided at 10 approved centres sites across the country. The survey was conducted over an 8-week period, April to June, 2020.

## Summary findings

91 respondents participated in the survey. Approximately one third of questionnaires were incomplete. However, on the main, this cohort responded to the majority of questions in the survey. These responses were accounted for in the report.

The following questions and measures were asked of participants:

### First 4 Likert scale questions:

It was easy to access the peer advocacy services through the technologies  
I felt connected during the peer advocacy session through the technologies  
I found I could speak freely to my peer advocate through the technologies  
I felt listened to by my peer advocate through the technologies

Totally disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Totally agree
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### Five-point single Likert scale question

How likely is it that you would recommend Irish Advocacy Network services through technologies to someone in the same position as you?

unlikely						likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	

Of the 335 total responses to the first 4 Likert scale questions, 99.1% were on the positive segment of the scale (agree or totally agree). Of the 99.1%, 17% were in the Agree category and approximately 83% in the Totally Agree category. Reasons for the neutral or negative oriented responses to these questions, (three in total, or approximately 0.9%), are explored later below.

On the five-point single Likert scale question, 98% (R=82) of the 84 respondents provided a maximum of 5 on the Likert scale signifying a maximum level of satisfaction of peer advocacy services facilitated by the video chat app technology. One participant chose 0 (approximately 1%, R=1), with another choosing 3 on the scale of likelihood in recommending Irish Advocacy Network peer advocacy services through video chat app (approximately 1%, R=1). Regards the former, it was reported that the screen froze ending in unexpected disconnection to the service before resuming the conversation. The latter indicated a Neutral response with the participant leaving a comment at the end: "Need to talk to someone and can't talk to computer". The neutral or negative responses to the Likert scale questions are considered directly below.

### **Open ended questions**

Themed responses to open ended question at the end of the survey questionnaire were: 1. Positive and optimistic (the technologies were well received with optimism about future usage expressed); 2. Ambivalent but appreciative (a general apprehension toward the technology was shared, yet appreciation and even enjoyment communicating through the video chat app accompanied these comments); 3. Virtual space or physical presence? (an obvious desire or preference for the physical presence of the peer advocate was expressed); 4. Problems, issues and concerns (primarily, perceived threats to privacy and inconsistency with internet coverage)

### **Recommendation**

Given the overwhelming positive response to this survey it is recommended that peer advocacy, delivered through the application of video chat apps be continued. Extension of this service beyond the current 10 sites should also be determined. This should help the IAN develop the capacity to deliver a blended service and augment it's capacity into the future.