

Department for Work and Pensions

Research Report No 583

Disability and Carers Service Customer Service Survey 2008

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A report of research carried out by Ipsos MORI on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions

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Glossary

| | |
|------|--|
| AA | Attendance Allowance (paid only to customers aged 65+) |
| CA | Carer's Allowance |
| CAU | Carer's Allowance Unit (based in Preston) |
| DBC | Disability Benefit Centre |
| DCPU | Disability Contact and Processing Unit |
| DCS | Disability and Carers Service |
| DLA | Disability Living Allowance |
| DWP | Department for Work and Pensions |
| PDCS | Pension Disability and Carers Service |

Summary

This summary presents the key findings from the Disability and Carers Customer Service Survey 2008. It also discusses the implications of these results in terms of the evident strengths of the organisation and areas for potential improvement.

Overall attitudes to the Disability and Carers Service

Overall satisfaction with the Disability and Carers Service (DCS) remains very high, although the proportion of customers saying they are **very** satisfied has decreased slightly since 2007. The majority of customers would speak highly of the DCS, although again over the past year there has been a slight decrease in the proportion doing so spontaneously. The decline in the proportion of customers who are **most positive** about the service coincides with a slight increase in the proportion of customers who report having difficulties or problems with the service, as well as a decline in satisfaction with aspects of telephone contact with the service (as explored further overleaf).

The DCS continues to perform well on its Customer Promise/Vision Statement. In particular, a high proportion of customers feel that the DCS recognises its customers as individuals and treats them with respect. However, a smaller proportion agrees that the DCS understands the needs of customers and listens to their views. As shown below, both these aspects are strong drivers of advocacy of the service, so may warrant further focus in order to improve customers' overall perceptions of the service.

As with overall satisfaction and advocacy, there has been a slight decline in the proportion of customers who are **most positive** about aspects of the Customer Promise/Vision Statement. In comparison to 2007, fewer customers **strongly** agree that DCS services are easy to access and although a high proportion still agree that the DCS uses clear written and spoken English this has fallen slightly since last year.

What drives advocacy?

Our analysis shows that as in 2007, attitudinal factors, such as customer satisfaction with DCS services, are key in understanding customers' advocacy of the DCS. The

two factors which have the biggest impact on advocacy towards the DCS are: agreeing that the DCS listens to the views of its customers and agreeing that the DCS provides its customers with an efficient service. The DCS may want to concentrate on these factors in order to improve the (already high) advocacy rating. It is worth noting that the top five drivers of advocacy are from the Customer Promise/Vision Statement, therefore highlighting that the DCS is correct to focus on these aspects of customer service and may want to prioritise these aspects to further improve advocacy.

Satisfaction with customer service

Satisfaction with the claims process is fairly high and has remained stable since 2007. Satisfaction with the notification letter is particularly high with the majority of customers satisfied it explained clearly what to do if they were unhappy with the decision, told them everything they needed to know and explained clearly why the decision had been made. However, as was the case in 2007, customers are less satisfied with the claim form itself, specifically that the questions asked on the claim form are easy to understand and that the claim form as a whole is easy to complete. Indeed, as seen below, the claim form continues to be the most commonly requested improvement to the service by customers.

The vast majority of customers who telephone the DCS are satisfied with each aspect of the call and many are **very** satisfied. Customers are particularly satisfied that staff are polite, that they spoke to a person rather than a recorded message and that staff answered in plain and simple language. Customers are least satisfied with being phoned back at an agreed time. However, there has been a decline in satisfaction levels with aspects of telephone contact including: staff phoning back at an agreed time, the time taken to answer the phone, speaking to a person rather than a recorded message. There has also been an increase in the proportion of customers who report difficulties getting through on the phone.

The decline in satisfaction with aspects of telephone contact coincide with organisational changes including the introduction of a new telephone system on the Helpline and the Internet Protocol Contact Centre and also the introduction of new validation procedures with which Helpline staff were required to familiarise themselves. DCS monitoring data shows that there was a corresponding increase in complaints over the same period. These organisational changes may, therefore, partly account for the decline in satisfaction with aspects of telephone contact as noted above.

In line with the results from 2007, satisfaction with written contact tends to be lower than for telephone contact, although it still remains relatively high. Customers are very satisfied with the ease of understanding the reply and the reply telling them everything they need to know. Since the last survey, there has been a slight decline in the proportion of customers saying they are very satisfied that the reply to their letter was easy to understand.

Strategic customer service priorities

As in 2007, strengths of the DCS **during the claims process** are clear and comprehensive communication. For instance, customers are very satisfied, and also feel it is very important, that when making a claim **the letter explained clearly what to do if they were not happy with the decision**. This aspect of written contact is an organisational strength for the DCS as well as **telling the customer everything they need to know and explaining clearly why the decision has been made**.

Again, similar to a year ago, the DCS' strengths when it comes to customers **contacting them** are the **politeness of staff, speaking to a person rather than a recorded message and staff using plain and simple language**.

Whilst the factors mentioned above are strengths of the DCS, priorities for improvement can be identified from aspects of the claims process or contact with the service which customers think are important but with which they are less satisfied. A continuing priority for the DCS with regard to the **claims process** is making **the claim form easy to complete** and making the **questions in the claim form easy to understand**. As in 2007, other priorities for the DCS are to ensure **the questions asked help customers describe their needs and circumstances fully** and that **the guidance with the claim form is easy to understand**.

In terms of **contacting the DCS**, as in 2007, key priorities for improvement are **telephoning back at the agreed time and telling customers' everything they need to know straight away**.

Methods of contact

Consistent with last year, family and friends are the most common source from which customers have heard about DCS services, followed by members of DCS staff and leaflets from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

By far the most common way of contacting the DCS is by telephone, followed by letter. These are also customers' two most favoured methods of communication with the service, indicating that communication channels are well matched to customers' needs. When it comes to how the DCS contacts customers, as in 2007, letters are slightly more popular than phone calls.

Around three in ten customers have asked the DCS to contact them in another format, most frequently in large print. The proportion of customers who received information in the requested format has improved significantly since 2007, with the percentage of customers being contacted in the desired way increasing in every instance. However, there remains a substantial proportion of customers who do not have their request for an alternative format met. More positively, however, satisfaction among customers who have received communication in large print is high. This does fall with regard to other forms of contact such as Braille and textphone.

Tackling sources of dissatisfaction

Although the proportion of customers who say they have had difficulties or problems with the DCS remains relatively low, it has increased slightly over the past year. The most commonly experienced problems are challenging the decision on a claim, followed by a lack of communication or information. Getting through on the phone and being given different answers to the same question by staff are also frequently mentioned difficulties.

Of those who had difficulties, nearly one in four made a complaint. Although the proportion of customers saying they are dissatisfied with how their complaint was handled has decreased since 2007, these views still outweigh those who are satisfied with the handling of their complaint.

One of the recommendations from Ipsos MORI's 2007 report was to, '*consider exploring the reasons for the relatively low reporting of problems*'. Following this, the results for the 2008 customer survey do appear to show that a larger proportion of customers are reporting problems than in 2007 and that a greater number of these customers say that they went on to make a complaint. That said, there does still appear to be an under-reporting of complaints across DCS Business Units and this is one aspect that may be examined under the new Pension, Disability and Carers Service (PDCS) 'Complaints Centre of Excellence', set up as a direct response to the recent National Audit Office report on complaints handling across DCS.

Consolidating the 2007 findings, the improvement customers would most like to see to the service the DCS provides continues to be easier to understand claim forms. This is followed by easier to understand guidance and help filling in claim forms.

Key differences between customers

Age

In line with 2007, older customers continue to be more satisfied with the DCS overall and more likely to speak highly of the DCS than younger customers. This is a common finding in research on perceptions of public services. Older customers are also consistently more satisfied across the various aspects of the service and the fulfilment of its Vision Statement.

In terms of contacting the DCS, older customers are the least likely age group to use the telephone and are more likely to prefer face-to-face contact than younger customers. They are also more likely to receive help or guidance when filling in their claim forms and are more likely than younger people to think this assistance was useful. However, older customers are less likely than their younger counterparts to have experienced difficulties or problems when dealing with the DCS. This may reflect the lower expectations of public services generally held by older customers rather than an actual difference in experience.

Business Unit

Matching trends recorded in 2007, the Carer's Allowance Unit (CAU) and AA North East (AA NE) consistently outperform the Disability Benefit Centres (DBC's) and the Disability Contact and Processing Units (DCPU's). CAU and AA NE customers are significantly more likely to be satisfied with the service they receive from the DCS than customers overall and linked to this are more likely to speak positively of the service. Positive ratings are also common across various aspects of the service for Mota customers.

Looking across the DBC's, customers of Edinburgh DBC¹ are consistently less likely to be satisfied about the DCS overall as well many aspects of the service. Manchester DBC tends to receive the most positive ratings.

Allowance

Those receiving or claiming Attendance Allowance (AA) are consistently the most satisfied group of customers and the most likely to speak positively of the DCS. This is likely to reflect the older age of AA customers. Carer's Allowance (CA) customers are also highly satisfied with the service they receive from the DCS as shown through the positive ratings of the CAU. Customers receiving or claiming Disability Living Allowance (DLA) are consistently the least likely to be satisfied with the DCS overall as well as various aspects of the service and are also least likely to speak positively of it.

DLA customers are considerably more likely to have experienced a difficulty or problem when dealing with the DCS than both AA and CA customers and are more likely to mention a range of improvements to the service.

Disability type

As in 2007, customers with psychological or behavioural disabilities are less likely to be satisfied with the service they receive from the DCS or to speak highly of the service than customers overall. Customers with sensory disabilities tend to be more satisfied and positive across the board.

In terms of communicating with the DCS, people with learning disabilities are most likely to favour telephone contact both to get in touch with the DCS and to receive communication from them. Customers with psychological or behavioural disabilities are more likely to have written to the DCS than customers overall.

¹ Although Edinburgh DBC closed during 2008 with its work gradually transferring to DCPU1 at Warbreck House and the AA NE Command in CAU, the survey relates to interactions with DCS that took place between May and the end of July 2008 when a proportion of Edinburgh's customers that was sufficient for survey purposes, was actually still dealing with the Edinburgh DBC. It should be noted, however, that a small number of ex-Edinburgh DBC customers will also have been captured in the sample surveyed for DCPU1 and AA NE.

Customers with disabilities concerning movement and the brain and psychological or behavioural disabilities are more likely to report having problems or difficulties when dealing with the DCS than customers overall.

Length of time since initial claim

Customers who made their initial claim less than three years ago are again more satisfied with DCS services than those who made their initial claim longer ago. Customers who made their initial claim three years ago or earlier are more likely to have experienced difficulties or problems when dealing with the DCS than those claiming more recently.

Those making an initial claim within the last three years are significantly more likely to be aware that you can receive DLA while in work or training than those making a claim further in the past.

Event and outcome type

As is to be expected, those customers receiving an unfavourable outcome are considerably less likely to be satisfied with the DCS overall as well as across most aspects of the service than those customers who experienced a favourable outcome. Customers with an unfavourable outcome are also far less likely to speak positively of the DCS.

Related to this, those customers appealing a decision about their claim are more likely to be dissatisfied with the DCS than customers overall.

Ethnicity

White customers are more likely to be advocates of the DCS than ethnic minority customers and are also more likely to be satisfied with the service they receive from the DCS. While there has been no change in the proportion of ethnic minority customers who are satisfied with the service since 2007, there has been a decline in the proportion who would speak highly of the service.

Ethnic minority groups are more likely to claim to have had problems or difficulties when dealing with the DCS than white customers and this has increased since 2007. Ethnic minority customers are also more likely to submit a formal complaint if they have a problem.

White customers are consistently more satisfied than those from minority ethnic groups with aspects of both telephone and written communications. While the telephone is reported by both customers of a white and ethnic minority background to be the best way for them to contact the DCS, this is true of significantly more white than ethnic minority customers. A greater proportion of ethnic minority customers than white customers, also prefer letters to both contact the DCS and to receive communication.

As in 2007, ethnic minority customers are much more likely than white customers to request alternative formats from the DCS and to have received help with the claims process.

In order to understand better, and more fully, the experiences of ethnic minority customers of the DCS, a qualitative research project has recently been carried out by Ipsos MORI. The research explored the reasons why ethnic minority customers may be less satisfied than white customers. The report findings will be available during summer 2009.²

Appointees for children

Satisfaction with the DCS is considerably higher for appointees for children than for customers overall. However, the proportion of these customers speaking highly of the DCS is broadly similar to the average.

Appointees for children are more likely to agree that the DCS is fulfilling each aspect of the Vision Statement than customers overall. For instance, they are more likely to agree that the DCS provides them with an accurate and efficient service, that it keeps them informed, that they are able to access DCS services easily, that the DCS uses clear written and spoken English and that the DCS can be trusted.

Appointees for children are particularly likely to have telephoned the DCS in the last 12 months with satisfaction levels with aspects of both telephone and written contact on a par with the average across all DCS customers.

Customers with mental health issues

As in 2007, customers with psychological or behavioural disabilities³ tend to be among those least satisfied with the DCS. Advocacy levels are also lower among this group than customers overall.

These customers are more likely to say that each aspect of the claim process is important, but they are less likely to be satisfied with them.

A greater proportion of customers with psychological or behavioural disabilities claim that they have experienced difficulties or problems when dealing with the DCS than customers overall. The most commonly encountered problems are challenging the decision on their claim, a lack of communication or not being kept informed, and being given different answers to the same question by different staff. Again, this is consistent with results from the 2007 survey.

² Ipsos MORI conducted 35 in-depth interviews with customers from an ethnic minority background. In addition, we conducted a workshop with members of the voluntary sector and/or service providers involved in dealing with customers from an ethnic minority background in relation to welfare services.

³ Please see the appendices for an explanation of the disabilities included in this definition.

Conclusions and implications

Overall satisfaction with the DCS continues to be high. The key strengths of the organisation are:

- treating customers with respect and recognising them as individuals;
- providing all necessary information to customers at the claims stage;
- polite staff communicating in plain and simple language;
- communication channels are well-matched to customers needs.

There have also been some encouraging signs of improvement since last year:

- Provision of information in requested format has improved.
- Proportion of customers dissatisfied with how their complaint was handled has dropped since last year, although there is scope for further improvement as these customers still outnumber those satisfied with complaint handling.

However, we suggest focusing on the following aspects of the service:

- Demonstrating that you listen to the views of customers and providing an efficient service are the top drivers to advocacy of the service, so concentrating on these factors may help improve overall advocacy of the service.
- Aspects of the customer promise that have shown a decline in satisfaction levels since 2007 relate to accessibility and using clear written and spoken English and may warrant further attention.
- The decline in satisfaction with aspects of telephone contact have coincided with the introduction of a new telephone system on the Helpline and the Internet Protocol Centre. It may be worth investigating further the impact of these changes on customers' experiences of the service.
- The claim form, despite improvements in recent years, continues to be customers' top priority for improvement. It is important to continue monitoring customers' experiences of the claim form and making necessary improvements.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This report by the Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute, on behalf of the DWP, contains the latest measure of customers' experience of, attitudes towards and satisfaction with the DCS.

The DCS is a government organisation for disabled people and their carers. It is part of the DWP and was set up as an agency in November 2004. In April 2008, the DCS merged with The Pensions Service, to become the PDCS.⁴

Much of the primary business of the DCS is to administer claims for DLA, AA and CA. The DCS is delivered by:

- **nine** DBCs in the following locations: Bootle, Bristol, Edinburgh⁵, Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, Midlands, Wales and Wembley. The DBCs deal with new claims for DLA and AA and for three months after the decision on a new claim, deal with payments, changes in circumstances and requests to look at the claim again;
- **four** DCPUs that, after three months, (unless there is an outstanding issue) deal with future payments, renewals and changes of circumstances;
- **one** DCPU (DCPU 5) that deals with the end-to-end claims and maintenance process for the geographical area covered by the former Sutton DBC;

⁴ Please note that customers were asked about the DCS in the survey and we refer to the DCS throughout this report.

⁵ Although Edinburgh DBC closed during 2008 with its work gradually transferring to DCPU1 at Warbreck House and the AA NE Command in CAU, the survey relates to interactions with DCS that took place between May and the end of July 2008 when a proportion of Edinburgh's customers that was sufficient for survey purposes, was actually still dealing with the Edinburgh DBC. It should be noted, however, that a small number of ex-Edinburgh DBC customers will also have been captured in the sample surveyed for DCPU1 and AA NE.

- the CAU based in Preston that is responsible for administering CA to carers of disabled people;
- the Mota Unit, a specialist unit within the DCPU which deals with those customers who wish to use the Higher Rate Mobility Component of their DLA to lease or purchase a vehicle or powered wheelchair/scooter. For as long as the customer participates in the scheme, the Mota Unit assumes full responsibility for the maintenance of all aspects of that customer's case; and
- AA NE, which is based at the CAU in Preston and deals with new claims for AA from the North East region. For three months after the decision on a new claim it also deals with payments, changes in circumstances, and requests to look at the claim again.

1.2 Objectives

This project follows on from the Customer Service Survey carried out by Ipsos MORI on behalf of the DCS in 2007 and before that in 2006, 2005 and 2004⁶. The main objectives of this survey are as follows:

- to measure overall satisfaction with the service provided by the DCS;
- to measure satisfaction with individual elements of the service provided by the DCS, as well as customers' (perceptions of) actual experience;
- to gather customer priorities for improving this service;
- where appropriate, to rank these measures against previous results, so that the direction of travel for key performance indicators can be assessed;
- to analyse the key results by delivery unit, service channel, customer type and other key demographics (such as age, type of disability), as well as outcome type, event type and length of time as a customer;
- to feed back these results to the DCS, in order that it may improve its service to customers, and monitor progress against key performance targets;
- to demonstrate the DCS' commitment to consultation.

In line with these broad objectives this report contains individual sections which focus on:

- overall customer attitudes to the DCS, including measures of customer satisfaction and advocacy;
- views of DCS services;

⁶ Please note this report will discuss the findings from the 2008 survey and compare these to the results gathered in 2007. Comparison to data collected over past years of the survey will not be possible, given changes to the sampling method before the 2007 survey.

- customer experience of making a claim with the DCS;
- customer perceptions and experience of communicating with the DCS, such as their current and preferred sources of contact, and their attitudes towards various aspects of their service;
- problems experienced by customers when dealing with the DCS and complaints made, along with improvements they would like to see.

1.3 Methodology

Self-completion questionnaires were sent to a sample of 21,307 customers of DLA, AA or CA who had dealt with the DCS between 14 April and 14 July 2008 (for DLA and AA) or between 12 May and 12 August 2008 (for CA). In all, 17 Business Units in England, Scotland and Wales were covered, these being the nine DBCs, the five DCPUs, Mota, the CAU and AA NE.

Questionnaires were sent to approximately 1,000 customers in Mota, and each DBC and DCPU, along with 5,000 sent to CAU customers and 350 to customers of AA NE. As in previous years, the proportion of DLA to AA customers sampled was set to reflect the average caseload across the business for each customer group (65% DLA and 35% AA for the DBCs, 80% DLA and 20% AA for DCPUs 1-4, 65% DLA and 35% AA for DCPU 5 and 100% DLA for Mota).

For CAU customers, as last year, 5,000 customers were randomly selected from the full list of those who had been in contact with the CAU in the three-month period.

As in 2007, DCS supplied Ipsos MORI with scan data for DLA and AA customers who had been in contact with the DCS over the three-month period. Ipsos MORI drew the sample of customers to be approached to participate in the survey. This involved stratifying the sample according to event type to ensure that the profile reflected that of a typical period of activity as shown in the DCS MI portal. A specified number of customers were then selected from each Business Unit for each event type to reflect the overall profile of customers. As in 2007, the DCS also supplied Ipsos MORI with the sample of CAU customers.

Fieldwork was conducted between 29 September and 5 December 2008. In order to boost the response rate, one full questionnaire reminder was sent to all those who had not responded by 24 October 2008.

As in 2007, we developed two versions of the questionnaire, one for AA and DLA customers, and one for CA customers. While the questions themselves, in all but a couple of instances, were the same in both versions, the aim was to ensure that CA customers filled them in with respect to CA rather than as an appointee of

a friend or relative receiving AA or DLA in those instances where the customer selected fulfilled both roles.⁷

The total number of returned questionnaires is 8,589 – this represents an unadjusted response rate of 40%. The numbers of respondents within each area (based upon the Business Unit they use) are shown in the table below.

Table 1.1 Number of respondents within each area, by Business Unit

| Area/Business Unit | Valid sample n | Number returned n | Response rate % |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Edinburgh | 650 | 219 | 34 |
| AA North East | 350 | 193 | 55 |
| Leeds | 1,000 | 377 | 38 |
| Manchester | 1,000 | 390 | 39 |
| Bootle | 1,651 | 602 | 36 |
| Midlands | 1,000 | 383 | 38 |
| Bristol | 1,000 | 425 | 43 |
| Wales | 1,656 | 641 | 39 |
| Wembley | 1,000 | 375 | 38 |
| Glasgow | 1,000 | 391 | 39 |
| DCPU 1 | 1,000 | 404 | 40 |
| DCPU 2 | 1,000 | 392 | 39 |
| DCPU 3 | 1,000 | 399 | 40 |
| DCPU 4 | 1,000 | 381 | 38 |
| DCPU 5 | 1,000 | 426 | 43 |
| Carer's Allowance Unit (CAU) | 5,000 | 2,109 | 42 |
| Mota | 1,000 | 482 | 48 |
| Total | 21,307 | 8,589 | 40 |

Where appropriate, results in this report are compared with those of the Customer Service Survey carried out between October and December 2007. In 2007, self-completion questionnaires were sent to a sample of 20,401 customers who either claim or receive DLA, AA or CA. In all, 14 Business Units (including DBCs and DCPUs) in England, Scotland and Wales were covered, along with CAU and Mota customers from across England, Scotland & Wales, with approximately 1,000 customers in each area being sent a questionnaire (5,001 for CAU). In addition, 400 questionnaires were sent to customers in the AA NE Business Unit. A total of 8,199 completed questionnaires were returned, giving an unadjusted response rate of 40%.

⁷ Please note that any differences between questions asked of DCA/AA and CA customers are identified where appropriate within the text and also on the charts.

1.4 An inclusive approach

As with the two previous surveys, all efforts were made to encourage responses from the widest possible base of DCS customers. These included the offer to provide a copy of the questionnaire in Braille, large print, community languages, and having a full-time contact at Ipsos MORI to answer any queries about the survey, and if necessary read out the questions over the phone to respondents. The questionnaires were printed in black ink on yellow paper, in order to assist those with sight difficulties. Customers with speech or hearing difficulties could also contact Ipsos MORI free of charge using a minicom.

1.5 Presentation and interpretation of results

This report presents the overall topline findings and relevant differences between sub-groups in the analysis where there is a significant difference at the 95% confidence interval (see appendices for an indicative guide on statistical reliability). Aggregate results for all questions can be found in the appended questionnaire, 'marked up' with the survey findings.

Where percentages do not add up to 100%, this is due to computer rounding, the exclusion of 'don't know' categories, or multiple answers. Throughout the report an asterisk (*) denotes any value less than half a per cent.

1.6 Measuring perceptions

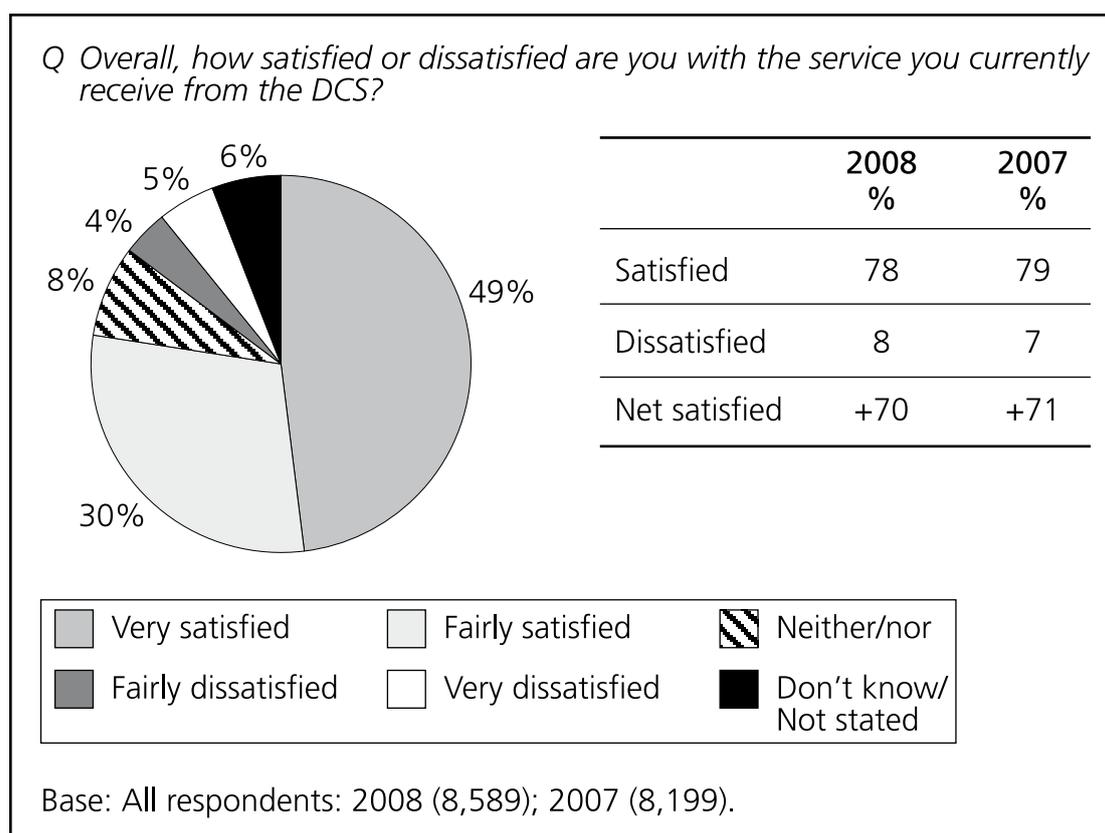
It is also worth pointing out that this survey deals with customers' perceptions at the time the survey was conducted **rather than facts**. Customers' perceptions, therefore, may not accurately represent the level and quality of services that are currently provided by the DCS. Indeed, one of the challenges will be to link these perceptions with other data that is available, for example performance indicators or other measurements of service quality.

2 Overall customer attitudes

2.1 Overall service satisfaction

DCS customers remain highly satisfied with the overall service they receive. As shown in the chart below, nearly four in five customers (78%) say they are satisfied, which is in line with 2007 (79%). Although the proportion of customers saying they are satisfied has fallen by 1% since 2007, this is not statistically significant. Almost half (49%) of customers are very satisfied, although this is slightly lower than last year (51%). Less than one in ten customers (8%) are dissatisfied.

Figure 2.1 Overall customer satisfaction



The overall performance of the DBCs has remained relatively stable over the past year, although the proportion of DBC customers dissatisfied with the service received from the DCS has increased from 9% in 2007 to 12% in 2008.

There is also some variation in the performance of the individual units. Customers from Manchester DBC and Midlands DBC are more likely to be satisfied with the service they currently receive from the DCS compared with customers across all DBCs (81% and 79% respectively compared with 74%) and findings for these two DBCs are unchanged from 2007.

Edinburgh DBC customers are the most likely to be dissatisfied with the service they receive from the DCS (20% compared with 8% of customers overall), and the level of dissatisfaction has increased since 2007 (10%). As well as Edinburgh DBC, customers of Bristol DBC, Bootle DBC and Leeds DBC are also significantly more likely to be dissatisfied with the service they currently receive from the DCS than customers overall across all DBCs (14% of Bristol DBC and 12% of both Bootle DBC and Leeds DBC are dissatisfied).

There are no significant variations between DCPUs, with all five units receiving satisfaction ratings between 77% and 81%. In DCPU 3 the proportion of customers reporting to be dissatisfied with the service they currently receive from the DCS has fallen from 13% in 2007 to 8% in 2008.

As was the case in 2007, CAU and AA NE customers are the most likely group to be satisfied with the DCS (84% and 87% respectively, compared with 78% of customers overall). Overall levels of satisfaction among Mota customers are also high and in line with the average across all customers (82%).

As in 2007, DLA customers are less satisfied than those claiming AA or CA (72% compared with 85% of AA customers and 84% of CA customers).

As also seen in previous years, older customers report higher satisfaction with the service they receive from the DCS (85% of customers aged 65 years and over are satisfied compared with 69% of 16 to 24 year olds). Indeed, older age groups are consistently found in public sector research to be the most satisfied with public services in general and this may be linked to lower expectations than younger age groups. Indeed, as seen in Chapter 6, when asked to rate the importance of aspects of telephone and written contact, younger respondents place greater importance on these aspects than older respondents.

White customers are also more likely to be satisfied than ethnic minority customers (80% compared with 73%), with customers from a black ethnic background in particular reporting the lowest satisfaction (71%) (for more details regarding differences between customers of different ethnicities please see Chapter 6).

Customers who made their initial claim less than three years ago are slightly more satisfied with the overall service than those who made a claim a longer time ago (81% satisfied compared to 78%), perhaps reflecting recent improvements to the service.

There are some significant differences in satisfaction among people with various types of disabilities; customers with psychological or behavioural difficulties are less likely to be satisfied (72%) compared with those with cardio-respiratory (78%), sensory (77%), movement (77%) and learning disabilities (77%).

Customers renewing a claim are most satisfied (85% compared with 78% overall), whilst those appealing are least satisfied (54% compared with 78% overall), most likely due to the fact that the latter have already experienced an outcome not to their liking. Understandably, those customers receiving a favourable outcome are far more likely to be satisfied (90% satisfied) than those who received an unfavourable one (51%).

2.2 Advocacy

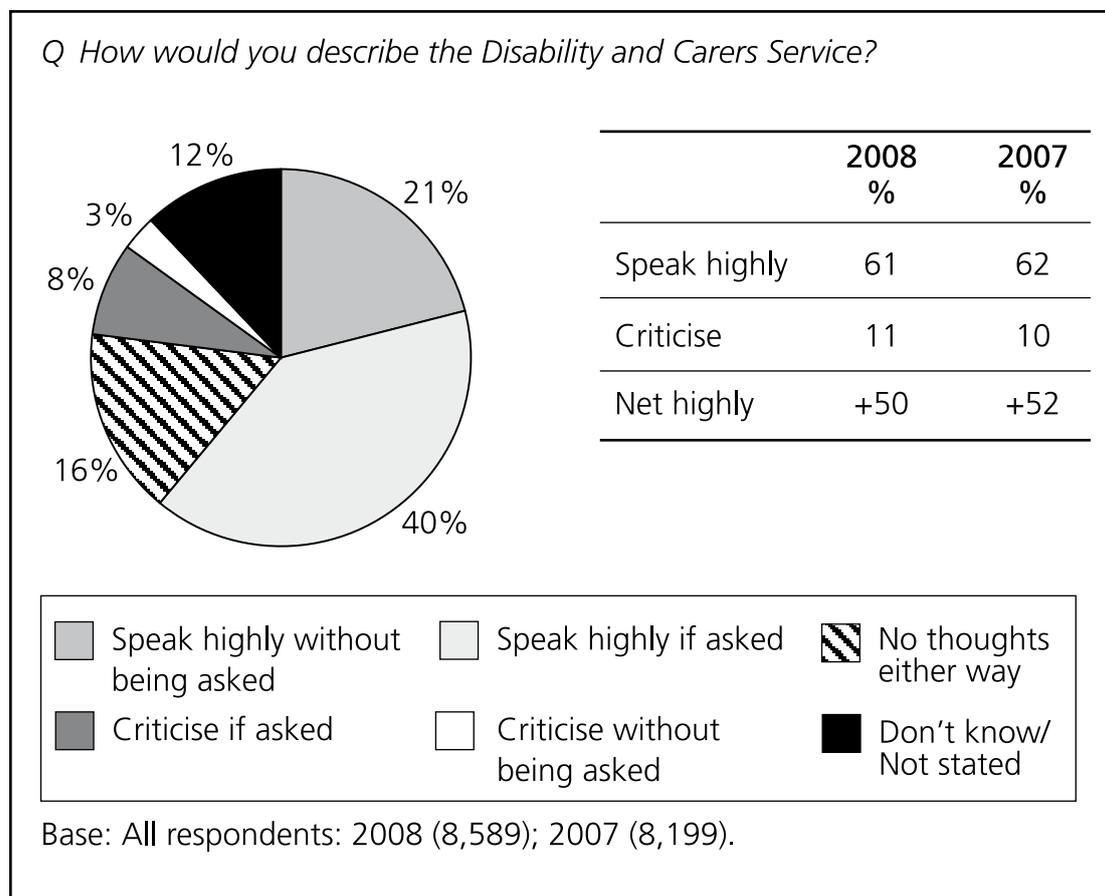
The extent to which customers speak positively in public about an organisation and its services – known as ‘advocacy’ – is one of the most effective measures of active support for the organisation and its goals, and as such is strongly associated with organisational success.

The majority of customers are advocates of the DCS: three in five (61%) would speak highly of the service, and one in five (21%) would do so spontaneously – without being asked: on both aspects findings are unchanged from 2007. Just one in ten customers (11%) would criticise the service, which is also in line with last year.

Among the DBCs, customers of Manchester DBC are most likely to speak highly of the service (63% compared with an average of 58% across all DBCs) linking with the higher levels of satisfaction among these customers.

As is the case for overall satisfaction, the customers least likely to be advocates are from Edinburgh DBC (45%), where ratings have declined since 2007 (56%). Similarly, the Business Units that receive lower satisfaction ratings are also less likely to be advocates of the service. This includes customers across Leeds DBC, Wales DBC and Wembley DBC who are less likely to be positive about the DCS compared with customers overall (55%, 56% and 56% positive respectively compared with 61% of all customers). Customers in Leeds DBC are significantly less likely to be advocates for the DCS now compared with 2007 when 61% were positive. Customers in Glasgow DBC are also less likely to be positive about the DCS compared to a year ago (60% positive compared with 67% in 2007).

DCPU customers are more likely to speak highly of the DCS than customers of DBCs. Across the DCPU, advocacy ratings are highest among customers of DCPU 1 (64% compared with 60% for DCPU overall).

Figure 2.2 Advocacy

Reflecting the high satisfaction ratings received by the CAU and AA NE, customers of these Business Units are also more likely to speak highly of the DCS than customers overall (68% and 76% respectively, compared with 61% overall). Advocacy amongst AA NE customers has also increased by four percentage points since 2007.

As is the case for overall satisfaction, customers of DLA are far less likely to be advocates than those claiming AA or CA. While just over half of DLA customers speak positively of the DCS (53%), this compares with 68% of CA customers and 71% of AA customers. Likewise, criticism from customers of DLA stands at 16%, compared with the average of 11% across all DCS customers.

Other notable differences in advocacy levels include:

- Older customers are more likely to be advocates than their younger counterparts (72% of those aged 65 and over, compared with 50% of those aged 16-24).
- Customers of a white ethnic background are more likely to be advocates than ethnic minority customers (63% compared with 51%).

- Customers making or renewing a claim are more positive than those appealing (63% and 64% respectively compared with 31%).
- Customers who receive a favourable outcome are more positive than those receiving an unfavourable outcome (72% compared with 38%).

2.3 Key drivers analysis – what drives advocacy?

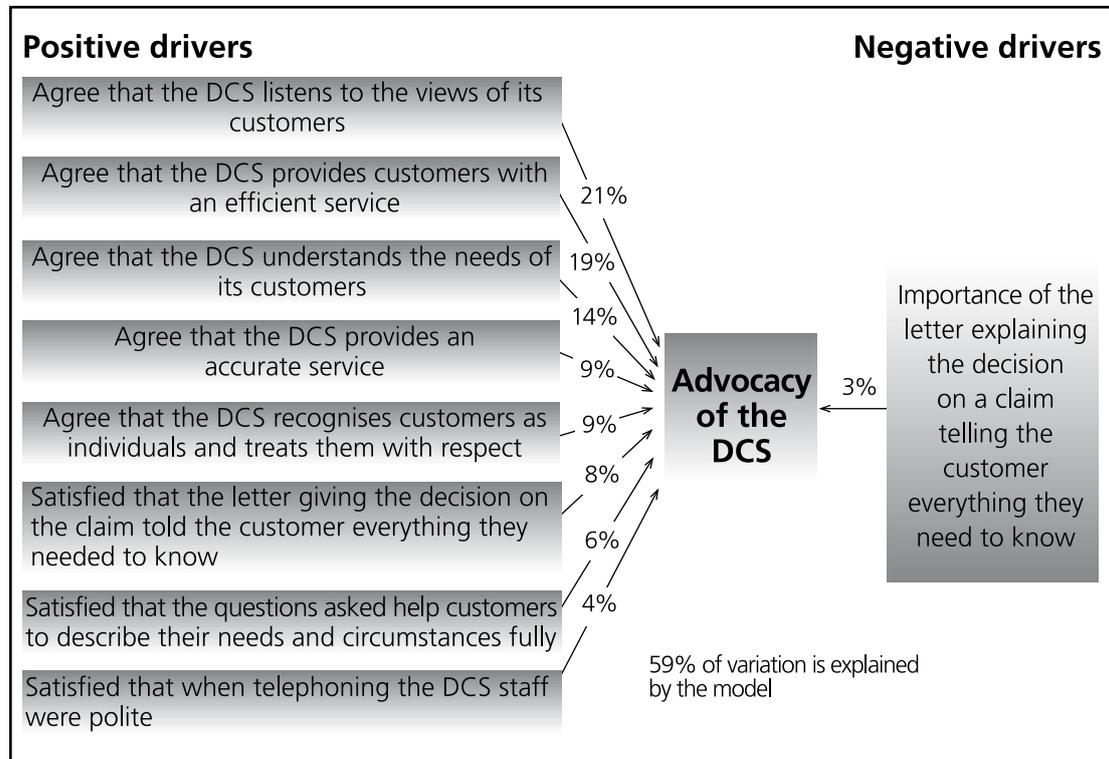
As in 2007, we have conducted further analysis on the survey data in order to identify what is 'driving' customer attitudes towards the DCS. Key drivers analysis is a statistical technique used to identify how strongly satisfaction with individual service factors are associated with overall advocacy of the DCS. As in 2007, we have concentrated exclusively on customer responses to the question which asks whether they would speak highly or criticise the DCS with or without being asked, or whether they have no thoughts either way. This question measures 'advocacy', which is the strongest indicator we have for measuring the extent of customers' active support for, and appreciation of, an organisation and its services.

Our analysis shows that as in 2007 **attitudinal factors, such as customer satisfaction with DCS services are key in understanding customers' advocacy of the DCS**. When we added variables relating to customers' experiences of the DCS and their demographic background to the model, little change is observed in the variance explained by the model.⁸ Please refer to the appendices for more detail on key drivers analysis.

As in 2007, the two factors which have the biggest impact on advocacy towards the DCS are: **agreeing that the DCS listens to the views of its customers** (21%) and **agreeing that the DCS provides its customers with an efficient service** (19%). The DCS may want to concentrate on these factors in order to improve the (already high) advocacy rating. Indeed, as shown in Figure 2.3, the top five drivers of advocacy all relate to the Customer Promise/Vision Statement, which suggests that the DCS is correct to focus on these aspects of customer service.

⁸ In the model based only on attitudinal variables, 59% of variance is explained by the model. This means that 59% of advocacy is captured by the model, and that other factors not included in the model explain the remaining 41%. When experiential variables are added to the model, 60% of variance is explained by the model. This shows that attitudinal variables are most important in explaining advocacy.

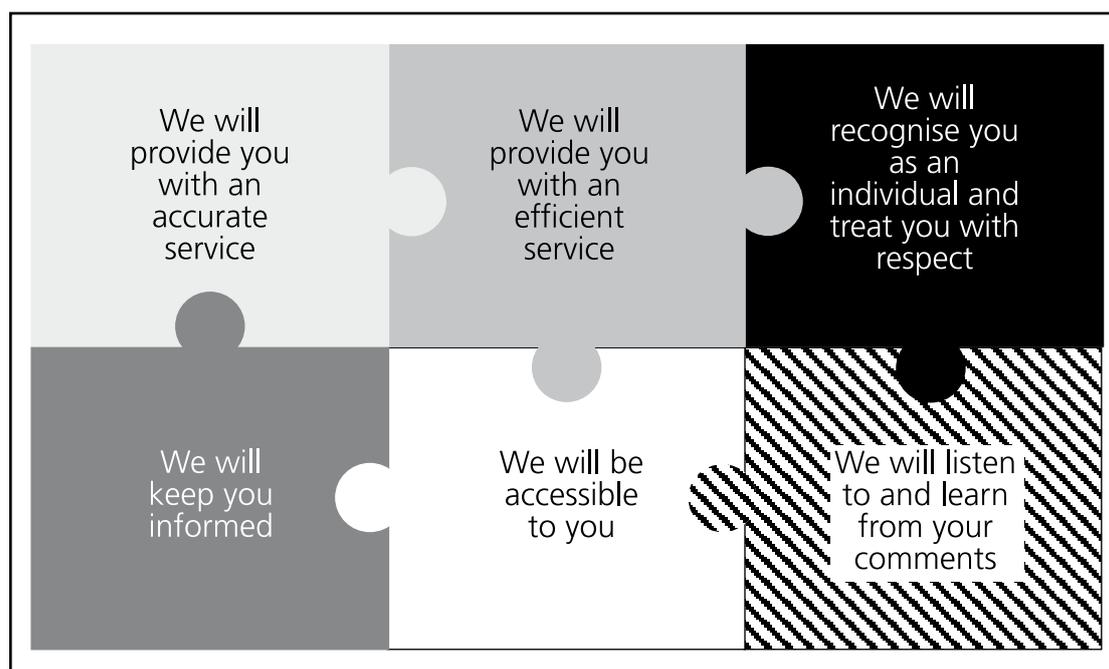
Figure 2.3 Advocacy of the DCS – attitudinal factors



3 Delivering the Customer Promise/Vision Statement

The DCS introduced its Customer Promise in February 2005 and in 2008 this was replaced by the PDCS Vision and Mission Statement. Both of these statements promote the customer-focused nature of the organisation and its commitment to disabled people and carers. The Vision Statement concerns, however, not only customer-facing staff but all DCS managers and staff. The key elements of the Customer Promise, which are closely tied to those of the Vision Statement, are illustrated in Figure 3.1 and tie in closely to the PDCS mission to *'be an accessible, trusted and efficient service whose people feel valued and energised to respect, understand and fulfil our customers' needs every day.'*

Figure 3.1 Key elements of the Customer Promise



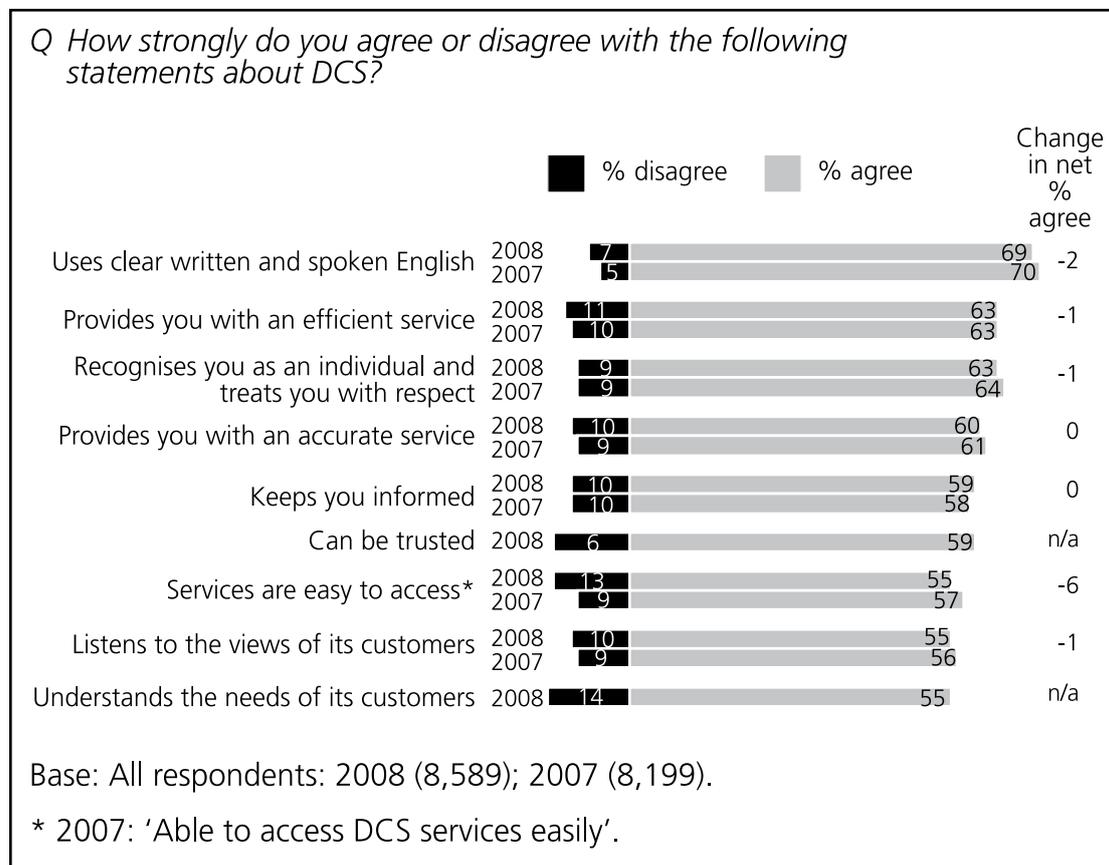
As in 2007, customers are asked in the current survey to evaluate whether or not they feel that the DCS is delivering on each of the Customer Promise/Vision Statement criteria. Overall, ratings on individual elements remain high and unchanged since 2007.

The elements of the Customer Promise/Vision Statement customers are most likely to say are being met are **the DCS uses clear written and spoken English** (69% agree), **recognises them as individuals and treats them with respect** (63% agree), and **is a service that can be trusted** (59% agree). The first two are those on which the DCS also performed most strongly in 2007.

The three elements in which the DCS performs least well are **understanding the needs of its customers** (55% agree), **ease of access to services** (55% agree), and **listening to the views of customers** (55% agree). While the first measure is new for 2008, ease of access to services has experienced a slight decline from 58% in 2007. Listening to the views of customers has not changed significantly.

Few customers think the DCS is **not** delivering on any of the individual elements of the Customer Promise/Vision Statement, with disagreement levels reaching a maximum of one in seven (14%) for understanding the needs of customers.

Figure 3.2 The DCS Customer Promise



Results for different service units generally mirror those associated with advocacy and satisfaction, with ratings among customers of Edinburgh DBC consistently and significantly lower than average, while CAU and AA NE score highly.

Generally, the oldest customers (aged 65 and over) display the greatest satisfaction with elements of the Vision Statement, with the exception of whether they believe **the DCS uses clear written and spoken English** (67% of customers aged 65 and over agree compared with 75% of those aged 16-24). Findings are generally similar between white and ethnic minority customers. However, a higher proportion of ethnic minority customers feel that **the DCS uses clear written and spoken English** (76% compared with 70% of white customers).

As is the case for overall satisfaction and advocacy, DLA customers are consistently less likely to agree that the various elements of the Vision Statement are being fulfilled by the DCS. This is most pronounced with regard to agreement that the **DCS understands the needs of its customers** (48% agree compared with 59% of AA customers and 63% of CA customers).

4 Making contact with the Disability and Carers Service

4.1 Sources of information about allowances

As in 2007, family and friends continue to be the main source of information about DCS allowances, with just over one-third (35%) of customers having first heard about the service in this way. About one in ten (11%) were first informed by a member of DCS staff. One in five (19%) first heard about the allowances from another public service or agency besides the DCS or DWP, while 5% found out about the allowances through a voluntary-sector organisation or customers' representative group. Nine per cent of customers have heard about the DCS from a DWP publicity leaflet which has declined since 2007 (13%).

Overall, sources of information about the DCS remain similar between customers, although there are some differences to note. Customers with psychological or behavioural disabilities are far less likely than other customers to first hear about DCS allowances through family and friends (29% versus 35% overall). However, along with people with learning disabilities, customers with psychological or behavioural disabilities are more likely to have heard about allowances from a carer (15% and 12% respectively).

Younger customers are more likely to have first heard about allowances from family and friends (47% of 16-24 year olds compared to 35% overall) or carers (11% compared with 7% overall), perhaps reflecting higher dependency of these customers on family members. Older customers are more likely to have been informed by DCS staff (14% of those aged 65+ compared with 9% of those aged 16-24).

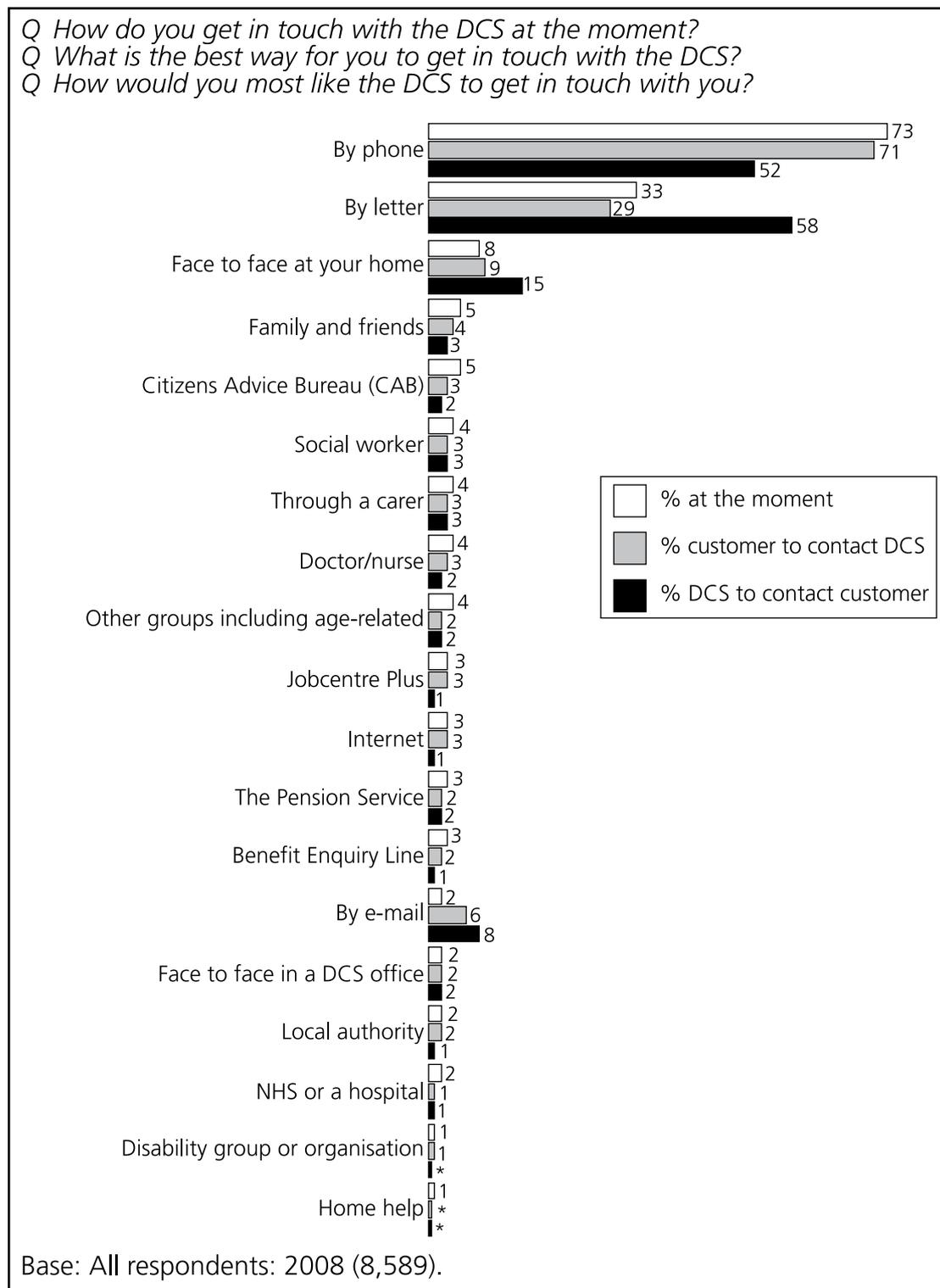
4.2 Methods of making contact

As in 2007, the telephone is by far the most common way in which customers contact the DCS (73% contact the DCS in this way) followed by post (33%).

These are also deemed 'the best' ways to contact the DCS (71% cite a preference for phone, while 29% feel that post is more suitable). This suggests that current provision is well matched to customers' needs.

However, when it comes to the DCS contacting them, a slightly higher proportion of customers would prefer written than telephone contact (58% compared with 52%). This has increased since 2007 when 52% favoured written contact.

Figure 4.1 Sources of information about allowances



While face-to-face home visits are not a common method of contact with the DCS (8% use them at the moment), more than one in seven customers (15%) say face-to-face at their home would be the way they would most like the DCS to get in touch with them.

There are some notable differences in preferred communication channels between different customers. A high proportion of people with learning disabilities believe telephone is the best way for them to get in touch with the DCS (74%), and for the DCS to get in touch with them (70%). In contrast, people with sensory disabilities are less likely (66%) to favour the telephone to get in touch with the DCS.

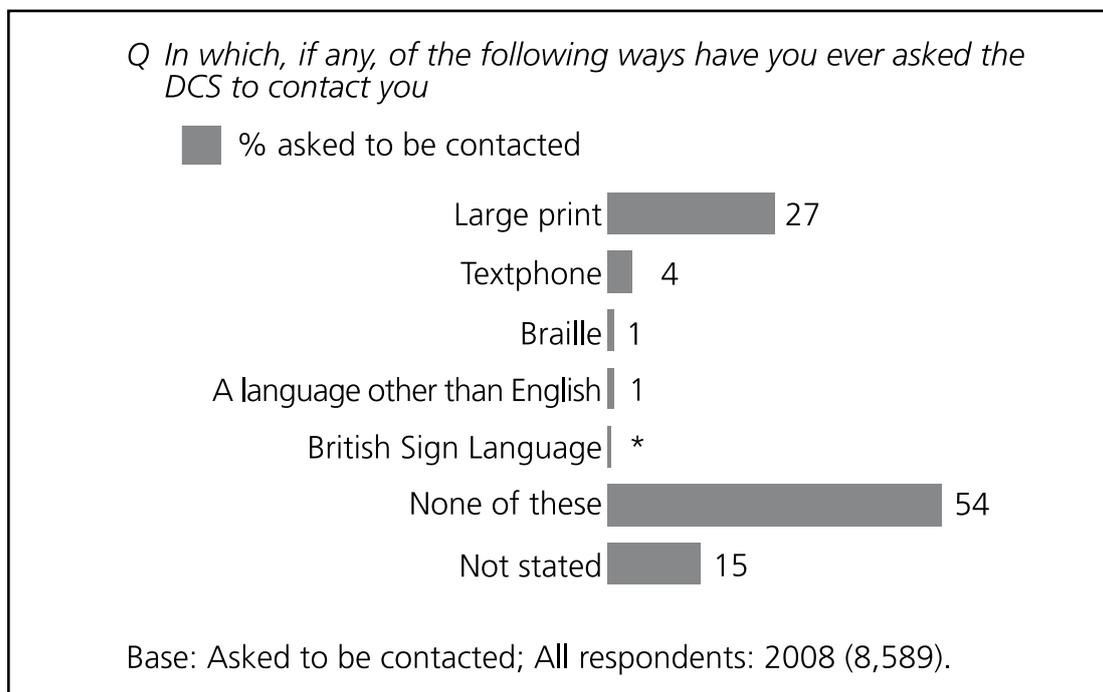
A higher proportion of people over age 65 prefer that the DCS keeps in contact with them through face-to-face home visits than younger age groups (22%, compared with) 8% of customers in the 16-24 and 25-34 age groups).

There is a difference between white customers and those from an ethnic minority background in preferred communication channels. While the telephone is reported by both customers of a white and an ethnic minority background to be the best way for them to contact the DCS, this is true of significantly more white customers (72% compared with 66% of ethnic minority customers). A greater proportion of customers from ethnic minority backgrounds than white customers, prefer using letters to contact the DCS (36% and 30% respectively). Similarly, ethnic minority customers are more likely to prefer the DCS to get in touch with them using written communication (69% compared with 59% of white customers).

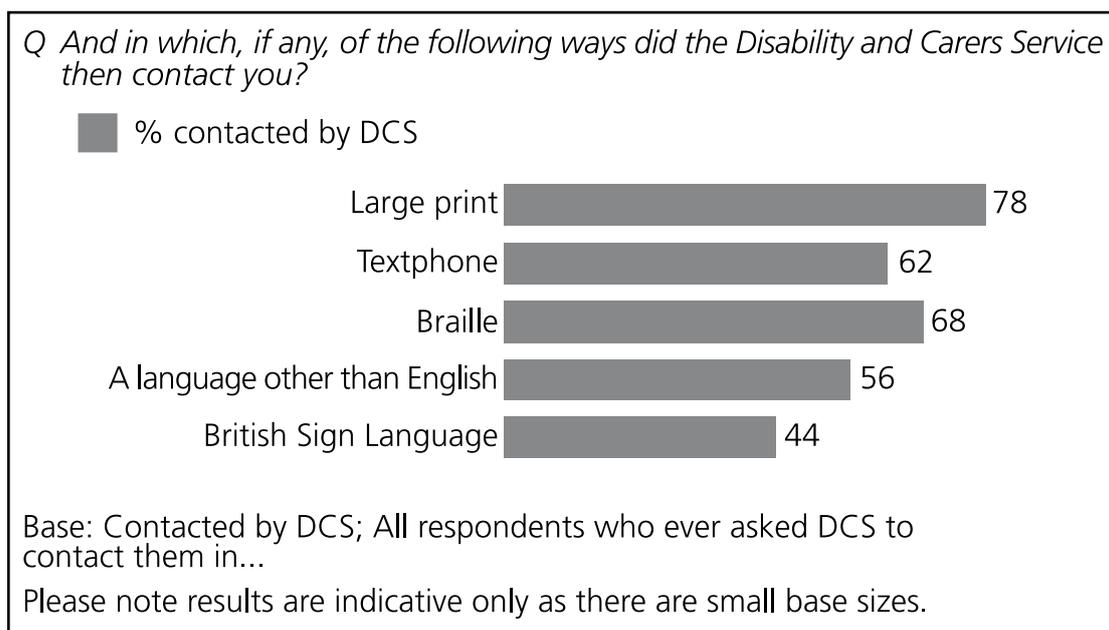
4.3 Accessible services – use of alternative formats by DCS

Around three in ten customers (31%) say they have asked the DCS to contact them in an alternative format. Requests for large-print documents are most common, with about one in four (27%) customers having requested them. Communication via textphone has been requested by 4% of customers. Correspondence by Braille, British Sign Language, or any language other than English are requested by 1% or fewer customers.

However, despite a significant improvement since 2007, a significant proportion of customers do not have their request for an alternative format met. Of those who requested information in large print, 78% actually received it. This is an increase from 72% receiving large print after requesting it in 2007, but still leaves one in five (22%) customers with their request unfulfilled. For Braille requests, fulfilment falls to 68% and textphone requests fulfilment falls to 62%. Of the 60 respondents who requested information in a language other than English, 56% received it. The base of customers who requested communication via British Sign Language is very small (25 respondents), which affects the statistical significance of results, but it is of note that only 11 respondents had their request fulfilled.

Figure 4.2 Requested alternative formats from the DCS

Of those who were contacted in large print as requested, about four in five (82%) are satisfied with the service that they subsequently received. However, satisfaction falls to 59% of those contacted in a non-English language, 51% among those contacted with Braille materials, and 49% of those who received service via textphone.⁹

Figure 4.3 Received contact from the DCS

⁹ Please note that 33%, 38% and 44% of customers, respectively, did not give an answer here.

Q *How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service you received from the DCS in these ways?*

| Method of contact | <i>Base: All answering who have been contacted in each format</i> | %/n | Satisfied | Dissatisfied |
|--|---|------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Large print | 1,814 | % | 82 | 3 |
| Textphone | 188 | % | 49 | 4 |
| Braille ¹ | 50 | n | 26 | 1 |
| British Sign Language ¹ | 11 | n | 5 | 1 |
| Language other than English ¹ | 34 | n | 20 | 1 |

¹ Please note results are based on small base sizes and so results are indicative only.

Source: Ipsos MORI.

White customers are much less likely than ethnic minority customers to request alternative contact from the DCS (30% compared with 46%). The most commonly requested format among customers from an ethnic minority background is a letter or claim form in large print (38% compared with 27% of white customers). Customers from a black ethnic background are even more likely to have requested communication in an alternative format (54%) and in terms of large print this has been requested by nearly half (46%) of black customers compared with just over a quarter of white customers (27%).

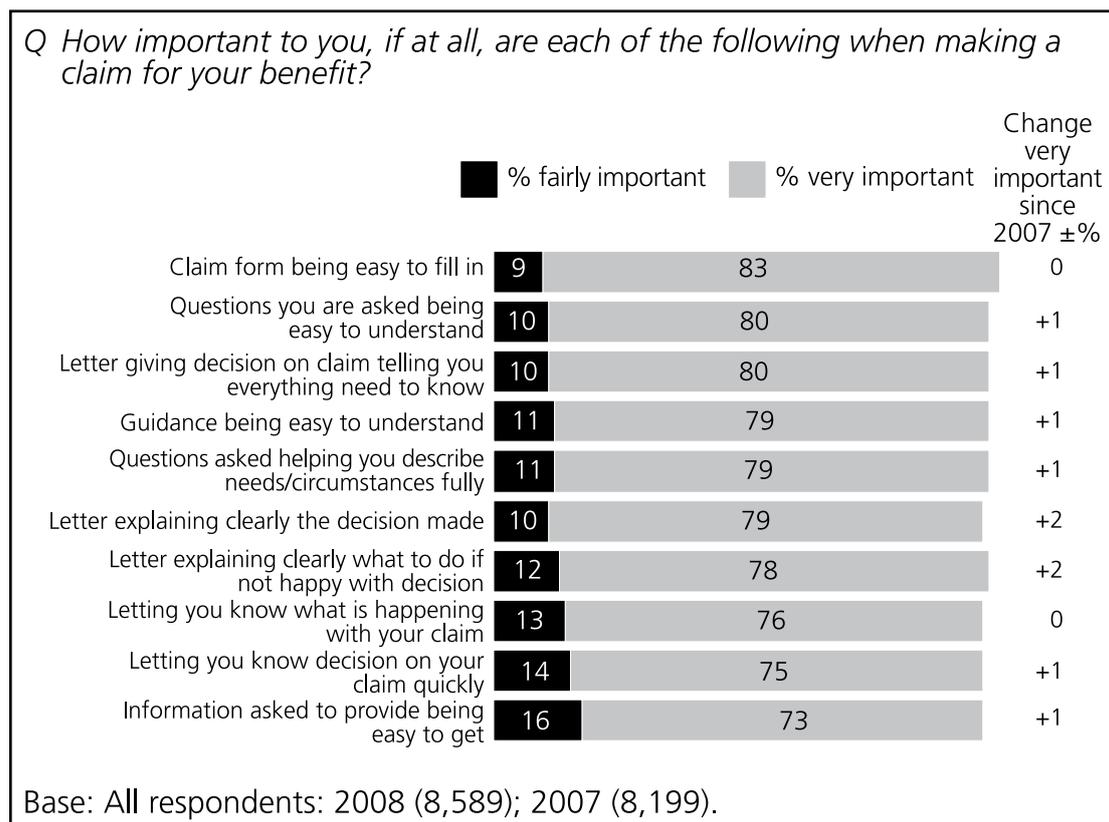
5 The claims process

5.1 Making a claim

About 90% of customers believe that each aspect of making a claim is important, with at least seven in ten saying each is **very** important (70%). There is little variation in perceived importance of different aspects, but **the claim form being easy to fill in** remains marginally more important (83% say it is **very** important), while the **information the customer is asked to provide being easy to get** is least important (73% say it is **very** important).

Figure 5.1 shows that this year many aspects of making a claim are felt to be slightly more important than, or just as important as, in 2007.

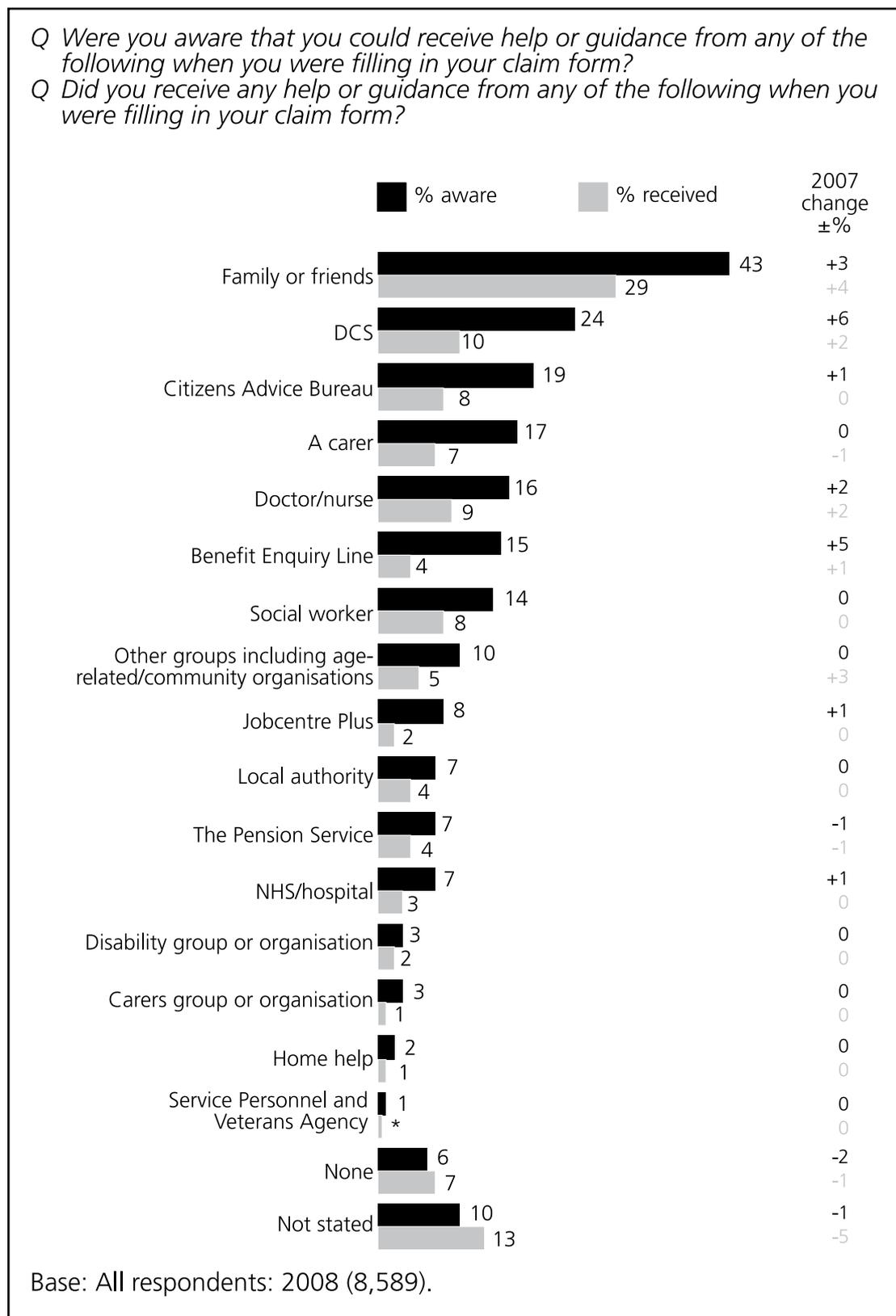
Figure 5.1 Making a claim – priorities



5.2 Help or guidance

5.2.1 Help or guidance in general

Figure 5.2 Receiving help or guidance



The source of help or guidance of which customers are most commonly aware is friends and family (43%), and this is also the source from which they are most likely to have actually received help or guidance (29%).

Levels of awareness of many other sources, such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, carers, doctors or nurses, and social workers, have remained relatively stable since 2007. Awareness of the Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL) has increased from 10% to 15%.

Seven per cent of customers say they do not need any help or guidance, a decrease of five percentage points since 2007.

5.2.2 Help and guidance from DCS

Awareness of the DCS as a source of help or guidance when filling in a claim form has increased by six percentage points since 2007 (24% as opposed to 18%). However, despite this increase in awareness of the help and guidance offered by the DCS, customers are no more likely to actually use the DCS when filling in their claim form than they were in 2007 (10% compared with 8%).

CAU customers are also more likely than other customers to use the DCS for help and guidance (13% compared with 9% of DBC customers and 8% of DCPU and Mota customers). Across the DBCs, the level of assistance used is lowest for Edinburgh (3%) and highest for Bristol (11%). For DCPUs, the highest levels of assistance from the DCS are seen at DCPUs 1 and 3 (10%), and the lowest at DCPU 5 (6%).

There are no apparent differences between customers from a white ethnic background and ethnic minority customers. Customers under age 55 are slightly more likely to be aware of the DCS as a source of help than their older counterparts. Customers aged 65 or over are significantly more likely than their younger counterparts to actually receive this assistance (14% of those aged 65+ compared to 5% of those aged 16-24).

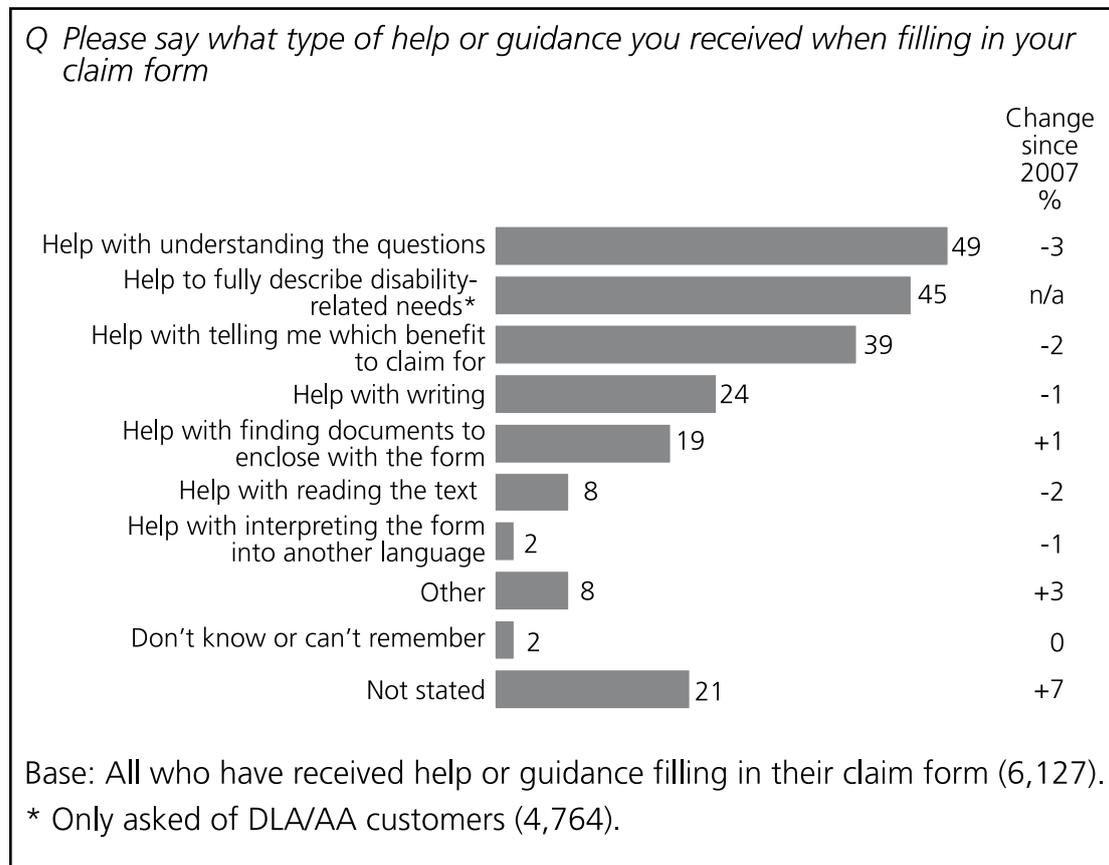
DLA customers are less likely than AA or CA customers to use help or guidance from DCS (6% compared with 13% for AA and CA).

5.2.3 Reasons for help

About half of customers (49%) receive help with understanding the questions on the claim form, a decrease of 3% from 2007. The next most common reason is help describing disability-related needs (45%)¹⁰.

There are differences in the type of help or guidance sought by customers of different benefits. DLA customers are the group most likely to receive **help with understanding the questions** (51% compared with 48% of AA customers and 46% of CA customers). Customers receiving AA or CA are far more likely than DLA customers to receive **help with determining which benefit to claim** (45% and 44% respectively, compared with 33% of DLA customers).

¹⁰ This statement was asked of DLA and AA customers only.

Figure 5.3 Type of help received with the claim form

The vast majority of customers receiving help or guidance found it useful (74%), with 57% saying it was **very** useful. Customers in Midlands DBC are more likely to think the help or guidance offered to them when filling in their claim form was useful (79% compared with 73% across all DBCs). Customers from Edinburgh DBC are less likely to think the help or guidance was helpful (66%). The highest proportion of customers reporting the help or guidance was not useful are from Wales DBC (10% compared with 4% overall).

Customers receiving or claiming AA are more likely to have found the help or guidance useful compared with DLA or CA customers (77% useful compared with 74% of CA customers and 71% of DLA customers).

Mirroring higher levels of satisfaction across the service, older customers (aged 65 or above) are more likely to think the guidance was useful (77%) compared with customers overall (74%). There are no significant differences in the attitudes of customers from different ethnic backgrounds.

5.3 Strategic priorities

Figure 5.4 illustrates satisfaction with the various aspects of the claims process, plotted against how important they are thought to be by customers. Situated in the top right hand quadrant are aspects with which customers are **very satisfied**,

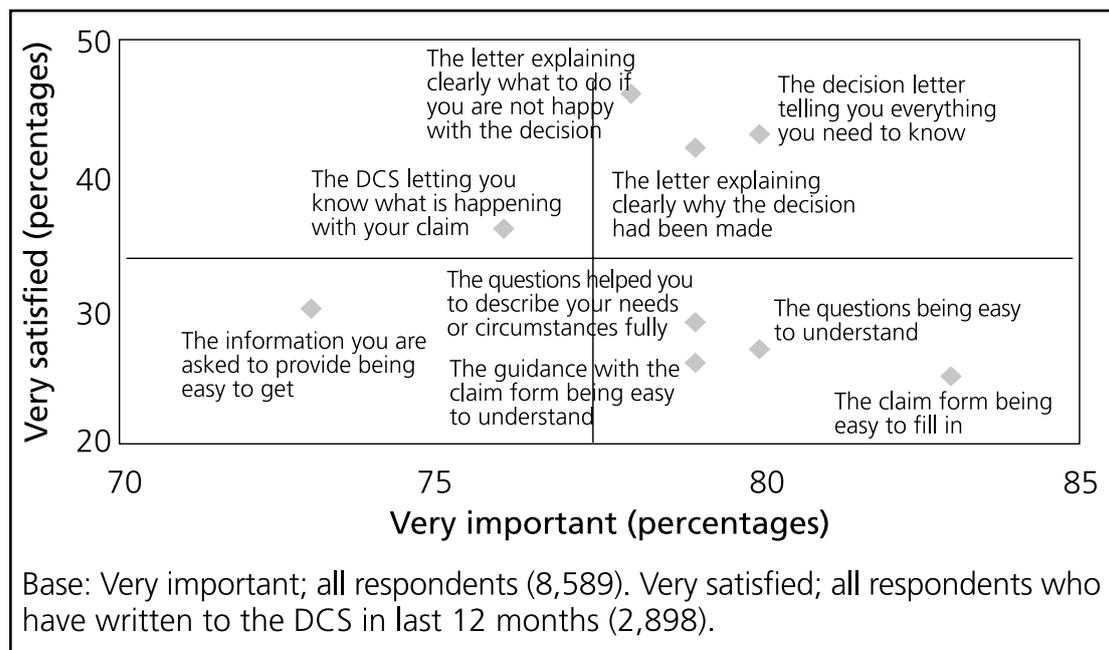
and also think are **very important**. These are the organisational strengths of the DCS. Overall, as in 2007, strengths of the DCS are clear and comprehensive communication – particularly in **written** contact, specifically:

- the letter explaining clearly what to do if the customer is not happy with the decision;
- telling the customer everything they need to know; and
- explaining clearly why the decision had been made

However, there are also aspects which customers rate as highly important, but with which they are less satisfied. These are situated in the lower right quadrant and are priorities for improvement for the DCS. As in 2007, these tend to focus on the claim form itself – including questions and guidance. Specifically, and very similarly to 2007:

- the claim form was easy to fill in;
- the guidance with the claim form being easy to understand;
- the questions being easy to understand; and
- the questions helped you to describe your needs or circumstances fully.

Figure 5.4 Making a claim – importance compared with satisfaction



6 Strategic priorities for contact

6.1 Strategic priorities – overview

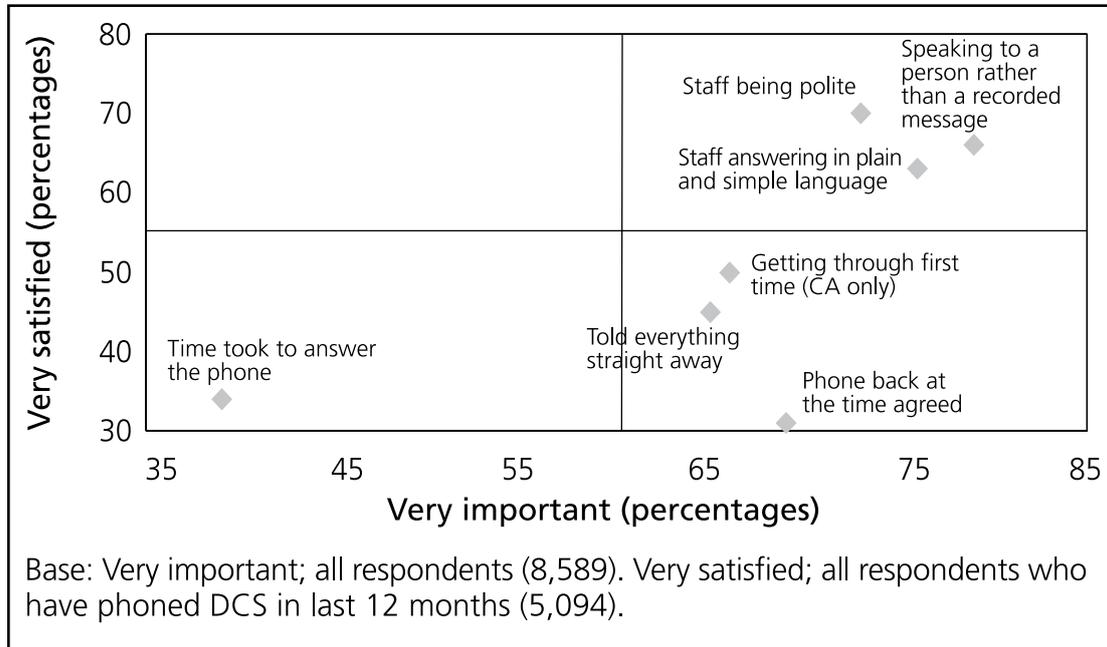
Figures 6.1 to 6.3 show satisfaction with the various aspects of contact with the DCS, plotted against how important they are thought to be. It is important to remember however, that all aspects of telephone and written contact are deemed important by the majority of DCS customers and so the figures focus only on those customers saying an aspect of the contact process is very important.

Looking first at **telephone** contact, the **politeness of staff, speaking to a person rather than a recorded message** and **staff using plain and simple language** are the organisation's strengths and these have been maintained since 2007. Situated in the top right hand quadrant, these are aspects with which customers are very satisfied, and also think are very important.

The priorities for improvement are **being telephoned back at a time agreed in advance** and, to a lesser extent, **being told everything they need to know straightaway**. With regard only to customers of CA, a priority for improvement is **getting through the first time they call**. These are situated in the lower right hand quadrant. Customers think these aspects are important, but are less satisfied with them.

Customers are less satisfied with **the time it takes to answer the phone**, but they are less likely to see this as a very important aspect of service. It should be remembered, however, that the time taken to answer the phone is still an important aspect for customers with 71% saying so.

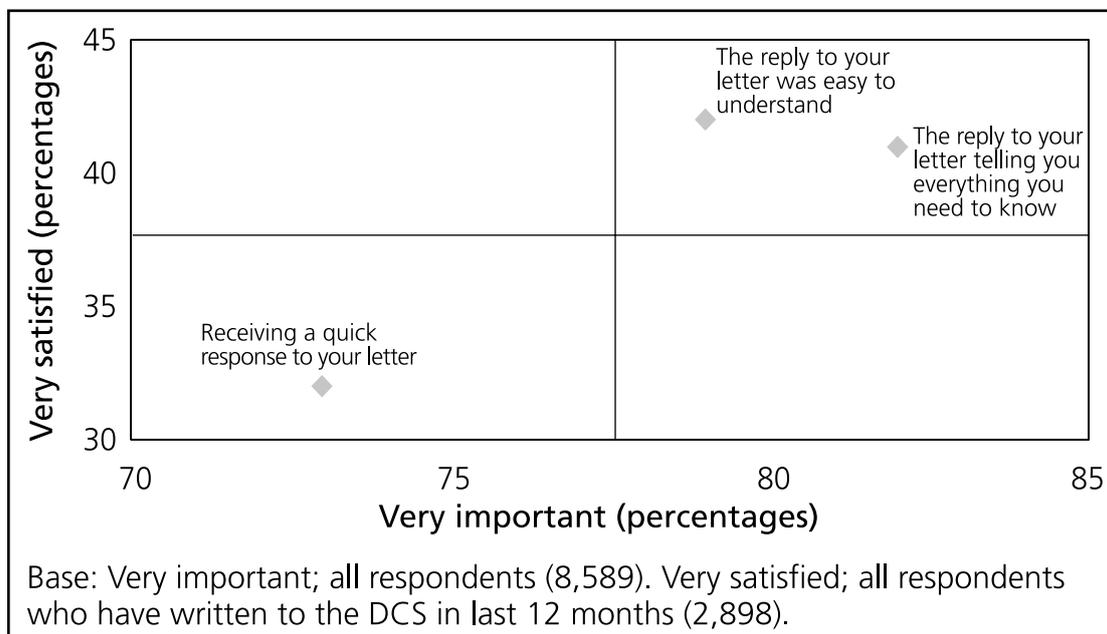
Figure 6.1 Telephone contact – importance compared with satisfaction



With regard to written communication, **written replies that are easy to understand** and **telling customers everything they need to know** are the strengths of the DCS. Customers are very satisfied with these aspects, and also think they are very important.

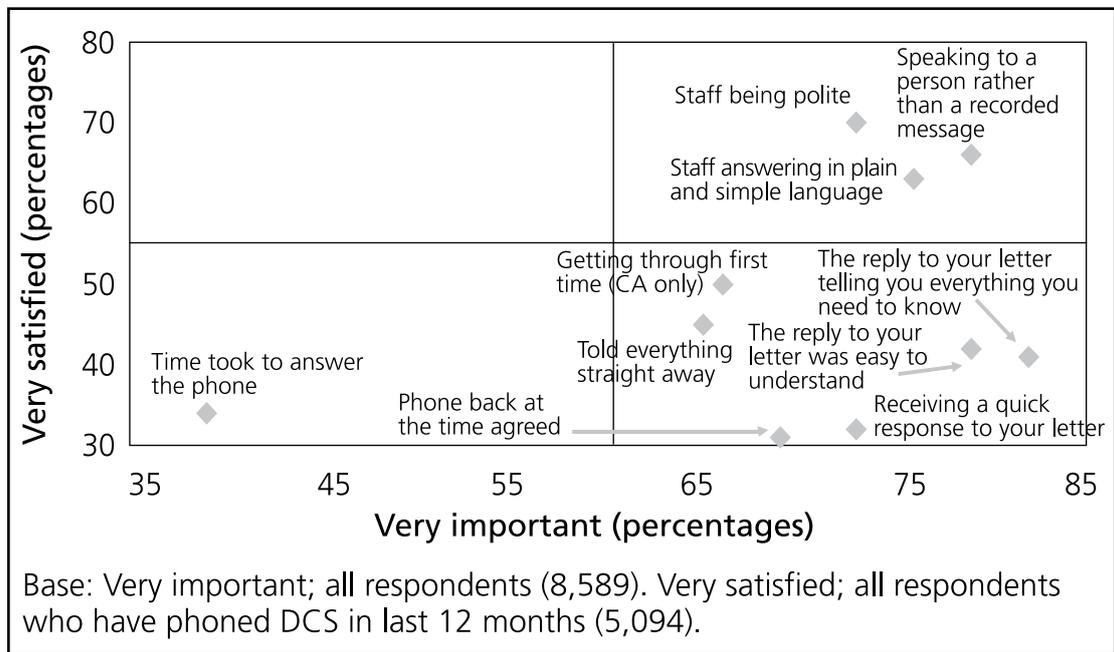
There are no attributes in the lower right quadrant signalling high priorities for improvement. However, while **receiving a quick response** is not the most important factor, it is still rated as very important by over seven in ten customers, while satisfaction is relatively low.

Figure 6.2 Written contact – importance compared with satisfaction



Plotting these on the same scatter chart, the three services associated with written contact, the ease of understanding the reply, the time it took to reply to the letter and the reply telling the customer everything they need to know, all remain priorities as they were in 2007. This also reflects lower satisfaction with written contact than with telephone services. Priorities for telephone contact are being telephoned back at a time agreed in advance, being told everything they need to know straight away, and for customers of CA, getting through on the first call.

Figure 6.3 Telephone and written contact – importance compared with satisfaction



6.2 Telephone contact

About three in five customers (59%) have phoned the DCS in the past 12 months, including by textphone. This proportion is unchanged since 2007.

Customers of Mota are most likely to have telephoned the DCS (71% compared with 59% of customers overall). Customers of AA NE (42%) are least likely to have done so. Within the DBCs, three in five customers (60%) in Bristol, Edinburgh and Wales have contact via telephone, compared to a low of just over half (52%) in Glasgow. DCPU 4 has the highest level of telephone contact (65%), and DCPU 5 has the lowest (57%).

Although, as seen earlier, a higher proportion of white respondents favour telephone contact than ethnic minority customers, there is no difference between white and ethnic minority customers in usage of telephone. Usage of the telephone varies by age, with the oldest customers least likely to have used the phone (46%) compared with younger customers aged 25-34 (74%).

6.3 Priorities for telephone services

Customers' priorities for telephone contact remain similar to those seen in 2007. **Speaking to a person rather than a recorded message** is deemed the most important aspect, with 79% of respondents finding this very important. All other aspects of making contact were found to be very important by at least two thirds (65%) of customers.

Q Please tell us how important, if at all, the following would be if you needed to phone the Disability and Carers Service (including by textphone)

| | 2008 Very important | 2007 Very important | Change in % important since 2007 +/- |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| You speaking to a person rather than a recorded message with instructions | 79 | 80 | 0 |
| Staff answering in plain, simple language | 76 | 74 | +2 |
| Staff being polite | 73 | 71 | +1 |
| Staff promptly phoning you back with the answer if they can't give you the information you need straight away | 69 | 67 | +2 |
| Getting through to a member of staff the first time you call (2008 CA customers only) ¹ | 66 | n/a | n/a |
| Being told everything you need to know straight away | 65 | 61 | +2 |
| The phone being answered within 30 seconds (2008 DLA/AA customers only) ² | 39 | 37 | n/a |

¹ This was asked of CA customers only in 2008.

² This was asked of DLA/AA customers only in 2008.

Base: All respondents.

Younger customers are far more likely than their older counterparts to place high importance on **staff being polite** (82% of customers in the 16-24 age group thought this is very important, compared to 66% of those aged 65 or above). For most factors older customers are significantly less likely to say each is important, possibly reflecting lower expectations. Indeed, this may, in part, explain the higher levels of satisfaction and advocacy among older customers than younger customers as seen in Chapter 2.

6.4 Satisfaction with telephone services

Overall, customers are satisfied with the services they receive when they telephone the DCS, particularly with **the politeness of staff** (90% satisfied), **speaking to a person rather than a recorded message** (84% satisfied) and **staff answering**

in plain and simple language (84% satisfied). It is worth noting that, for each aspect, a higher proportion of customers are **very** satisfied than **fairly** satisfied, a tribute to the quality of services.

Over the past year there has been a decline in satisfaction with aspects of the telephone service. For instance this applies to **staff phoning back at an agreed time** (31% are very satisfied compared with 38% in 2007). This ties in with the increased proportion of customers reporting they have experienced difficulties getting through on the phone (up seven percentage points since 2007 to 34% in 2008) as seen in Chapter 7. The proportion of customers **very** satisfied with **being able to speak with a person rather than a recorded message** has dropped three percentage points to 66%, and the proportion **very** satisfied that **they were told everything they needed to know straight away** has fallen two percentage points to 45%.

However, it is worth noting that the sampling for the customer survey coincided with the introduction of a new telephone system on the Helpline and the Internet Protocol Contact Centre and also the introduction of new validation procedures with which Helpline staff were required to familiarise themselves. DCS monitoring data shows that there was a corresponding increase in complaints over the same period. These organisational changes may, therefore, partly account for the decline in satisfaction with aspects of telephone contact as noted above.

6.5 Written contact

Just over a third (34%) of customers have written to the DCS in the last 12 months, with no significant change since 2007.

As is the case for telephone contact, customers of Mota are most likely to have written to the DCS (39% compared with 34% overall). Customers of AA NE (21%) are least likely to have done so. Within the DBCs, about two in five customers (42%) in Edinburgh made written contact, compared to a low of just over one in four (27%) in Glasgow. Every DCPU has 38% of customers making contact in writing, except for DCPU1 at 34%. The CAU has a lower than average level of contact at 29%.

However, there is a significant difference between white and ethnic minority customers: two in five ethnic minority customers contacted the DCS in writing, compared with about a third (34%) of white customers. As seen earlier, written contact is ethnic minority customers' preferred method of communication.

Customers of DLA are far more likely to make written contact (42%) than customers of CA (29%) or AA (22%).

Customers with psychological or behavioural disabilities are more likely to have written to the DCS than customers overall (43% compared with 34%), along with people with learning disabilities and communication difficulties (42% respectively).

This form of contact is particularly common among those who are dissatisfied with the DCS; about three in five (61%) of them write, compared to 31% of satisfied customers. People appealing against a decision (54%) and those for whom the outcome falls within 'other' outcomes (42%) also have high proportions of customers writing to the DCS.

6.6 Priorities for written contact

As in 2007, customers' top priority for written contact includes **the reply to the letter telling them everything they need to know**, with more than four in five (82%) saying it is very important. Least important is the **letter being responded to quickly** – although still nearly three in four (73%) say it is very important. About four in five (79%) think it is very important that **the reply to the letter is easy to understand**.

Q Please tell us how important, if at all, the following would be if you needed to write to the Disability and Carers Service

| | 2008 Very important | 2007 Very important | Change in % important since 2007 +/- |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| The reply to your letter telling you everything you need to know | 82 | 91 | +1 |
| The reply to your letter being easy to understand | 79 | 78 | +1 |
| Receiving a quick response to your letter | 73 | 72 | +1 |

Base: All respondents.

Customers with communication difficulties, movement and brain disabilities, and psychological/behavioural problems tend to have very high expectations, while again customers with sensory disabilities have the lowest proportion saying they think each aspect is **very** important. For example, 96% of customers experiencing communication difficulties believe **receiving a quick response to their letter** is important compared with 90% of customers overall. White customers are more likely than ethnic minority customers to believe that it is very important that **the reply to their letter tells them everything they need to know** (92% important compared with 88%).

6.7 Satisfaction with written contact

As in 2007, satisfaction with written contact tends to be lower than satisfaction with telephone contact. Customers are most satisfied that **the reply to their letter was easy to understand** (71% satisfied), and somewhat less satisfied that **the reply told them everything they need to know** (66% satisfied) or with **the time it took to reply to their letter** (67% satisfied).

Over the past year there has been a decline in the proportion of customers saying they are **very** satisfied that the reply to their letter was easy to understand (42%, down from 45% in 2007).

Attendance Allowance customers show the highest level of satisfaction with written contact. For instance, whereas three-quarters of AA customers (75%) are satisfied that **the reply to their letter told them everything they needed to know**, this applies to less than two-thirds of DLA customers (61%).

Likewise, as with telephone contact, the 65 and over age group has the highest proportion of customers claiming they are **very** satisfied. While more than three-quarters (76%) of those aged 65 and over are satisfied that **the reply to their letter was easy to understand**, this applies to around two-thirds (65%) of those aged 16-24.

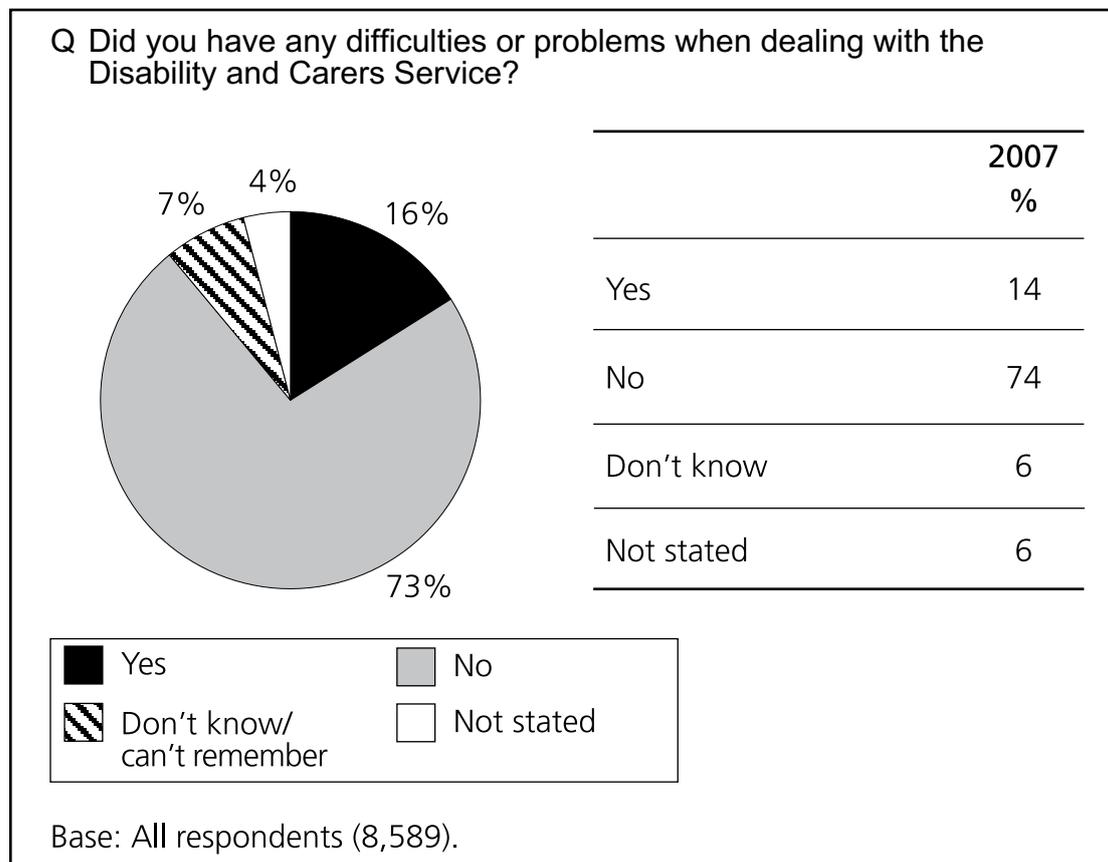
Those with a favourable outcome are far more likely to be satisfied with aspects of the reply to their letter (78% are satisfied with **the time it took to reply to their letter** compared with 55% of those with an unfavourable outcome). Those who have made a claim within the last three years are also more satisfied than those who did so longer ago (69% satisfied with **the time it took to reply to their letter** compared with 64% of those making their initial claim three years ago or more).

7 Areas for improvement

7.1 Difficulties or problems

Around three in four DCS customers (73%) have not experienced a difficulty or problem when dealing with the service. However, around one in six do report experiencing a problem (16%), which represents a slight increase of two percent since 2007 (14%).

Figure 7.1 Problems dealing with DCS – extent



As shown in Figure 7.2, almost half (46%) of all customers who have experienced a difficulty or problem when dealing with DCS state it to have been **challenging the decision on their claim** and this has increased since 2007 (34%). This is also the problem the largest proportion of customers have made a formal complaint about (11%). While this high level of reporting around challenging the claim decision could suggest customers are thinking about the outcome of their challenge rather than the process of making the challenge itself, it is in fact the case that there is no significant difference in the proportion of customers with an unfavourable outcome saying this compared to customers overall (45% of those with an unfavourable outcome compared with 46% overall). Customers with an unfavourable outcome are, however, significantly more likely to say they had a problem challenging the decision on their claim than customers with a favourable outcome (45% compared with 32% respectively).

A **lack of communication, or not being kept informed** (37%) and **difficulties in getting through on the phone** (34%) are the other most commonly reported problems. Other issues are based around interaction with DCS staff, with customers finding problems with being **given different answers to the same question by staff** (33%) and also finding **staff were slow in dealing with their requests or problems** (29%). In nearly every case, 2008 has seen rises in the proportion of customers stating these issues compared with 2007. The only exception to this is the lower proportion of customers saying they experienced difficulties as **the service made too many mistakes, or was not efficient enough** (17% in 2008 compared with 20% in 2007).

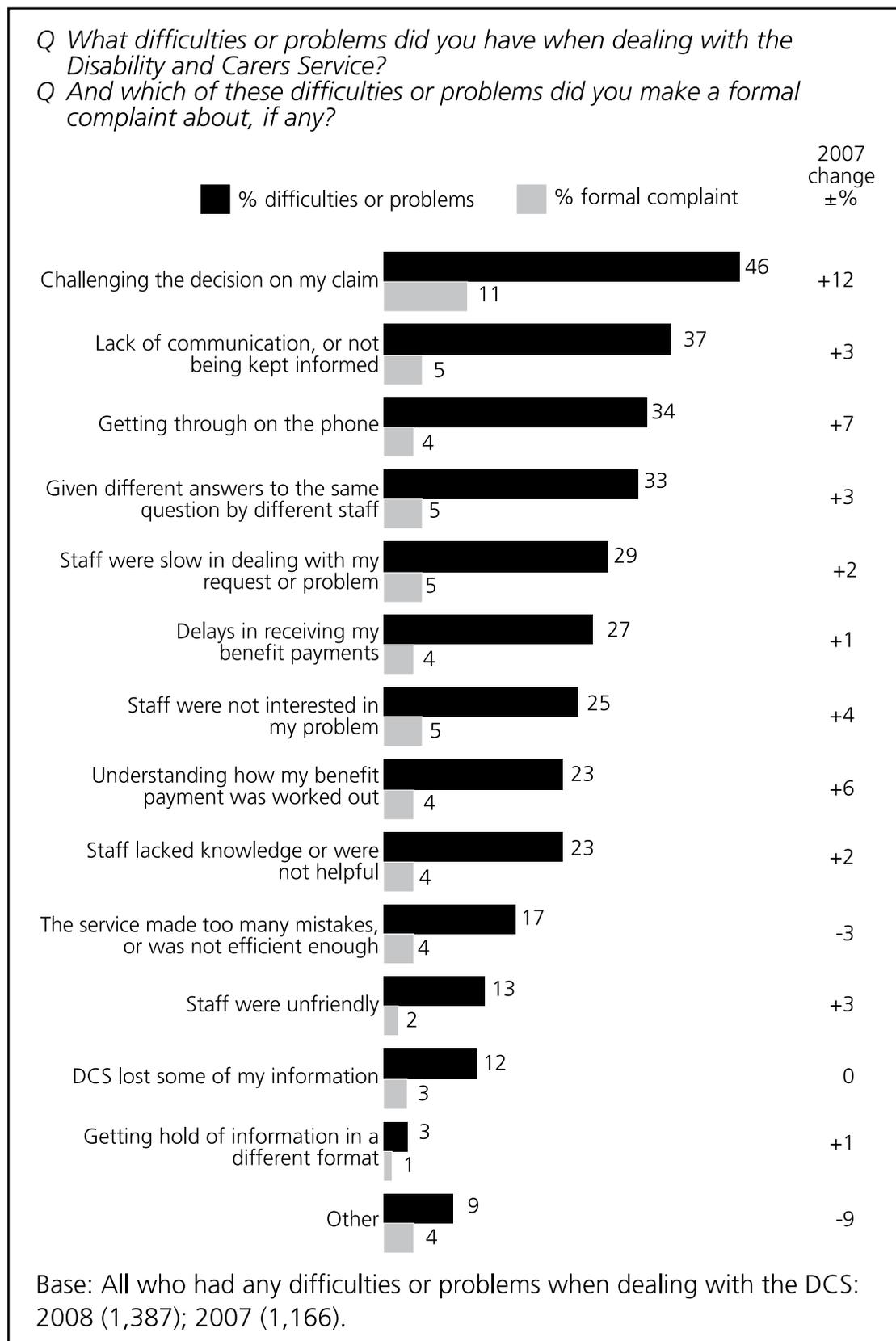
7.2 Complaints

Around one in four customers (23%) who have had a difficulty or problem with DCS have gone on to make a formal complaint. This equates to 4% of all customers responding to this survey. This compares to 1% of customers in 2007, although due to a change in question wording, data is not directly comparable. In 2007, customers were simply asked whether or not they had made a formal complaint to the DCS whereas in 2008 customers were prompted with a possible list of difficulties or problems and asked which, if any, of these they had made a formal complaint about. The more detailed nature of the question was intended to understand which areas of the service customers are most likely to make formal complaints about and equally, which areas of the service create problems or difficulties for the customer but which are not a source of complaints. This prompted list in 2008 is likely to have helped recall of complaints and therefore pushed the percentage of customers reporting a formal complaint significantly above the 2007 level.

One of the recommendations from Ipsos MORI's 2007 report was to, '*consider exploring the reasons for the relatively low reporting of problems*'. Following this, 2008 does appear to show that a larger proportion of customers appear to be reporting problems than in 2007 and that a greater number of these customers say that they went on to make a complaint. That said, there does still appear to be an under-recording of complaints across DCS Business Units and this is one aspect

that may be examined under the new PDCS Complaints Centre of Excellence, set up as a direct response to the recent National Audit Office report on complaints handling across DCS.

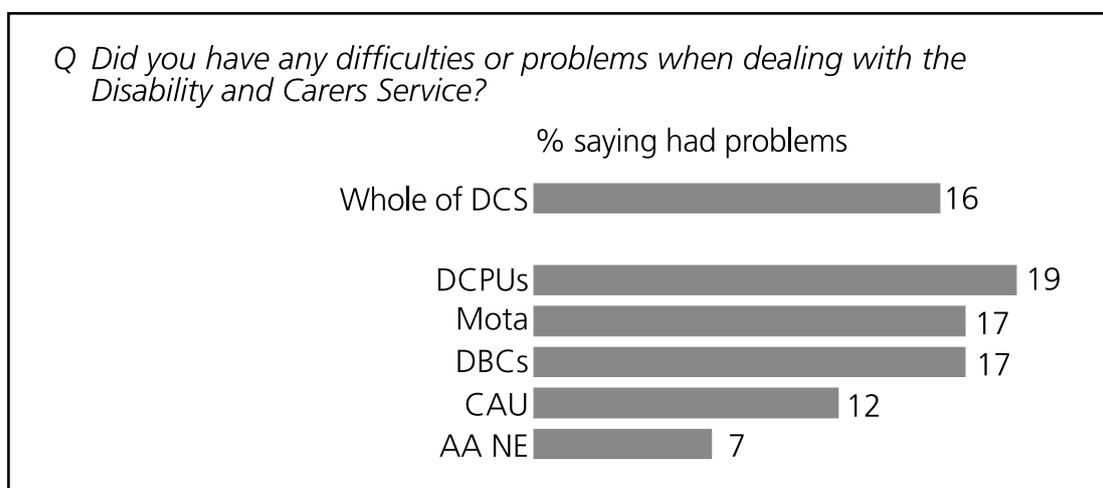
Figure 7.2 Problems dealing with DCS – reasons



The most common issues that customers have made a complaint about is **challenging the decision on their claim (11%)**, **lack of communication or not being kept informed (5%)**.

In analysing results by key sub-groups, the Business Units with the largest proportion of customers experiencing problems are Edinburgh DBC (28%), DPCU3 (26%) and Wembley DBC (20%). Figure 7.3 indicates differences in experiences of problems with the DCS by Mota, DCPUs, DBCs, CAU and AA NE.

Figure 7.3 Problems with the DCS

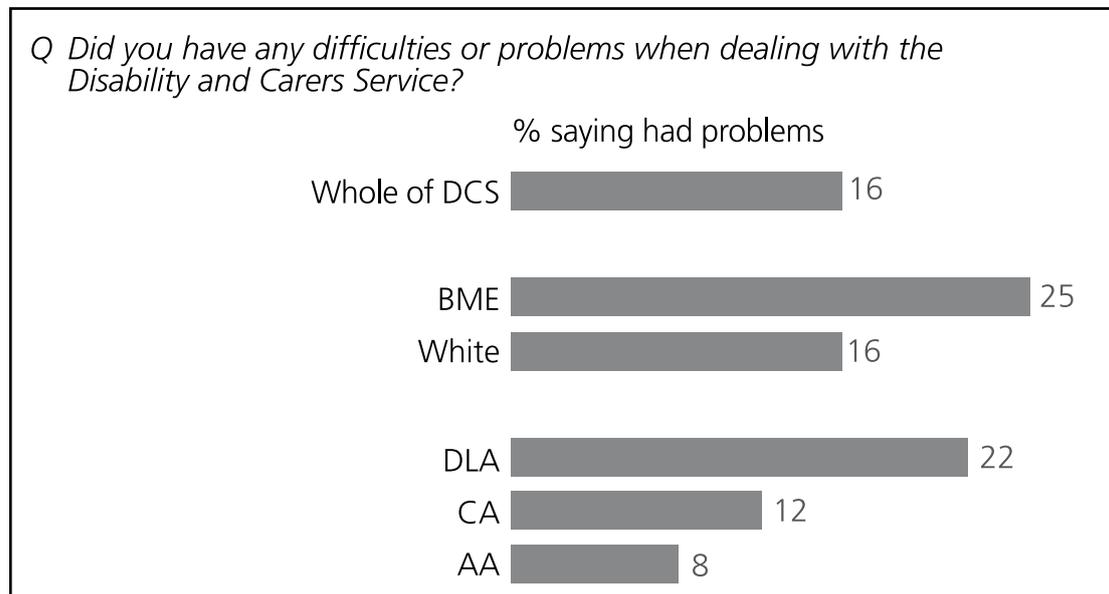


As Figure 7.4 shows, customers from a minority ethnic background are more likely to report having a difficulty or problem when dealing with the DCS than customers from a white ethnic background (25% compared with 16%). Looking more closely at customers from a minority ethnic background, customers from a black ethnic background are more likely to have experienced problems or difficulties (29%) than those from an Asian ethnic background (19%).

Customers claiming DLA (22%) are more likely to claim to have experienced problems than those claiming CA (12%) or AA (8%), as was the case in 2007.

Also more customers with disabilities concerning movement and the brain (27%) and psychological or behavioural disabilities (25%) claim to have had problems or difficulties with the DCS than customers overall (16%).

Customers who made their initial claim three years or more ago are more likely to have had problems (21% report having problems) than those whose initial claim was made less than three years ago (15% report having problems). Those who had an unfavourable outcome to their claim are more likely to have experienced problems (24%) than those who had a favourable outcome to their claim (9%).

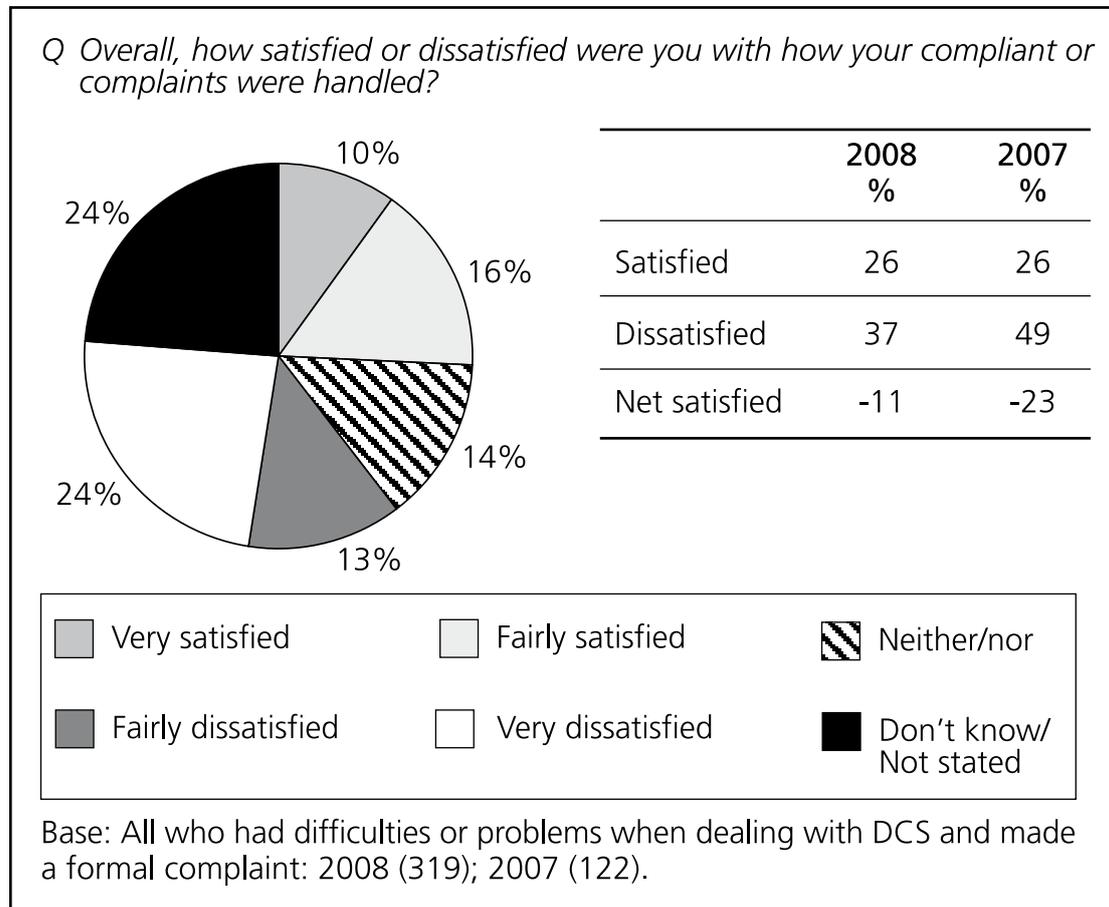
Figure 7.4 Problems with the DCS

Younger customers aged 25-34 are more likely to have problems or difficulties than customers overall (26% compared with 16%) whilst those aged 65 and over are least likely to do so (8%), again, this follows trends from previous years' results. This links to lower levels of overall satisfaction among younger customers and findings that show older customers are more likely to be satisfied and not report problems.

Customers who have gone through the appeals process and experienced a difficulty or problem when dealing with the DCS are more likely than average to go on to make a formal complaint (29% compared with 23%). Customers from an ethnic minority background are more likely to make a complaint if they experience a difficulty or problem than white customers (34% compared with 22%).

Of those customers who did make a formal complaint, a higher proportion of customers are dissatisfied than satisfied with how their complaint was handled (37% compared with 26%). However, the proportion of customers dissatisfied with the handling of their complaint has fallen by 12 percentage points since 2007 (49%).

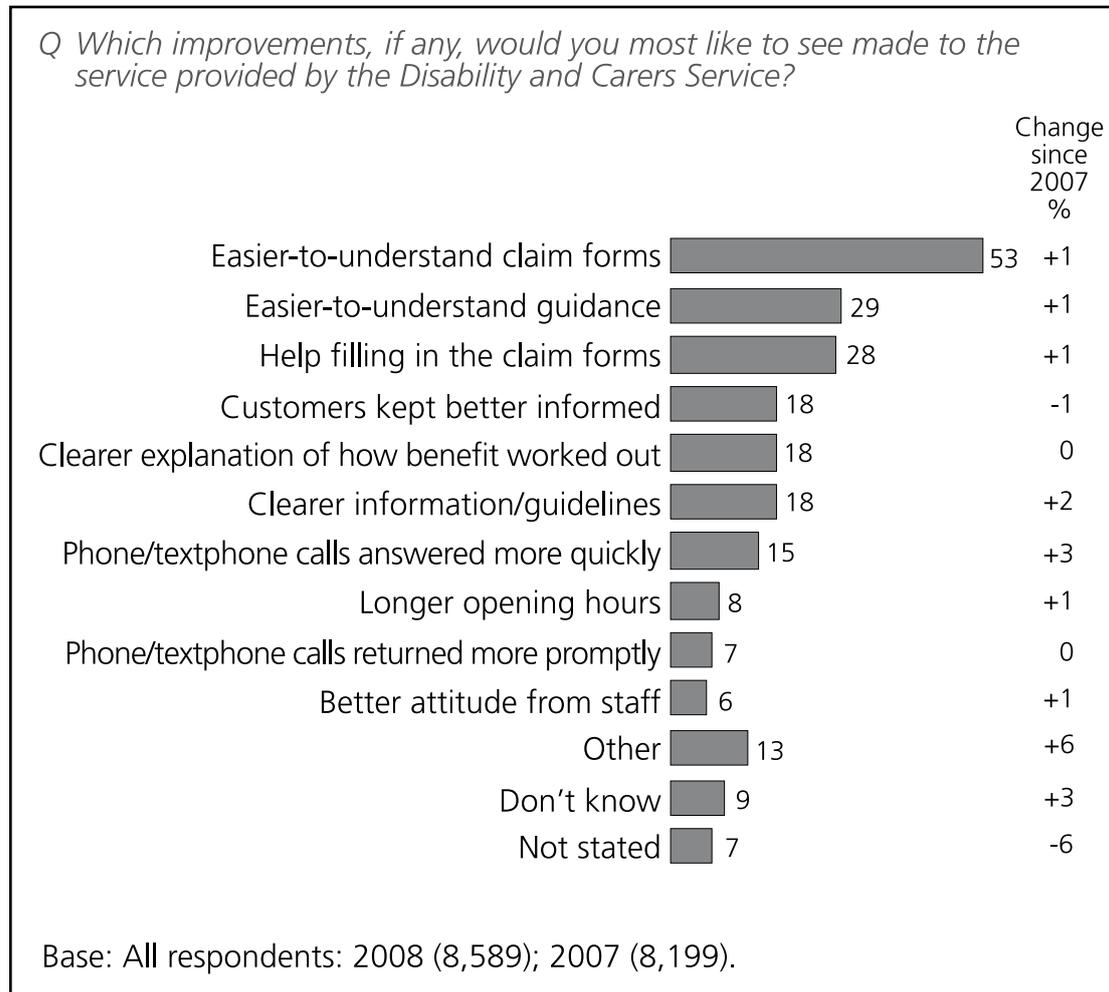
Older customers aged 65 and over tend to be more satisfied with how their complaint was handled (37%) than customers overall (26%). Customers from an ethnic minority background are also more satisfied (43%) than customers overall (26%). Customers who have been through the appeal process are most dissatisfied with how their complaint or complaints have been handled, with over half (56%) dissatisfied compared with 37% of customers overall. Attitudes towards the handling of complaints do not differ significantly across the Business Units or across disability or benefit types.

Figure 7.5 Making complaints – satisfaction

7.3 Improvements customers would like to see

Customers' priorities for improvements to the service are similar to a year ago. Over half of all customers would like to see **easier-to-understand claims forms** (53% in 2008). This is followed by, **easier-to-understand guidance** (29%) and **help filling in claim forms** (28%).

Customers from a DCPU are more likely than customers overall to desire **easier-to-understand claim forms** (60% compared with 53% overall). This is also the case for Mota customers (60%) and Edinburgh DBC customers (63%). Edinburgh DBC customers and those from a DCPU are also more likely to desire **easier-to-understand guidance issued with claim forms** (37% and 31% respectively) compared with 29% overall. Improvements around **help filling in the claim forms** are mentioned more often by customers of Wales DBC, Glasgow DBC and DCPU 2 (34%, 32% and 34% respectively) than customers overall (28%). Customers of DCPU 2 are also more likely to wish for **phone and textphone calls to be answered more quickly** (22% compared with 15% overall) and for **phone and textphone calls to be returned more promptly** (10% compared with 7% overall).

Figure 7.6 Improvements to the DCS

AA customers are less likely to mention any improvements to the DCS compared with DLA or CA customers. For instance, while 62% of DLA customers would like **easier-to-understand claim forms**, this applies to 44% of AA customers. Similarly, a third (32%) of DLA customers would like **easier-to-understand guidance issued with claim forms** compared with a quarter (26%) of AA customers.

A higher proportion of customers with learning disabilities (67%), communication difficulties (64%) and psychological or behavioural disabilities (61%), than average (53%), would like **easier-to-understand claim forms**.

Customers from ethnic minorities are more likely to believe improvements are needed in most areas than white customers. Customers from ethnic minority backgrounds are more likely to desire improvements than white customers in the following areas:

- Kept better informed (ethnic minority customers 30% compared with white 18%).
- Clearer explanation of how my benefit payment was worked out (ethnic minority customers 29%, white 18%).

- Phone and textphone calls answered more quickly (ethnic minority customers 23%, white 14%).
- Longer opening hours (ethnic minority customers 17%, white 7%).
- Phone and textphone calls returned more promptly (ethnic minority customers 12%, white 7%).
- Better attitude from staff (ethnic minority customers 15%, white 6%).

8 Disability and Carers Service priority customer groups

The DCS is committed to developing its customer insight activity around three key areas during 2009 – ethnicity, children, and customers with mental health issues. This chapter outlines the findings for each of these groups highlighting those areas of the service which are well suited to the needs of these customer groups but also those needing improvement.

8.1 Ethnicity

In the table below we compare the percentages of customers who declare each ethnic identity in our survey with the overall UK ethnic population profile from the 2001 Census. Although we have no means of knowing the ethnic profile of the DCS customer base, we can see that a number of completed questionnaires were returned from all the main ethnic groups. The ethnic profile of customers returning questionnaires also matches the overall ethnic profile of the UK population fairly closely. These figures serve to indicate the diverse nature of the DCS' customer base.

| | % | n | 2001 Census UK population profile % |
|-------------------------------|----|-------|---|
| White | 92 | 7,863 | 92 |
| Mixed | 1 | 56 | 1 |
| Asian or Asian British | 3 | 215 | 4 |
| Black or Black British | 1 | 96 | 2 |
| Chinese or other ethnic group | 1 | 66 | 1 |

Source: Ipsos MORI.

Base: All respondents who stated an ethnic identity (8,589).

White customers are more likely to be advocates for the DCS than ethnic minority customers (63% would speak highly of the service compared with 51%) and are also more likely to be satisfied with the service they receive from the DCS (80% satisfied compared with 73%). While there has been no change in the proportion of ethnic minority customers who are satisfied with the service since 2007, there has been a decline in the proportion who would speak highly of the service (57%).

Ethnic minority groups are more likely to claim to have had problems or difficulties when dealing with the DCS than white customers (25% compared with 16% respectively). Furthermore, the proportion of ethnic minority customers experiencing difficulties has increased since 2007 (19%). Ethnic minority customers are also more likely to submit a formal complaint if they have a problem, with around one in three (34%) experiencing problems going on to make a complaint, compared with around one in five (22%) white customers.

Looking at aspects of the Customer Promise/Vision Statement ethnic minority customers are more likely to agree that **the DCS uses clear written and spoken English** than customers from a white ethnic background (76% compared with 70% of white customers). However, with regard to communication by telephone, ethnic minority customers are less likely to be satisfied that **staff answered in plain and simple language** (79% compared with 85% of white customers). This was also the case in 2007 (80% compared with 86% of white customers), indicating this as a continuing issue to be addressed.

White customers are consistently more satisfied than those from ethnic minority groups over aspects of both telephone and written communications. For telephone contact this includes satisfaction with the **time taken to answer the phone** (68% of white customers compared with 59% of ethnic minority customers) and **speaking to a member of staff not a recorded message** (85% of white customers compared with 72% of ethnic minority customers).

There is a difference between white and ethnic minority customers in communication channels. While the telephone is reported by both customers of a white and ethnic minority background to be the best way for them to contact the DCS, this is true of significantly more white than ethnic minority customers (72% compared with 66%). A greater proportion of ethnic minority customers than white customers, prefer using letters to contact the DCS (36% compared with 30%). Similarly, ethnic minority customers are more likely to prefer the DCS **to get in touch with them using written communication** (69% compared with 59% of white customers).

As in 2007, ethnic minority customers are much more likely than white customers to request alternative formats from the DCS (30% compared with 46%). The most commonly requested alternative format among ethnic minority customers is large print (38% compared with 27% of white customers). Customers from a black ethnic background are even more likely to have requested communication in

an alternative format (54%) and in terms of large print this has been requested by nearly half (46%) of black customers compared with just over a quarter of white customers (27%).

As in 2007, those from ethnic minority groups are more likely than white customers to have received help with the claim process. This includes **finding documents to enclose with their form** (28% compared to 18%), **with writing** (42% compared with 23%), **with reading the text** (20% compared to 8%) and **with interpreting the form into another language** (22% compared to 1%).

In terms of priorities for improvement, ethnic minority customers are more likely to desire improvements than white customers in the following areas:

- Being kept better informed (30% compared with 18%).
- Clearer explanation of how benefit payment is worked out (29% compared with 18%).
- Phone and textphone calls being answered more quickly (23% compared with 14%).
- Longer opening hours (17% compared with 7%).
- Phone and textphone calls being returned more promptly (12% compared with 7%).
- Better attitude from staff (ethnic minority customers 15%, white 6%).

8.2 Appointees for children

More than four in five customers (82%) who are appointees for children,¹¹ are satisfied with the overall service they currently receive from the DCS. This is in line with the 2007 results (83%). This figure is significantly higher than the average satisfaction among all customers (78%). Around three in five (61%) would speak highly of the DCS, in line with the average across all customers in 2008 and 2007 (both 61%).

Looking at aspects of the Customer Promise/Vision Statement, appointees for child customers are more likely than average to agree that **the DCS provides them with an accurate service** (65% compared with 60% overall) and **an efficient service** (66% compared with 63% overall), that it **keeps them informed** (65% compared with 59% overall), that they are **able to access DCS services easily** (59% compared with 55% overall), that **the DCS uses clear written and spoken English** (72% compared with 69% overall) and that **the DCS can be trusted** (62% compared with 59% overall).

¹¹ A child is defined as aged between 0 and 15 years. Appointees completed questionnaires on behalf of the children.

In contacting the DCS, appointees for children are particularly likely to have telephoned the DCS in the last 12 months (70%, compared with 59% overall). Appointees also feel that the best way for them to get in touch with the DCS is by telephone (81%, compared with 71% overall). Satisfaction levels with aspects of telephone and written contact tend to be on a par with the average across all DCS customers.

Looking at the claim process, appointees for children tend to be more likely to say each aspect of the claim process is very important. They are less satisfied however than average that **the claim form was easy to fill in** (55% satisfied compared with 60% overall), and that **the questions asked were easy to understand** (59% satisfied compared with 62% overall).

Appointees for children are slightly more satisfied than other customers about **being kept informed of progress** (71% satisfied compared with 65% overall), that **the letter explained clearly why the decision had been made** (73% satisfied compared with 69% overall), the **letter giving them the decision on their claim told them everything they needed to know** (74% satisfied compared with 69% overall) and that **the letter explained clearly what to do if they were not happy with the decision** (79% satisfied compared with 74% overall). These findings are all in line with the 2007 survey results.

With regard to improvements they would like to see made by the DCS, the most common improvement requested is **making claim forms easier to understand** (58%, compared with 53% overall). Other areas recommended for improvement include **help filling in the claim forms** (26%), **easier to understand guidance** (25%), **phone and textphone calls returned more promptly** (19%, above the overall average among DCS customers of 15%) and customers being **kept better informed** (18%).

8.3 Customers with mental health problems

As in 2008, customers living with psychological or behavioural disabilities¹² tend to be among those least satisfied with the DCS (52% compared with the average across all customers of 78%). Advocacy levels are also lower among this group than customers overall (52% compared with 61%).

These customers are more likely to say that each aspect of the claim process is important, but they are less likely to be satisfied with them. For example, 96% of customers with a mental health illness believe that it is important that the **claim form is easy to fill in**, but 29% are dissatisfied with how easy the form is to fill in.

¹² Please see the appendices for an explanation of the disabilities included in this definition.

In terms of contacting the DCS, those with psychological or behavioural disabilities are more likely than others to have telephoned the service (64% compared with 59% overall).

One in four customers with psychological or behavioural disabilities (25%) claim that they have experienced difficulties or problems when dealing with the DCS, compared with around one in six overall (16%). The most commonly encountered problems are **challenging the decision on their claim** (57%), a **lack of communication or not being kept informed** (43%) and **being given different answers to the same question by different staff** (38%). Again this is consistent with results from the 2007 survey.

9 Carer's Allowance

Overall, the vast majority of CA customers are satisfied with the service they currently receive from the DCS (84%) with over half (56%) very satisfied. In both cases, these proportions of customers are significantly higher than for DCS customers overall (78% satisfied overall and 49% very satisfied). In addition, more than two in three (68%) CA customers would speak highly of the DCS. Again, this is a significantly higher proportion than for customers overall (61% positive).

Customers of CA tend to be more positive about aspects of the Customer Promise/Vision Statement than those claiming Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance. For example a higher proportion of CA than DLA or AA customers agree that the DCS:

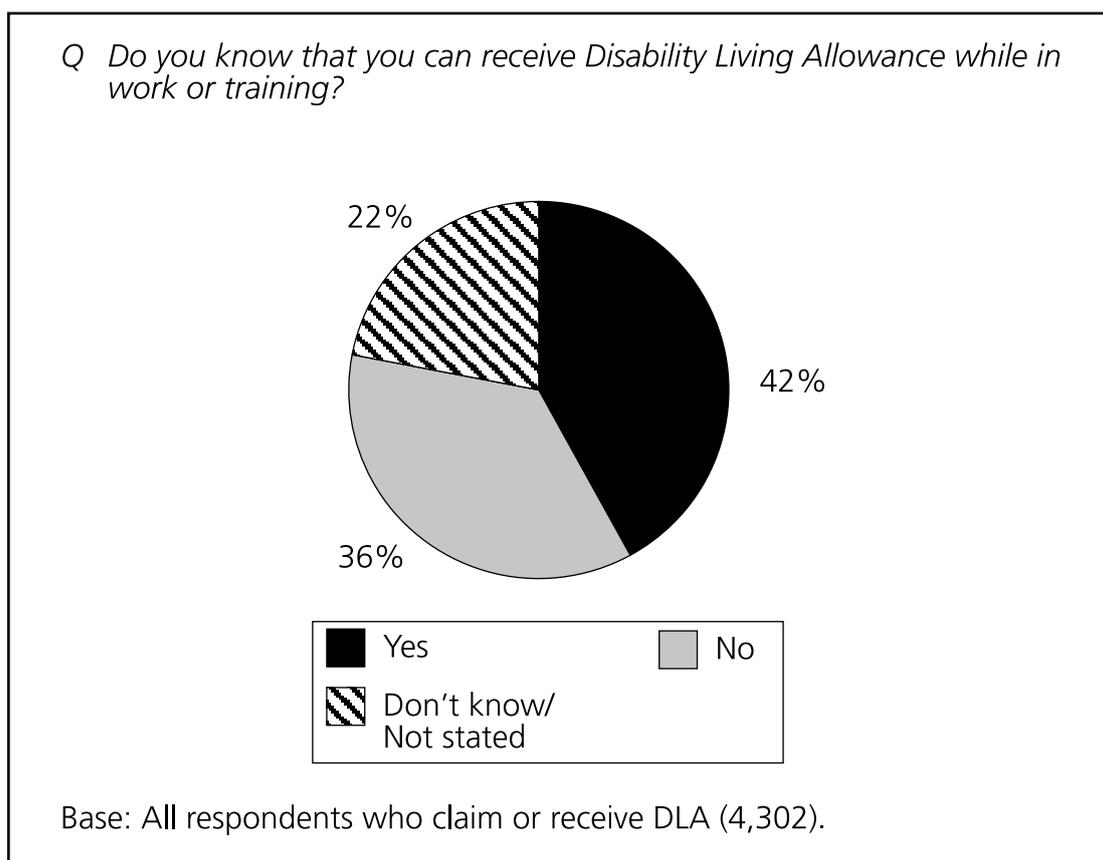
- keeps them informed (61% agree, compared with 56% of AA customers. A similar proportion of DLA as CA customers agree here (59%));
- services are easy to access (62% agree compared with 52% of DLA customers and 53% of AA customers);
- provides them with an accurate service (CA 68% agree, AA 62%, DLA, 55%);
- provides an efficient service (70% agree compared with 57% of DLA customers and 66% of AA customers).

Those who receive CA are less likely to have experienced problems than customers overall (79% have **not** experienced problems, compared with 73% overall). Customers receiving DLA are most likely to have had problems (22%, compared to 12% who receive CA). However, customers who receive CA are more likely to have had problems due to **delays in receiving benefit** (34% compared with 27% overall) and due to **not understanding how their benefit payment was worked out** (33% compared with 23% overall), a finding reflected in the results.

10 Receiving DLA while in work or training

Initiatives to promote awareness of the availability of DLA to those in work or training, such as through award notifications and Jobcentres, have been championed by the DWP Permanent Secretary, Leigh Lewis. The 2008 Customer Survey has been used to measure customer awareness of these issues. Around two in five DLA customers are aware that they can receive DLA whilst in work or training (42%). Whilst this is a fairly positive finding, this leaves over a third (36%) who are unaware. Please note, these questions have not been asked previously and thus, effectively set a baseline for future comparison.

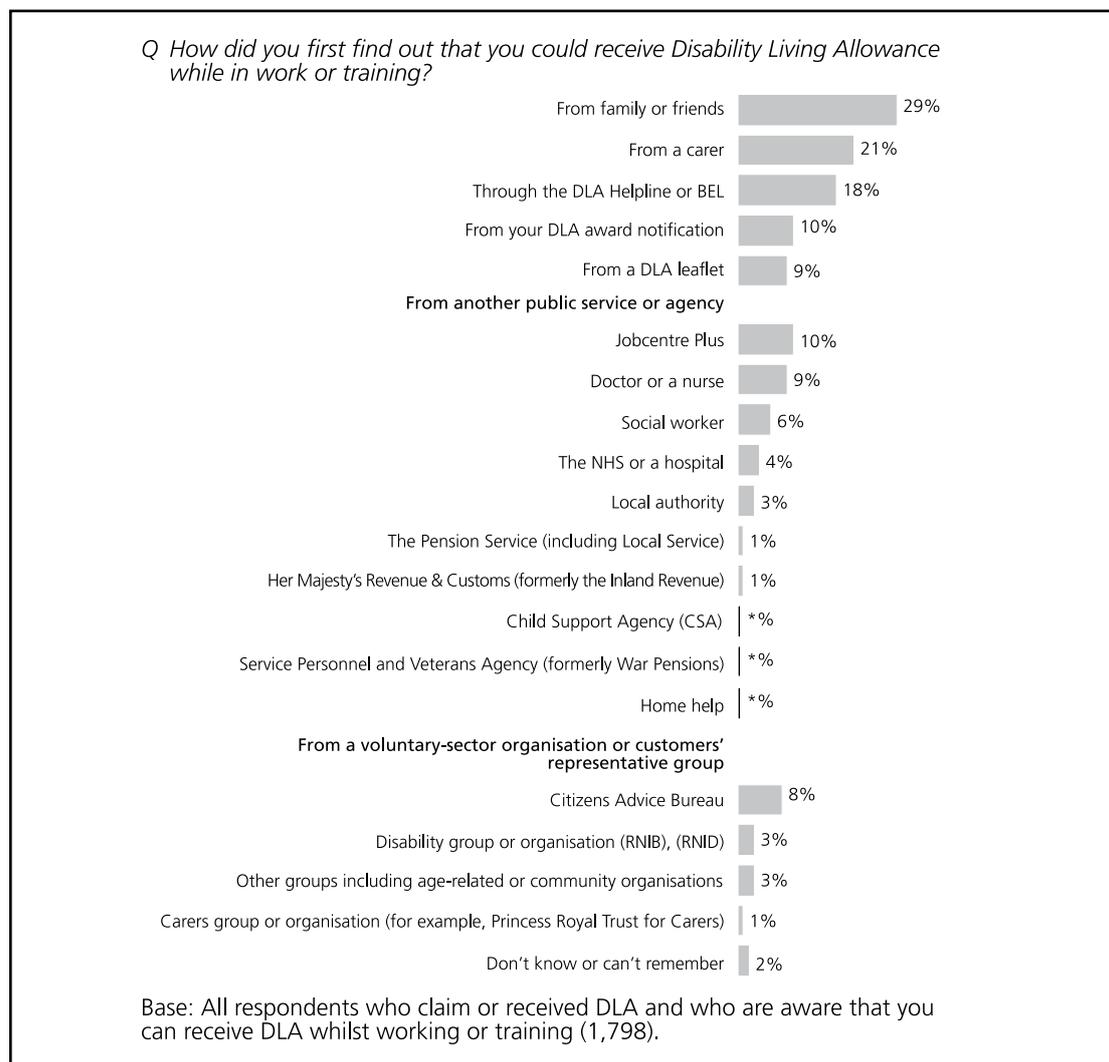
Figure 10.1 Awareness of DLA during work or training



Younger customers are more likely to be aware that they can receive DLA whilst in work or training. Over half (55%) of those aged 16-24 are aware, compared to only one in three (32%) of customers aged 65+. White customers are more aware than customers from an ethnic minority background (43% compared to 38%). Customers who made their initial claim three years or more ago are more aware that they can receive DLA while in work or training than those who made their claim less than three years ago (50% compared to 42%).

The most common ways of finding out about this entitlement is through family and friends (29%) and through a carer (21%). However, encouragingly for DCS, almost half (47%) of all DLA customers first heard about this directly through DCS or DWP sources. Of these sources, the DLA/AA Helpline/BEL is named by around two in five (18%) customers; other common sources are the DLA award notification (10%); Jobcentre Plus (10%) and the DLA leaflet (9%) which are all mentioned by one in ten customers who are aware of DLA availability while in work or training. These measures have been promoted by DCS and DWP recently and it appears that the campaigns may be proving successful.

Figure 10.2 Awareness of DLA during work or training



Appendix A

Technical details

Statistical reliability

It should be remembered that a sample, not all DCS customers, have completed a questionnaire. Consequently, all results are subject to margins of error, which means that not all differences are statistically significant. In addition, care should be taken in interpreting the results because of the small number of respondents in some sub-groups.

The sample tolerances that apply to the percentage results in this report are given in Table A.1. This table shows the possible variation that might be anticipated because a sample, rather than the entire population, was interviewed. As indicated, sampling tolerances vary with the size of the sample and the size of the percentage results.

For example, on a question where 50% of the people in a sample of 8,589 respond with a particular answer, the chances are 95 in 100 that this result would not vary more than one percentage point, plus or minus, from a complete coverage of the entire population using the same procedures. But on a question where 50% of the people in a sample of 377 respond with a particular answer, the chances are 95 in 100 that this result would not vary more than five percentage points from the 'true' population value.

Table A.1 Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages

| Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| | 10% or 90% | 30% or 70% | 50% |
| Base: | ± | ± | ± |
| Size of sample on which survey result is based | | | |
| 8, 589 (i.e. all customers) | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 5,085 (i.e. all who have telephoned the DCS in the past 12 months) | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2,882 (i.e. all who have written to the DCS in the past 12 months) | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 2,109 (i.e. all claiming CA) | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 1,000 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| 377 (i.e. Leeds DBC) | 3 | 5 | 5 |
| 100 | 6 | 9 | 10 |

Source: Ipsos MORI.

Tolerances are also involved in the **comparison of results** from different parts of the sample. A difference, in other words, must be of at least a certain size to be considered statistically significant. The following table is a guide to the sampling tolerances applicable to comparisons.

Table A.2 Differences required for these significance at or near these percentages

| Differences required for these significance at or near these percentages | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| | 10% or 90% | 30% or 70% | 50% |
| Base: | | | |
| Size of sample on which survey result is based | | | |
| 8,199 and 8,589 (i.e. comparing all customers in 2008 Customer Survey with all customers in 2007) | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 8,589 and 3,137 (i.e. comparing all customers with customer aged 65+) | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 8,589 and 901 (i.e. comparing all customers with all appointees) | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| 8,589 and 377 (i.e. comparing all customers with Leeds DBC) | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2,178 and 2,109 (i.e. comparing AA customers with carers) | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| 219 and 375 (i.e. comparing Edinburgh DBC customers with Wembley DBC customers) | 5 | 8 | 8 |
| 200 and 200 | 6 | 9 | 10 |
| 100 and 100 | 8 | 13 | 14 |
| 50 and 50 | 12 | 18 | 20 |

Source: Ipsos MORI.

Caution should be exercised when comparing small sub-groups to ensure that the findings are statistically significant. For example, if comparing findings between Edinburgh and Wembley DBC customers, there would need to be a difference of 8% (between findings around 30-70%) to be considered statistically significant.

Appendix B

Disability type definition

Throughout the report reference is made to classifications of disability type. These were included in the questionnaire so are self-defined disabilities by customers. Definition of these disability types are as follows:

Problems with movement (for example, arthritis, back pain, muscle disease)

Sensory problems (for example, blindness, deafness)

Cardio-respiratory problems (for example, heart disease, asthma, bronchitis)

Psychological or behavioural problems (for example, mental illness, dementia, behavioural disorder, being dependent on drugs or alcohol)

Problems with your wellbeing (for example, diabetes, skin disease, bowel or stomach disease)

Disorders relating to movement and the brain (for example, Parkinson's disease, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis)

Fatigue or stamina problems (for example, cancer, kidney disorders including dialysis, old age)

Learning disabilities (for example, Down's syndrome)

Communication difficulties (for example, speech or language)

Other health problems or disabilities

Appendix C

Note on Key Drivers Analysis

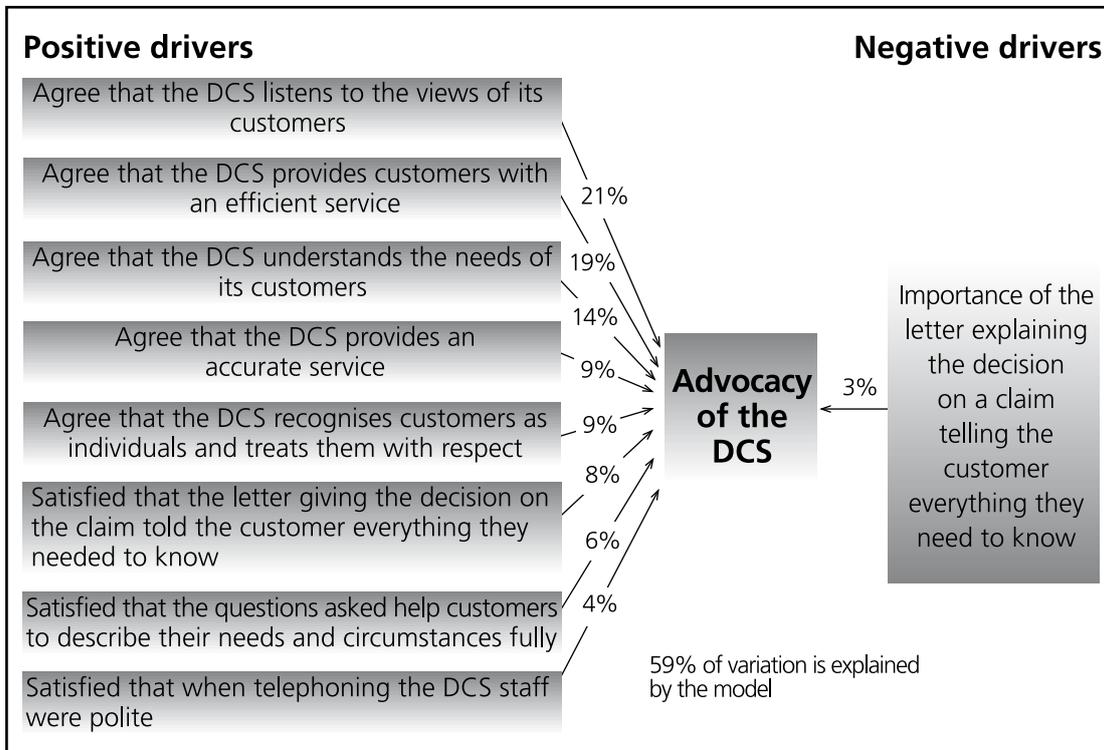
One way of looking deeper into the results of our survey and investigate what it is that is 'driving' customer views towards the DCS is to run a key drivers analysis on the responses given by DCS customers. On pages 19-20 of this report we discuss the results of this analysis.

Key Drivers is a multivariate technique used to identify how strongly satisfaction with individual service factors are associated with overall satisfaction. It can be argued that it is an 'objective' measure of what actually drives satisfaction, because it does not rely on customers' own perceptions about priorities, but uncovers the underlying 'covert' mechanisms at work, which customers may not be conscious of themselves.

Key Drivers Analysis also takes into account the inter-relationship between variables, whereas in basic table analysis it is less clear precisely which variables are **independently** influencing attitudes. For example, age and type of allowance may themselves be related, and so it is difficult to say which of these is having the most impact by looking at the tables alone.

Figure C.1 is one of those created in this analysis. The positive drivers are those that have a positive impact on the 'dependent variable' (in this case, advocacy of the DCS), hence, if a customer is more likely to agree the DCS listens to customers, they are more likely to speak highly of the DCS. The negative drivers have the reverse effect, hence, the more likely a customer is to say it is important that the letter explains clearly why the decision has been made, the less likely they are to speak highly of the DCS. The percentages refer to the relative strength of the relationship between each factor and the dependent variable. In saying that, the model explains 59% of variance, it means that 59% of advocacy is captured by the model, and that other factors not included in the model explain the remaining 41%.

Figure C.1 Advocacy of the DCS – attitudinal factors



Attitudinal factors

The following are the questions from the survey defined as 'attitudinal':

- Q2 Agree/disagree about DCS services
- Q10 Importance of services when telephoning the DCS
- Q12 Satisfaction with services when telephoning the DCS
- Q13 Importance of services when writing to the DCS
- Q15 Satisfaction with services when writing to the DCS
- Q16 Importance of aspects of service when making a claim
- Q17 Satisfaction with aspects of service when making a claim
- Q27 Overall satisfaction

Experiential factors

The following are the experiential factors:

- Q3 How the customer first heard about DLA, AA or CA
- Q4 How the customer gets in touch with the DCS
- Q5 How the customer would like to get in touch with the DCS

- Q6 How the customer would like the DCS to get in touch with them
- Q7 Requests for communications in alternative formats
- Q11 Whether the customer has telephoned the DCS in the last 12 months
- Q14 Whether the customer has written to the DCS in the last 12 months
- Q18 Awareness of sources of help or guidance
- Q19 Whether the customer received any help or guidance
- Q20 Type of help or guidance received
- Q22 Whether the customer had any problems or difficulties when dealing with the DCS
- Q23 Type of problem experienced
- Q24 Whether the customer made a formal complaint about the problem or difficulty they had
- Q26 Improvements needed in DCS services
- Q28 Awareness of DLA while in work/training
- Q29 How the customer found out about DLA while in work/training

Demographics

The following are the demographics:

- Gender
- Age
- Business Unit
- Appointee
- Disability
- Benefit type
- Time since initial claim
- Event type
- Outcome type

Appendix D

Outcome codes

As in 2007, the 2008 Customer Survey has used a computer scan sample to provide output on outcome types for AA and DLA customers based on codes used in the decision-making process. For the purposes of the survey report, these were then grouped into the following broader categories.

Unfavourable outcomes

These are outcome codes where the decision given has reduced or disallowed benefit. **These are likely to attract negative feedback.**

Y11 Y12 Y13 Y14 Y16 Y42 Y44 O99 H90 U01

Favourable outcomes

These are outcome codes where the decision given has awarded or increased the amount of benefit. **These are likely to attract positive feedback.**

Y17 Y19 Y48 F01 F02

No change outcomes

These are outcome codes where entitlement to benefit has been looked at, but the amount of benefit awarded has not been changed.

Y15 Y18 Y45 Y46 Y99

Other outcomes

These are outcomes where entitlement has not been looked at and used to clear events.

Y20 Y21 Y22 Y30 Y31 Y32 Y37 Y38 Y41 Y43 Y47

R01 R02 R03 R11 R12 R13 R14 R15 R16 R17 R18

S01 S02 S03 S04 H97 H98 H99

Appendix E

Event type codes

As in 2007, the 2008 Customer Survey has used a computer scan sample to provide output on event types for AA and DLA customers based on codes used in the decision-making process. For the purposes of the survey report, these were then grouped into the following broader categories.

Claims

These events cover all initial claims for DLA/AA.

01 02 03 04 05 06 07

Renewals

These events cover all renewal type claims for DLA/AA. These include renewal/reviews where one component is up for renewal but the other is not.

09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17

Reviews¹³

These include supersessions and reconsiderations with the exception of renewal/reviews.

20 21 22 23 24 26 27 28 29 82 83

47 49

¹³ Although 'review' is not a term technically associated with the DLA/AA process, it has been used for purposes of the survey report to include reconsiderations and supersessions.

Appeals

These events cover all DLA/AA appeal types. These include appeals to The Appeals Service (TAS) and Social Security Commissioner.

30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39

Others

These are all other event types. These include maintenance activities such as change in payee or method of payment and events that may not involve looking at the decision again.

25 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 61 62 63

64 65 66 92 94 96 97 98 99

Appendix F

Overall topline findings



**Disability and Carers Service
Customer Service Survey 2008
Topline Results (16 January 2009)**

- Self-completion questionnaires were sent to a sample of 21,307 customers who either claim or receive Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Attendance Allowance (AA) or Carer's Allowance (CA). In all, 15 Business Units (including DBCs and DCPUs) in England, Scotland and Wales were covered, along with CAU and MOTA customers from across England, Scotland and Wales, with approximately 1,000 customers in each area being sent a questionnaire (5,000 for CAU).
- Fieldwork was conducted between 29 September and 5 December 2008.
- Results are based on a total of 8,589 questionnaires – an unadjusted response rate of 40%.
- Results are unweighted.
- Where percentages do not sum to 100, this is due to computer rounding or multiple responses.
- An asterisk (*) indicates a value of less than half of one percent, but greater than zero
- Unless otherwise stated, results are based on all (8,589) respondents
- Fieldwork details for the 2007 survey can be found at the end of this document.

Overall opinions about the Disability and Carers Service

| 1 | How would you describe the Disability and Carers Service? Please tick one box only. | |
|--|--|-----------|
| | 2007 | 2008 |
| | % | % |
| I would speak highly of it without being asked | 23 | 21 |
| I would speak highly of it if I were asked | 40 | 40 |
| I would have no thoughts either way | 16 | 16 |
| I would criticise it if I were asked | 7 | 8 |
| I would criticise it without being asked | 3 | 3 |
| Don't know | 5 | 6 |
| Not stated | 7 | 6 |

| 2 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Disability and Carers Service? Please tick one box only on each line. | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | | Strongly agree % | Tend to agree % | Neither agree nor disagree % | Tend to disagree % | Strongly disagree % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
| The DCS uses clear written and spoken English | 2007 | 32 | 37 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 14 |
| | 2008 | 30 | 39 | 10 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 12 |
| The DCS recognises you as an individual and treats you with respect..... | 2007 | 31 | 33 | 12 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 13 |
| | 2008 | 29 | 34 | 13 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 11 |
| The DCS can be trusted | 2008 | 26 | 32 | 18 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 12 |
| The DCS provides you with an efficient service | 2007 | 28 | 35 | 11 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 13 |
| | 2008 | 26 | 37 | 12 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 12 |
| The DCS keeps you informed | 2007 | 24 | 34 | 13 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 16 |
| | 2008 | 23 | 36 | 14 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 13 |
| The DCS provides you with an accurate service | 2007 | 24 | 37 | 12 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 14 |
| | 2008 | 22 | 38 | 14 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 12 |
| The DCS understands the needs of its customers | 2008 | 22 | 33 | 15 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 12 |
| The DCS listens to the views of its customers | 2007 | 22 | 35 | 16 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 12 |
| | 2008 | 20 | 35 | 17 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 10 |
| The DCS services are easy to access ¹ | 2007 | 23 | 35 | 13 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 15 |
| | 2008 | 19 | 36 | 15 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 14 |

¹ Please note the question wording has changed between 2007 and 2008. The 2007 wording was “You are able to access DCS services easily”

Finding out about the Disability and Carers Service

| 3 | How did you first hear about Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance or Carer's Allowance? Please tick one box only. | 2007 | 2008 |
|---|--|-----------|-----------|
| | | % | % |
| | From family or friends | 34 | 35 |
| | Through staff from the Disability and Carers Service..... | n/a | 11 |
| | From a Department for Work and Pensions publicity leaflet | 13 | 9 |
| | From a carer | 8 | 7 |
| | Through the Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL) | 7 | 4 |
| | Through other benefit advice websites | n/a | 3 |
| | Through the Directgov website (www.direct.gov.uk) ² | 2 | 2 |
| | From another public service or agency | 25 | 19 |
| | Doctor or a nurse | 8 | 6 |
| | Social worker | 5 | 4 |
| | The NHS or a hospital..... | 3 | 3 |
| | Jobcentre Plus | 3 | 2 |
| | Local authority | 3 | 2 |
| | The Pension Service (including Local Service) | 2 | 1 |
| | Child Support Agency (CSA) | * | 0 |
| | Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (formerly War Pensions) | * | * |
| | Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (formerly the Inland Revenue) | * | * |
| | Home help | * | * |
| | From a voluntary-sector organisation or customers' representative group | 6 | 5 |
| | Citizens advice bureau (CAB) | 3 | 2 |
| | Other groups including age-related or community organisations (for example, Age Concern, Help the Aged, Contact a Family) or local places of worship | 3 | 2 |
| | Disability group or organisation (for example, Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)) | 1 | * |
| | Carers group or organisation (for example, Princess Royal Trust for Carers) | 1 | * |
| | Other..... | n/a | 3 |
| | Don't know or can't remember | 1 | 1 |
| | Not stated | 4 | 2 |

² Please note the question wording has changed between 2007 and 2008. The 2007 survey included just one internet code with the wording "Through the internet (for example, www.direct.gov.uk)"

Contacting the Disability and Carers Service

- 4 **How do you get in touch with the Disability and Carers Service at the moment?**
Please tick all the boxes that apply.
- 5 **What is the best way for you to get in touch with the Disability and Carers Service?** Please tick no more than three boxes.
- 6 **How would you most like the Disability and Carers Service to get in touch with you?** Please tick no more than three boxes.

| | Question 4 | | Question 5 | | Question 6 | |
|--|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| | 2007 | 2008 | 2007 | 2008 | 2007 | 2008 |
| By phone | 72 | 73 | 68 | 71 | 48 | 52 |
| By letter | 32 | 33 | 29 | 29 | 55 | 58 |
| Face-to-face at your home | 9 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 15 | 15 |
| Through family or friends..... | 4 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| Through a carer..... | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL) | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| By e-mail | 2 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 8 |
| Through the internet (for example, www.direct.gov.uk)..... | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Face-to-face in a DCS office | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| By textphone | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| By RNID Typetalk..... | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Through a public service or agency | 16 | 16 | 12 | 12 | 8 | 8 |
| Social worker..... | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| Doctor or a nurse | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Jobcentre Plus | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| The Pension Service (including Local Service)..... | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Local authority..... | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Home help..... | 1 | 1 | * | * | * | * |
| Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (formerly War Pensions) | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| The NHS or a hospital..... | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Through a voluntary-sector organisation or customers' representative group | 10 | 10 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 5 |
| Citizens advice bureau (CAB) | 5 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Other groups including age-related or community organisations (for example, Age Concern, Help the Aged, Contact a Family) or local places of worship | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Disability group or organisation (for example, Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | * |

4, 5, 6 CONTINUED

| | Question 4 % | | Question 5 % | | Question 6 % | |
|---|-----------------|------|-----------------|------|-----------------|------|
| | 2007 | 2008 | 2007 | 2008 | 2007 | 2008 |
| Carers group or organisation (for example, Princess Royal Trust for Carers) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | * |
| Don't know..... | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Not stated..... | 4 | 4 | 14 | 11 | 16 | 13 |

| | |
|---|--|
| 7 | In which, if any, of the following ways have you ever asked the Disability and Carers Service to contact you? Please tick all the boxes that apply. |
| 8 | And in which, if any, of the following ways did the Disability and Carers Service then contact you? ³ Please tick all the boxes. <i>Base: All who asked the DCS to contact them in each format</i> |

| | Question 7 | | Question 8 | |
|--|------------|-----------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| | 2007 % | 2008 % | 2007 (base) % | 2008 (base) % |
| Sending you a letter or claim form in large print..... | 26 | 27 | 72 (2,106) | 78 (2,327) |
| Communicating with you by textphone..... | 3 | 4 | 57 (253) | 62 (305) |
| Sending you a letter or claim form in Braille..... | 1 | 1 | 46 ⁴ (76) | 68 (74) |
| Communicating with you using a language other than English | 1 | 1 | 42 (45) ⁵ | 56 (60) |
| Communicating with you using British Sign Language (BSL) | * | * | 7 (n) ⁶ (16) | 11 (n) (25) |
| None of these..... | 55 | 54 | | |
| Not stated..... | 15 | 15 | | |

³ Please note a change of question wording from the 2007 survey which asked, "And in which, if any, of the following ways did the Disability and Carers Service then contact you?"

⁴ Please note results are indicative only, as there are small base sizes (76 /74)

⁵ Please note results are indicative only, as there are small base sizes (45 and 60)

⁶ Please note results are indicative only, as there are very small base sizes (16 and 25) – because the bases are so small, results are shown as the number of people giving this answer rather than as a percentage

If the DCS contacted you in any of the ways listed in question 8, please answer question 9. Otherwise, please move on to question 10.

| 9 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following ways in which the Disability and Carers Service contacted you? Please tick one box on each line for each service you said you received from the DCS in question 8. <i>Base: All who were contacted by the DCS in each format</i> | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|----------------|------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------|------------|-------------------|
| | | Very satisfied | Fairly satisfied | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | Fairly dissatisfied | Very dissatisfied | Don't know | Not stated | Base |
| Sending you a letter or claim form in large print ... | 2007 % | 60 | 23 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | (1,520) |
| | 2008 % | 58 | 24 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 8 | (1,814) |
| Communicating with you using British Sign Language (BSL) | 2007 n | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | (7) ⁷ |
| | 2008 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 5 | (11) |
| Communicating with you using a language other than English | 2007 n | 8 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | (19) ⁸ |
| | 2008 | 14 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 11 | (34) |
| Communicating with you by textphone | 2007 % | 42 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 41 | (145) |
| | 2008 | 37 | 12 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 44 | (188) |
| Sending you a letter or claim form in Braille | 2007 % | 26 | 17 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 49 | (35) ⁹ |
| | 2008 | 36 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 38 | (50) |

⁷ Please note results are indicative only, as there are very small base sizes (7 and 11) – because the base is so small, results are shown as the number of people giving this answer rather than as a percentage

⁸ Please note results are indicative only, as there are very small base sizes (19 and 34) – because the bases are so small, results are shown as the number of people giving this answer rather than as a percentage

⁹ Please note results are indicative only, as there are small base sizes (35 and 50)

Contacting the Disability and Carers Service by phone

Everyone should answer questions 10 and 11.

10 Please tell us how important, if at all, the following would be if you needed to phone the Disability and Carers Service (including by textphone).
Please tick one box only on each line.

| | | Very important % | Fairly important % | Not very important % | Not important at all % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
|---|-------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Speaking to a person rather than a recorded message with instructions | 2007 | 80 | 6 | 1 | * | 1 | 13 |
| | 2008 | 79 | 6 | 1 | * | 1 | 13 |
| Staff answering in plain and simple language | 2007 | 74 | 10 | 1 | * | 1 | 15 |
| | 2008 | 76 | 10 | 1 | * | 1 | 13 |
| Staff being polite | 2007 | 71 | 14 | 1 | * | 1 | 13 |
| | 2008 | 73 | 13 | 1 | * | 1 | 12 |
| Staff promptly phoning you back with the answer if they can't give you the information you need straight away | 2007 | 67 | 17 | 1 | * | 1 | 14 |
| | 2008 | 69 | 17 | 1 | * | 1 | 12 |
| Being told everything you need to know straight away | 2007 | 61 | 21 | 2 | * | 1 | 16 |
| | 2008 | 65 | 19 | 2 | * | 1 | 13 |
| The phone being answered within 30 seconds (2008 DLA/AA customers only, base; 6,480) ¹⁰ | 2007 | 37 | 33 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 19 |
| | 2008 | 39 | 32 | 11 | 1 | 1 | 16 |
| Getting through to a member of staff the first time you call (2008 CA customers only, base; 2,109) | 2008 | 66 | 19 | 1 | * | * | 13 |

11 Have you phoned the Disability and Carers Service in the last 12 months? (This includes by textphone.) Please tick one box only.

| | 2007 % | 2008 % |
|------------------------------------|--------|-----------|
| Yes | 59 | 59 |
| No | 29 | 28 |
| Don't know or can't remember | 7 | 8 |
| Not stated | 5 | 4 |

¹⁰ Please note the responses to this statement are not directly comparable between 2007 and 2008. In 2008 different answer codes were asked of DLA/AA customers and CA customers.

If you have phoned the DCS in the last 12 months, please answer question 12. Otherwise, please move on to question 13.

12 How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with each of the following when you phoned the Disability and Carers Service? (This includes by telephone.)
Please tick one box only on each line.

Base: All who have phoned the DCS in the last 12 months (2007:4,823, 2008: 5,094)

| | | Very satisfied % | Fairly satisfied % | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied % | Fairly dissatisfied % | Very dissatisfied % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
|--|-------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Staff were polite..... | 2007 | 71 | 19 | 2 | 1 | 1 | * | 5 |
| | 2008 | 70 | 21 | 3 | 2 | 1 | * | 4 |
| You spoke to a person rather than a recorded message ¹¹ .. | 2007 | 69 | 15 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| | 2008 | 66 | 18 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| Staff answered in plain and simple language..... | 2007 | 64 | 21 | 3 | 2 | 1 | * | 9 |
| | 2008 | 63 | 21 | 4 | 2 | 1 | * | 8 |
| You were told everything you needed to know straight away | 2007 | 47 | 26 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 45 | 26 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 9 |
| The time that it took to answer the phone (2008 DLA/AA customers only, base; 3,813 ¹²)..... | 2007 | 39 | 32 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 11 |
| | 2008 | 34 | 33 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 11 |
| You were phoned back at a time the member of staff agreed with you beforehand | 2007 | 38 | 18 | 9 | 3 | 4 | 10 | 19 |
| | 2008 | 31 | 16 | 10 | 3 | 4 | 11 | 25 |
| You got through to a member of staff the first time you called (2008 CA customers only, base; 1281)..... | 2008 | 50 | 26 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 7 |

¹¹ Please note there have been slight word changes between the 2007 and 2008 surveys for each of these statements. E.g. In 2007 the wording was 'Speaking to a person rather than a recorded message'

¹² Please note the responses to this statement are not directly comparable between 2007 and 2008. In 2008 different answer codes were asked of DLA/AA customers and CA customers.

Writing to the Disability and Carers Service

Everyone should answer questions 13 and 14.

13 Please tell us how important, if at all, the following would be if you needed to write to the Disability and Carers Service.
Please tick one box only on each line.

| | | Very important % | Fairly important % | Not very important % | Not important at all % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
|--|-------------|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| The reply to your letter telling you everything you need to know | 2007 | 81 | 8 | * | * | 1 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 82 | 8 | * | * | 1 | 9 |
| The reply to your letter being easy to understand | 2007 | 78 | 10 | * | * | 1 | 11 |
| | 2008 | 79 | 10 | * | * | 1 | 10 |
| Receiving a quick response to your letter. | 2007 | 72 | 17 | 1 | * | 1 | 9 |
| | 2008 | 73 | 17 | 1 | * | 1 | 9 |

14 Have you written to the Disability and Carers Service in the last 12 months?
Please tick one box only.

| | 2007 % | 2008 % |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Yes | 35 | 34 |
| No | 53 | 53 |
| Don't know or can't remember | 8 | 9 |
| Not stated | 5 | 4 |

If you have written to the DCS in the last 12 months, please answer question 15. Otherwise, please move on to question 16.

15 How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with each of the following when you wrote to the Disability and Carers Service?
Please tick one box only on each line.

Base: All who have written to the DCS in the last 12 months (2007: 2,830. 2008: 2,898)

| | | Very satisfied % | Fairly satisfied % | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied % | Fairly dissatisfied % | Very dissatisfied % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
|---|-------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|
| The reply to your letter was easy to understand | 2007 | 45 | 28 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 9 |
| | 2008 | 42 | 29 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 9 |
| The reply to your letter told you everything you needed to know | 2007 | 43 | 25 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 8 |
| | 2008 | 41 | 25 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 1 | 9 |
| The time it took to reply to your letter..... | 2007 | 34 | 34 | 9 | 10 | 8 | 1 | 5 |
| | 2008 | 32 | 35 | 8 | 10 | 9 | 1 | 6 |

Making a claim

Everyone should answer questions 16-19.

16 How important to you, if at all, are each of the following when making a claim for a Disability and Carers Service benefit? Please tick one box only on each line.

| | | Very important % | Fairly important % | Not very important % | Not important at all % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
|--|-------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| The claim form being easy to fill in..... | 2007 | 83 | 9 | * | * | 1 | 7 |
| | 2008 | 83 | 9 | 1 | * | 1 | 6 |
| The questions you are asked being easy to understand | 2007 | 79 | 10 | 1 | * | 1 | 9 |
| | 2008 | 80 | 10 | 1 | * | 1 | 8 |
| The letter giving you the decision on your claim telling you everything you need to know | 2007 | 79 | 10 | 1 | * | 1 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 80 | 10 | * | * | 1 | 9 |
| The questions you are asked helping you to describe your needs or circumstances fully | 2007 | 78 | 10 | 1 | * | 1 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 79 | 11 | 1 | * | 1 | 9 |

16 CONTINUED

| | | Very important % | Fairly important % | Not very important % | Not important at all % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
|---|-------------|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| The guidance with the claim form being easy to understand | 2007 | 78 | 11 | 1 | * | 1 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 79 | 11 | 1 | * | 1 | 8 |
| The letter explaining clearly why the decision has been made..... | 2007 | 77 | 11 | 1 | * | 1 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 79 | 10 | 1 | * | 1 | 9 |
| The DCS letting you know what is happening with your claim | 2007 | 76 | 13 | 1 | * | 1 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 76 | 13 | 1 | * | 1 | 9 |
| The letter explaining clearly what to do if you are not happy with the decision | 2007 | 76 | 11 | 1 | * | 1 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 78 | 12 | 1 | * | 1 | 9 |
| The DCS letting you know the decision on your claim quickly | 2007 | 74 | 14 | 1 | * | 1 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 75 | 14 | 1 | * | 1 | 9 |
| The information you are asked to provide being easy for you to get | 2007 | 72 | 15 | 1 | * | 1 | 11 |
| | 2008 | 73 | 16 | 1 | * | 1 | 10 |

| 17 When you made your claim for Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance or Carer’s Allowance, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with each of the following? Please tick one box only on each line. | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | | Very satisfied % | Fairly satisfied % | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied % | Fairly dissatisfied % | Very dissatisfied % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
| The letter explained clearly what to do if you were not happy with the decision..... | 2007 | 45 | 28 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 11 |
| | 2008 | 46 | 28 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 10 |
| The letter giving you the decision on your claim told you everything you needed to know | 2007 | 43 | 26 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 11 |
| | 2008 | 43 | 26 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 9 |
| The letter explained clearly why the decision had been made..... | 2007 | 42 | 27 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 11 |
| | 2008 | 42 | 27 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 10 |
| You were kept informed on the progress of your claim ¹³ | 2007 | 36 | 29 | 10 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 11 |
| | 2008 | 36 | 30 | 11 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 10 |
| The time it took to send you the decision | 2007 | 32 | 29 | 9 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 11 |
| | 2008 | 32 | 29 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 10 |
| The information you were asked to provide was easy for you to get..... | 2007 | 31 | 36 | 11 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 12 |
| | 2008 | 30 | 36 | 12 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 11 |
| The questions you were asked helped you to describe your needs or circumstances fully..... | 2007 | 29 | 32 | 11 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 11 |
| | 2008 | 28 | 32 | 12 | 10 | 7 | 2 | 10 |
| The questions you were asked were easy to understand | 2007 | 28 | 34 | 11 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 12 |
| | 2008 | 27 | 35 | 11 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 10 |
| The claim form was easy to fill in..... | 2007 | 26 | 35 | 10 | 10 | 7 | 2 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 25 | 35 | 11 | 11 | 8 | 2 | 8 |

¹³ Please note that there has been a slight word change from the 2007 survey which read “The way you were kept informed on the progress of your claim”.

The guidance with
the claim form was
easy to understand....

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 2007 | 26 | 36 | 11 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 12 |
| 2008 | 26 | 36 | 12 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 10 |

- 18 **Were you aware that you could receive help or guidance from any of the following when you were filling in your claim form?**
Please tick all that apply.
- 19 **Did you receive any help or guidance from any of the following when you were filling in your claim form?**
Please tick all that apply.

| | Question 18 | | Question 19 | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| | 2007 | 2008 | 2007 | 2008 |
| | % | | % | |
| Family or friends..... | 40 | 43 | 25 | 29 |
| A carer..... | 17 | 17 | 8 | 7 |
| Disability and Carers Service (DCS)..... | 18 | 24 | 8 | 10 |
| Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL) | 10 | 15 | 3 | 4 |
| From another public service or agency | 49 | 40 | 31 | 25 |
| Social worker | 14 | 14 | 8 | 8 |
| Doctor or a nurse..... | 14 | 16 | 7 | 9 |
| The Pension Service (including Local Service) | 8 | 7 | 5 | 4 |
| Jobcentre Plus..... | 7 | 8 | 2 | 2 |
| Local authority | 7 | 7 | 4 | 4 |
| The NHS or a hospital | 6 | 7 | 3 | 3 |
| Home help | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (formerly War Pensions) | 1 | 1 | * | * |
| From a voluntary-sector organisation or customers' representative group | 28 | 29 | 16 | 15 |
| Citizens advice bureau (CAB) | 18 | 19 | 8 | 8 |
| Other groups including age-related or community organisations (for example, Age Concern, Help the Aged, Contact a Family) or local places of worship | 10 | 10 | 6 | 5 |
| Disability group or organisation (for example, Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)) | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Carers group or organisation (for example, Princess Royal Trust for Carers)..... | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| No, none of these..... | 8 | 6 | 8 | 7 |
| I did not need help or guidance filling in the form..... | Does not apply | | 12 | 7 |
| Don't know or can't remember | Does not apply | | 2 | 1 |
| Not stated..... | 11 | 10 | 18 | 13 |

If you have received help or guidance with filling in your claim form, please answer questions 20 and 21. Otherwise, please move on to question 22.

| | | | |
|-----------|---|-------------|-------------|
| 20 | Please say what type of help or guidance you received when filling in your claim form. Please tick all that apply. | | |
| | <i>Base: All who received help or guidance when filling in their claims form (2007: 4,970, 2008: 6,127)</i> | | |
| | | 2007 | 2008 |
| | | % | % |
| | Help with understanding the questions | 52 | 49 |
| | Help to fully describe disability-related needs ¹⁴ | 42 | 45 |
| | Help with telling me which benefit to claim for | 41 | 39 |
| | Help with writing | 25 | 24 |
| | Help with finding documents to enclose with the form | 18 | 19 |
| | Help with reading the text | 10 | 8 |
| | Help with interpreting the form into another language..... | 3 | 2 |
| | Other..... | 5 | 8 |
| | Don't know or can't remember | 2 | 2 |
| | Not stated | 14 | 21 |

| | | | |
|-----------|--|-------------|-------------|
| 21 | How useful, if at all, did you find the help or guidance you were offered when you filled in your claim form? Please tick one box only. | | |
| | <i>Base: All who received help or guidance when filling in their claim form (2007: 4,970, 2008: 6,127)</i> | | |
| | | 2007 | 2008 |
| | | % | % |
| | Very useful..... | 65 | 57 |
| | Fairly useful | 17 | 17 |
| | Not very useful | 2 | 3 |
| | Not useful at all | 1 | 1 |
| | Don't know or can't remember | 3 | 3 |
| | Not stated | 12 | 20 |

¹⁴ Please note this statement was asked of everybody (both customers of DLA/AA and CA) in the 2007 survey so the results are not directly comparable with the 2008 survey where it was asked only of DLA/AA customers.

Everyone should answer question 22.

| 22 | Did you have any difficulties or problems when dealing with the Disability and Carers Service? Please tick one box only. | 2007 | 2008 |
|----|---|------|------|
| | | % | % |
| | Yes, I had problems | 14 | 16 |
| | No, I did not have any problems..... | 74 | 73 |
| | Don't know or can't remember | 6 | 7 |
| | Not stated..... | 6 | 4 |

If you experienced any difficulties or problems when dealing with the DCS, please answer questions 23 to 25. Otherwise, please move on to question 26.

| | |
|----|---|
| 23 | <p>What difficulties or problems did you have when dealing with the Disability and Carers Service? Please tick all the boxes that apply. <i>Base: All who had difficulties or problems when dealing with the Disability and Carers Service (2007: 1,166, 2008: 1,387)</i></p> |
| 24 | <p>And which of these difficulties or problems did you make a formal complaint about, if any? Please tick all the boxes that apply. <i>Base: All who had difficulties or problems when dealing with the Disability and Carers Service (2008: 1,387)</i></p> |

| | Question 23 | Question 24 | |
|--|-------------|-------------|------|
| | 2007 | 2008 | 2008 |
| | % | % | % |
| Challenging the decision on my claim ¹⁵ | 34 | 46 | 11 |
| Lack of communication, or not being kept informed..... | 34 | 37 | 5 |
| Getting through on the phone | 27 | 34 | 4 |
| Given different answers to the same question by different staff | 30 | 33 | 5 |
| Staff were slow in dealing with my request or problem..... | 27 | 29 | 5 |
| Delays in receiving my benefit payments..... | 26 | 27 | 4 |
| Staff were not interested in my problem..... | 21 | 25 | 5 |
| Staff lacked knowledge or were not helpful..... | 21 | 23 | 4 |
| Understanding how my benefit payment was worked out | 17 | 23 | 4 |
| The service made too many mistakes, or was not efficient enough..... | 20 | 17 | 4 |
| Staff were unfriendly | 10 | 13 | 2 |
| The Disability and Carers Service lost some of my information | 12 | 12 | 3 |
| Getting hold of information in a different format (for example, in large print, in Braille, on audio tape or in another language)..... | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Other..... | 18 | 9 | 4 |
| None of these | n/a | n/a | 24 |
| Not stated | 11 | 11 | 54 |

¹⁵ Please note there have been slight changes to the wording of the statements in this question since 2007. E.g in 2007 this read "I had problems when I challenged the decision on my claim"

If you made a formal complaint to the Disability and Carers Service, please answer question 25. Otherwise, please move on to question 26.

| | | | |
|----|---|------|------|
| 25 | <p>Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with how your complaint or complaints were handled? Please tick one box only.</p> <p><i>Base: All who had difficulties or problems when dealing with the Disability and Carers Service and made a formal complaint (2007: 122, 2008: 319)</i></p> | | |
| | | 2007 | 2008 |
| | | % | % |
| | Very satisfied | 13 | 10 |
| | Fairly satisfied | 13 | 16 |
| | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | 10 | 14 |
| | Fairly dissatisfied | 8 | 13 |
| | Very dissatisfied | 41 | 24 |
| | Don't know or can't remember | 3 | 3 |
| | Not stated | 11 | 21 |

Improving the service you receive

Everyone should answer questions 26 and 27.

| | | | |
|----|--|------|------|
| 26 | <p>Which improvements, if any, would you most like to see made to the service provided by the Disability and Carers Service?</p> <p>Please tick no more than three boxes.</p> | | |
| | | 2007 | 2008 |
| | | % | % |
| | Easier-to-understand claim forms | 52 | 53 |
| | Easier-to-understand guidance issued with claim forms | 28 | 29 |
| | Help filling in the claim forms | 27 | 28 |
| | Customers kept better informed | 19 | 18 |
| | Clearer explanation of how my benefit payment was worked out ... | 18 | 18 |
| | Clearer information and guidelines (for example, in customer information leaflets and booklets) | 16 | 18 |
| | Phone and textphone calls answered more quickly | 12 | 15 |
| | Longer opening hours | 7 | 8 |
| | Phone and textphone calls returned more promptly..... | 7 | 7 |
| | Better attitude from staff..... | 5 | 6 |
| | Other | 7 | 13 |
| | Don't know | 6 | 9 |
| | Not stated | 13 | 7 |

Overall satisfaction with the service you receive

27 **Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service you currently receive from the Disability and Carers Service?**
Please tick one box only.

| | 2007 | 2008 |
|--|------|------|
| | % | % |
| Very satisfied | 51 | 49 |
| Fairly satisfied | 28 | 30 |
| Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | 8 | 8 |
| Fairly dissatisfied | 3 | 4 |
| Very dissatisfied | 4 | 5 |
| Don't know | 2 | 2 |
| Not stated | 5 | 4 |

Receiving DLA while in work or training

If you have claimed Disability Living Allowance for yourself or on behalf of someone else, please answer question 28. Otherwise, please move on to question A.

28 **Do you know that you can receive Disability Living Allowance while in work or training?** Please tick one box only.

Base: All who claim or receive Disability Living Allowance (DLA) who are aware that you can receive DLA while in work or training (4,302)

| | 2008 |
|------------------|------|
| | % |
| Yes | 42 |
| No | 36 |
| Don't know | 10 |
| Not stated | 12 |

If you know that you can receive Disability Living Allowance while in work or training please answer question 29. Otherwise please move on to question A.

| | | |
|----|--|-------------|
| 29 | How did you first find out that you could receive Disability Living Allowance while in work or training? Please tick all box that apply | |
| | <i>Base: All those who know that you can receive Disability Living Allowance while in work or training (1,798)</i> | |
| | | 2008 |
| | | % |
| | From family or friends | 29 |
| | From a carer | 21 |
| | Through the DLA Helpline or Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL) | 18 |
| | From your DLA award notification..... | 10 |
| | From a DLA leaflet..... | 9 |
| | From another public service or agency | 28 |
| | Doctor or a nurse | 9 |
| | Jobcentre Plus | 10 |
| | Social worker | 6 |
| | The NHS or a hospital..... | 4 |
| | Local authority | 3 |
| | The Pension Service (including Local Service) | 1 |
| | Child Support Agency (CSA) | * |
| | Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (formerly War Pensions) | * |
| | Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (formerly the Inland Revenue) | 1 |
| | Home help | * |
| | From a voluntary-sector organisation or customers' representative group | 14 |
| | Citizens advice bureau (CAB) | 8 |
| | Other groups including age-related or community organisations (for example, Age Concern, Help the Aged, Contact a Family) or local places of worship | 3 |
| | Disability group or organisation (for example, Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)) | 3 |
| | Carers group or organisation (for example, Princess Royal Trust for Carers) | 1 |
| | Don't know or can't remember | 2 |
| | Not stated..... | 22 |

About You

We would be grateful if you would answer the following questions so that we can look at the views of different customer groups. This valuable information will help to make sure that we treat all customers fairly. As with the rest of this questionnaire, we will keep all the information you provide confidential.

A Which of these ethnic groups do you consider you belong to?

| | 07 | 08 |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Please tick one box only. | % | % |
| White | 92 | 92 |
| British | 90 | 89 |
| Irish | 1 | 1 |
| Any other white background | 1 | 1 |
| Mixed | * | 1 |
| White and Black Caribbean | * | * |
| White and Black African | * | * |
| White and Asian | * | * |
| Any other mixed background | * | * |
| Asian or Asian British | 2 | 3 |
| Indian | 1 | 1 |
| Pakistani | 1 | 1 |
| Bangladeshi | * | * |
| Any other Asian background | * | * |
| Black or Black British | 1 | 1 |
| Caribbean | 1 | 1 |
| African | 1 | 1 |
| Any other Black background | * | * |
| Chinese or other ethnic group | * | 1 |
| Chinese | * | * |
| Any other ethnic group | * | 1 |
| Not stated | 4 | 3 |

B How long ago did you make your first claim for Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance or Carer's Allowance? Please tick one box

| | 07 | 08 |
|------------------------------------|----|----|
| Please tick one box | % | % |
| Less than three years ago | 72 | 64 |
| Three years ago or more | 15 | 18 |
| Don't know or can't remember | 6 | 7 |
| Does not apply | 2 | 2 |
| Not stated | 5 | 9 |

C Do you have any of the following? Please tick all boxes that apply.

| | 07 ¹⁶ | 08 |
|--|------------------|----|
| (2008 DLA/AA customers only, base; 6048) | % | % |
| Problems with movement (for example, arthritis, back pain, muscle disease) | 61 | 64 |
| Sensory problems (for example, blindness, deafness) | 15 | 14 |
| Cardio-respiratory problems (for example, heart disease, asthma, bronchitis) | 30 | 31 |
| Psychological or behavioural problems (for example, mental illness, dementia, behavioural disorder, being dependent on drugs or alcohol) | 16 | 19 |
| Problems with your wellbeing (for example, diabetes, skin disease, bowel or stomach disease) | 25 | 25 |
| Disorders relating to movement and the brain (for example, Parkinson's disease, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis) | 8 | 8 |
| Fatigue or stamina problems (for example, cancer, kidney disorders including dialysis, old age) | 21 | 22 |
| Learning disabilities (for example, Down's syndrome) | 3 | 4 |
| Communication difficulties (for example, speech or language) | 6 | 7 |
| Other health problems or disabilities | 27 | 30 |
| None of these | 9 | 3 |
| Don't know or not sure | 1 | 1 |
| Not stated | 6 | 8 |

¹⁶ Please note QC was asked of all customers (both DLA/AA customers and CA customers) in 2007 but only of DLA/AA customers in 2008. The data are therefore not directly comparable.

C1 The Disability and Carers Service may want to do some further research over the next 12 months. If you are willing to take part in further possible research, Ipsos MORI will need to pass on your details, and the answers you have given in this survey, to the Disability and Carers Service. The answers you give will in no way affect any benefits you receive or any claim you are making. If you are willing to take part, please tick ‘Yes’, Otherwise, tick ‘No’.? Please tick one box

| | 2008 % |
|------------------|-----------|
| Yes | 43 |
| No..... | 47 |
| Not stated | 10 |

2007 DCS Customer Survey fieldwork details

- Self-completion questionnaires were sent to a sample of 20,401 customers who either claim or receive Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Attendance Allowance (AA) or Carer’s Allowance (CA). In all, 14 Business Units (including DBCs and DCPUs) in England, Scotland and Wales were covered, along with CAU and MOTA customers from across England & Wales, with approximately 1,000 customers in each area being sent a questionnaire (5,001 for CAU). In addition, 400 questionnaires were sent to customers in the AA North East Business Unit.
- Fieldwork was conducted between 15 October and 14 December 2007.
- Results are based on a total of 8,199 questionnaires – an unadjusted response rate of 40%.

Appendix G

Carer's Allowance topline findings



Disability and Carers Service Customer Service Survey 2008

Topline Results for Carer's Allowance (21 January 2009)

- Self-completion questionnaires were sent to a sample of 5,000 customers who either claim or receive Carer's Allowance (CA).
- Fieldwork was conducted between 29 September and 5 December 2008.
- Results are based on a total of 2,109 questionnaires – an unadjusted response rate for Carer's Allowance of 42%.
- Results are unweighted.
- Where results do not sum to 100 percent, this is due to computer rounding, multiple or invalid responses.
- An asterisk (*) indicates a value of less than half of one percent, but greater than zero
- Unless otherwise stated, results are based on all (2,109) respondents
- Fieldwork details for the 2007 survey can be found at the end of this document.

Overall opinions about the Disability and Carers Service

1 **How would you describe the Disability and Carers Service?** Please tick one box only.

| | 2007 | 2008 |
|--|------|-----------|
| | % | % |
| I would speak highly of it without being asked | 25 | 24 |
| I would speak highly of it if I were asked | 42 | 43 |
| I would have no thoughts either way | 15 | 15 |
| I would criticise it if I were asked | 5 | 5 |
| I would criticise it without being asked | 2 | 2 |
| Don't know | 4 | 5 |
| Not stated | 7 | 5 |

| 2 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Disability and Carers Service? Please tick one box only on each line. | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | | Strongly agree % | Tend to agree % | Neither agree nor disagree % | Tend to disagree % | Strongly disagree % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
| The DCS uses clear written and spoken English | 2007 | 36 | 36 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 14 |
| | 2008 | 34 | 40 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 11 |
| The DCS recognises you as an individual and treats you with respect..... | 2007 | 36 | 33 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 13 |
| | 2008 | 34 | 35 | 12 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 9 |
| The DCS can be trusted | 2008 | 31 | 36 | 14 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 10 |
| The DCS provides you with an efficient service..... | 2007 | 32 | 36 | 10 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 13 |
| | 2008 | 30 | 40 | 10 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 10 |
| The DCS keeps you informed | 2007 | 26 | 33 | 13 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 16 |
| | 2008 | 26 | 35 | 16 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 11 |
| The DCS provides you with an accurate service | 2007 | 28 | 38 | 12 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 13 |
| | 2008 | 27 | 41 | 11 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 10 |
| The DCS understands the needs of its customers | 2008 | 26 | 37 | 14 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 11 |
| The DCS listens to the views of its customers | 2007 | 26 | 35 | 15 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 12 |
| | 2008 | 24 | 38 | 15 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 9 |
| The DCS services are easy to access ¹ | 2007 | 25 | 35 | 12 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 15 |
| | 2008 | 23 | 39 | 14 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 12 |

¹ Please note the question wording has changed between 2007 and 2008. The 2007 wording was “You are able to access DCS services easily”

Finding out about the Disability and Carers Service

| 3 | How did you first hear about Carer's Allowance? Please tick one box only. | |
|---|---|-----------|
| | 2007 | 2008 |
| | % | % |
| From family or friends | 31 | 31 |
| Through staff from the Disability and Carers Service..... | n/a | 14 |
| From a Department for Work and Pensions publicity leaflet | 16 | 9 |
| From a carer | 8 | 7 |
| Through the Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL) | 8 | 5 |
| Through other benefit advice websites | | 3 |
| Through the Directgov website (www.direct.gov.uk) ² | 2 | 4 |
| From another public service or agency | 22 | 17 |
| Doctor or a nurse | 5 | 3 |
| Social worker | 5 | 4 |
| The NHS or a hospital..... | 2 | 2 |
| Jobcentre Plus | 2 | 3 |
| Local authority | 3 | 2 |
| The Pension Service (including Local Service) | 4 | 2 |
| Child Support Agency (CSA) | * | 0 |
| Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (formerly War Pensions) | * | * |
| Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (formerly the Inland Revenue) | * | 0 |
| Home help | * | * |
| From a voluntary-sector organisation or customers' representative group | 7 | 6 |
| Citizens advice bureau (CAB) | 3 | 3 |
| Other groups including age-related or community organisations (for example, Age Concern, Help the Aged, Contact a Family) or local places of worship..... | 3 | 2 |
| Disability group or organisation (for example, Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)) | 1 | * |
| Carers group or organisation (for example, Princess Royal Trust for Carers) | 1 | * |
| Other..... | n/a | 3 |
| Don't know or can't remember | 1 | 1 |
| Not stated | 3 | 2 |

² Please note the question wording has changed between 2007 and 2008. The 2007 survey included just one internet code with the wording "Through the internet (for example, www.direct.gov.uk)"

Contacting the Disability and Carers Service

- 4 **How do you get in touch with the Disability and Carers Service at the moment?**
Please tick all the boxes that apply.
- 5 **What is the best way for you to get in touch with the Disability and Carers Service?** Please tick no more than three boxes.
- 6 **How would you most like the Disability and Carers Service to get in touch with you?** Please tick no more than three boxes.

| | Question 4 | | Question 5 | | Question 6 | |
|---|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|----------|
| | % | | % | | % | |
| | 2007 | 2008 | 2007 | 2008 | 2007 | 2008 |
| By phone | 76 | 77 | 72 | 74 | 51 | 56 |
| By letter | 27 | 25 | 25 | 26 | 53 | 57 |
| Face-to-face at your home | 10 | 9 | 10 | 9 | 16 | 16 |
| Through family or friends..... | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Through a carer..... | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL) | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| By e-mail | 2 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 8 |
| Through the internet (for example, www.direct.gov.uk)..... | 3 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 2 |
| Face-to-face in a DCS office | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| By textphone | * | 1 | * | * | * | * |
| By RNID Typetalk..... | * | * | * | * | * | 0 |
| Through a public service or agency | 18 | 15 | 13 | 11 | 9 | 8 |
| Social worker..... | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Doctor or a nurse | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Jobcentre Plus | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| The Pension Service (including Local Service)..... | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| Local authority..... | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Home help..... | 1 | 1 | * | * | * | * |
| Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (formerly War Pensions) | 1 | * | * | * | * | * |
| The NHS or a hospital..... | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | * | 1 |
| Through a voluntary-sector organisation or customers’ representative group | 10 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 |
| Citizens advice bureau (CAB) | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Other groups including age-related or community organisations (for example, Age Concern, Help the Aged, Contact a Family) or local places of worship | 5 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Disability group or organisation (for example, Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)) | 1 | 1 | * | 1 | * | * |

4, 5, 6 CONTINUED

| | Question 4 % | | Question 5 % | | Question 6 % | |
|---|-----------------|----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| Carers group or organisation (for example, Princess Royal Trust for Carers) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | * |
| Don't know | 1 | 1 | * | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Not stated | 3 | 3 | 13 | 10 | 15 | 12 |

7 In which, if any, of the following ways have you ever asked the Disability and Carers Service to contact you? Please tick all the boxes that apply.

8 And in which, if any, of the following ways did the Disability and Carers Service then contact you?³ Please tick all the boxes. *Base: All who asked the DCS to contact them in each format*

| | Question 7 | | Question 8 | |
|--|------------|------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| | 2007 % | 2008 % | 2007 (base) % | 2008 (base) % |
| Sending you a letter or claim form in large print | 27 | 28 | 73 (574) | 78 (584) |
| Communicating with you by textphone | 4 | 4 | 57 (83) | 68 (77) |
| Sending you a letter or claim form in Braille | 1 | 1 | 10 (n) ⁴ (20) | 15 (n) (21) |
| Communicating with you using a language other than English | 1 | 1 | 8 (n) (15) ⁵ | 14 (n) (20) |
| Communicating with you using British Sign Language (BSL) | * | * | 2 (n) ⁶ (2) | 3 (n) (4) |
| None of these | 55 | 53 | n/a | n/a |
| Not stated | 14 | 15 | n/a | n/a |

³ Please note a change of question wording from the 2007 survey which asked, "And in which, if any, of the following ways did the Disability and Carers Service then contact you?"

⁴ Please note results are indicative only, as there are small base sizes (20 /21) – because the bases are so small, results are shown as the number of people giving this answer rather than as a percentage

⁵ Please note results are indicative only, as there are small base sizes (15 and 20) – because the bases are so small, results are shown as the number of people giving this answer rather than as a percentage

⁶ Please note results are indicative only, as there are very small base sizes (2 and 4) – because the bases are so small, results are shown as the number of people giving this answer rather than as a percentage

If the DCS contacted you in any of the ways listed in question 8, please answer question 9. Otherwise, please move on to question 10.

9 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following ways in which the Disability and Carers Service contacted you?
 Please tick one box on each line for each service you said you received from the DCS in question 8.
Base: All who were contacted by the DCS in each format

| | | Very satisfied | Fairly satisfied | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | Fairly dis-satisfied | Very dis-satisfied | Don't know | Not stated | Base |
|--|---------------|----------------|------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------|------------|--------------------|
| Sending you a letter or claim form in large print ... | 2007 % | 63 | 20 | 4 | 1 | 1 | * | 10 | (417) |
| | 2008 % | 64 | 21 | 5 | 1 | 1 | * | 8 | (458) |
| Communicating with you using British Sign Language (BSL) | 2007 n | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (2) ⁷ |
| | 2008 n | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | (3) |
| Communicating with you using a language other than English | 2007 n | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | (8) ⁸ |
| | 2008 n | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6 | (14) |
| Communicating with you by textphone | 2007 % | 47 | 13 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 34 | (47) ⁹ |
| | 2008 % | 48 | 10 | - | 2 | 2 | - | 38 | (52) |
| Sending you a letter or claim form in Braille | 2007 n | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | (10) ¹⁰ |
| | 2008 n | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | (15) |

⁷ Please note results are indicative only, as there is a very small base size (2 and 3) – because the base is so small, results are shown as the number of people giving each answer rather than as a percentage
⁸ Please note results are indicative only, as there is a very small base size (8 and 14) – because the base is so small, results are shown as the number of people giving each answer rather than as a percentage
⁹ Please note results are indicative only, as there is a small base size (47 and 52)
¹⁰ Please note results are indicative only, as there is a very small base size (10 and 15) – because the base is so small, results are shown as the number of people giving each answer rather than as a percentage

Contacting the Disability and Carers Service by phone

Everyone should answer questions 10 and 11.

10 Please tell us how important, if at all, the following would be if you needed to phone the Disability and Carers Service (including by textphone).
Please tick one box only on each line.

| | | Very important % | Fairly important % | Not very important % | Not important at all % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
|---|-------------|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Speaking to a person rather than a recorded message with instructions | 2007 | 81 | 6 | 1 | * | 1 | 11 |
| | 2008 | 79 | 6 | 1 | * | 1 | 13 |
| Staff answering in plain and simple language | 2007 | 74 | 10 | 1 | * | 1 | 14 |
| | 2008 | 76 | 11 | 1 | * | * | 12 |
| Staff being polite | 2007 | 73 | 13 | 1 | * | 1 | 13 |
| | 2008 | 74 | 13 | 1 | * | 1 | 12 |
| Staff promptly phoning you back with the answer if they can't give you the information you need straight away | 2007 | 67 | 18 | 1 | * | 1 | 13 |
| | 2008 | 72 | 15 | 1 | * | 1 | 12 |
| Being told everything you need to know straight away | 2007 | 62 | 20 | 2 | * | 1 | 14 |
| | 2008 | 71 | 15 | 1 | * | * | 13 |
| Getting through to a member of staff the first time you call ¹¹ | 2008 | 66 | 19 | 1 | * | * | 13 |

11 Have you phoned the Disability and Carers Service in the last 12 months? (This includes by textphone.) Please tick one box only.

| | 2007 % | 2008 % |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Yes | 63 | 61 |
| No | 27 | 27 |
| Don't know or can't remember | 7 | 8 |
| Not stated | 3 | 5 |

¹¹ Please note the responses to this statement are not directly comparable between 2007 and 2008. In 2007 the wording was "The phone being answered within 30 seconds".

If you have phoned the DCS in the last 12 months, please answer question 12. Otherwise, please move on to question 13.

12 How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with each of the following when you phoned the Disability and Carers Service? (This includes by textphone.)
Please tick one box only on each line.

Base: All who have phoned the DCS in the last 12 months (2007: 1,341, 2008: 5,094)

| | | Very satisfied % | Fairly satisfied % | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied % | Fairly dissatisfied % | Very dissatisfied % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
|---|-------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Staff were polite..... | 2007 | 74 | 18 | 2 | * | 1 | * | 5 |
| | 2008 | 75 | 18 | 2 | 1 | 1 | * | 3 |
| You spoke to a person rather than a recorded message ¹² .. | 2007 | 72 | 13 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| | 2008 | 69 | 16 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 8 |
| Staff answered in plain and simple language..... | 2007 | 66 | 20 | 3 | 1 | 1 | * | 9 |
| | 2008 | 68 | 20 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 7 |
| You were told everything you needed to know straight away | 2007 | 49 | 27 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 52 | 24 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 8 |
| You were phoned back at a time the member of staff agreed with you beforehand | 2007 | 40 | 19 | 9 | 2 | 3 | 10 | 17 |
| | 2008 | 38 | 16 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 23 |
| You got through to a member of staff the first time you called.... | 2008 | 50 | 26 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 7 |

¹² Please note there have been slight word changes between the 2007 and 2008 surveys for each of these statements. E.g. In 2007 the wording was ‘Speaking to a person rather than a recorded message’

Writing to the Disability and Carers Service

Everyone should answer questions 13 and 14.

13 Please tell us how important, if at all, the following would be if you needed to write to the Disability and Carers Service.
Please tick one box only on each line.

| | | Very important % | Fairly important % | Not very important % | Not important at all % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
|--|-------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| The reply to your letter telling you everything you need to know | 2007 | 82 | 7 | * | * | 1 | 9 |
| | 2008 | 83 | 8 | * | 0 | * | 8 |
| The reply to your letter being easy to understand | 2007 | 78 | 10 | * | * | 1 | 11 |
| | 2008 | 80 | 10 | * | * | * | 10 |
| Receiving a quick response to your letter. | 2007 | 73 | 16 | 1 | * | 1 | 9 |
| | 2008 | 76 | 16 | 1 | 0 | * | 8 |

14 Have you written to the Disability and Carers Service in the last 12 months?
Please tick one box only.

| | 2007 % | 2008 % |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Yes | 29 | 29 |
| No | 59 | 58 |
| Don't know or can't remember | 8 | 8 |
| Not stated | 4 | 5 |

If you have written to the DCS in the last 12 months, please answer question 15. Otherwise, please move on to question 16.

15 How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with each of the following when you wrote to the Disability and Carers Service?
Please tick one box only on each line.

Base: All who have written to the DCS in the last 12 months (2007: 624; 2008: 618)

| | | Very satisfied % | Fairly satisfied % | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied % | Fairly dissatisfied % | Very dissatisfied % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
|---|-------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|
| The reply to your letter was easy to understand | 2007 | 46 | 29 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 9 |
| | 2008 | 47 | 30 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 9 |
| The reply to your letter told you everything you needed to know | 2007 | 47 | 26 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 8 |
| | 2008 | 46 | 25 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 11 |
| The time it took to reply to your letter..... | 2007 | 39 | 34 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 6 |
| | 2008 | 39 | 39 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 5 |

Making a claim

Everyone should answer questions 16-19.

16 How important to you, if at all, are each of the following when making a claim for a Disability and Carers Service benefit? Please tick one box only on each line.

| | | Very important % | Fairly important % | Not very important % | Not important at all % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
|--|-------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| The claim form being easy to fill in..... | 2007 | 83 | 9 | * | * | 1 | 6 |
| | 2008 | 84 | 10 | 1 | * | 1 | 5 |
| The questions you are asked being easy to understand | 2007 | 78 | 11 | 1 | * | 1 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 81 | 11 | * | * | * | 8 |
| The letter giving you the decision on your claim telling you everything you need to know | 2007 | 78 | 11 | 1 | * | 1 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 81 | 10 | * | * | * | 8 |
| The questions you are asked helping you to describe your needs or circumstances fully | 2007 | 75 | 12 | 1 | * | * | 11 |
| | 2008 | 78 | 11 | 1 | * | 1 | 9 |

16 CONTINUED

| | | Very important % | Fairly important % | Not very important % | Not important at all % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
|---|-------------|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| The guidance with the claim form being easy to understand | 2007 | 77 | 11 | 1 | * | 1 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 80 | 11 | 1 | * | 1 | 8 |
| The letter explaining clearly why the decision has been made..... | 2007 | 75 | 13 | 1 | * | 1 | 11 |
| | 2008 | 80 | 11 | 1 | * | * | 9 |
| The DCS letting you know what is happening with your claim | 2007 | 75 | 13 | 1 | * | * | 10 |
| | 2008 | 77 | 13 | 1 | * | * | 9 |
| The letter explaining clearly what to do if you are not happy with the decision | 2007 | 74 | 14 | 1 | * | 1 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 78 | 12 | * | * | * | 9 |
| The DCS letting you know the decision on your claim quickly | 2007 | 74 | 14 | 1 | * | * | 10 |
| | 2008 | 77 | 13 | 1 | * | * | 8 |
| The information you are asked to provide being easy for you to get | 2007 | 69 | 18 | 1 | * | 1 | 11 |
| | 2008 | 73 | 16 | 1 | * | 1 | 9 |

| 17 When you made your claim for Carer’s Allowance, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with each of the following? Please tick one box only on each line. | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | | Very satisfied % | Fairly satisfied % | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied % | Fairly dissatisfied % | Very dissatisfied % | Don't know % | Not stated % |
| The letter explained clearly what to do if you were not happy with the decision..... | 2007 | 48 | 26 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 13 |
| | 2008 | 52 | 24 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 11 |
| The letter giving you the decision on your claim told you everything you needed to know | 2007 | 48 | 25 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 11 |
| | 2008 | 50 | 24 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 10 |
| The letter explained clearly why the decision had been made..... | 2007 | 47 | 26 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 12 |
| | 2008 | 49 | 26 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 10 |
| You were kept informed on the progress of your claim ¹³ | 2007 | 39 | 29 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 13 |
| | 2008 | 40 | 28 | 10 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 11 |
| The time it took to send you the decision | | | | | | | | |
| | 2008 | 38 | 31 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 11 |
| The information you were asked to provide was easy for you to get..... | 2007 | 39 | 34 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 13 |
| | 2008 | 39 | 34 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 12 |
| The questions you were asked helped you to describe your needs or circumstances fully..... | 2007 | 37 | 33 | 10 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 12 |
| | 2008 | 38 | 32 | 10 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 11 |
| The questions you were asked were easy to understand | 2007 | 36 | 34 | 10 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 13 |
| | 2008 | 38 | 33 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 11 |
| The claim form was easy to fill in..... | 2007 | 34 | 36 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 10 |
| | 2008 | 35 | 36 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 10 |

17 Continued

¹³ Please note that there has been a slight word change from the 2007 survey which read “The way you were kept informed on the progress of your claim”.

The guidance with
the claim form was
easy to understand....

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 2007 | 33 | 36 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 13 |
| 2008 | 35 | 36 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 11 |

18 **Were you aware that you could receive help or guidance from any of the following when you were filling in your claim form?**

Please tick all that apply.

19 **Did you receive any help or guidance from any of the following when you were filling in your claim form?**

Please tick all that apply.

| | Question 18 | | Question 19 | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| | % | | % | |
| | 2007 | 2008 | 2007 | 2008 |
| Family or friends..... | 35 | 34 | 19 | 20 |
| A carer..... | 15 | 13 | 5 | 5 |
| Disability and Carers Service (DCS)..... | 21 | 31 | 10 | 13 |
| Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL) | 11 | 18 | 4 | 6 |
| From another public service or agency | 53 | 40 | 33 | 24 |
| Social worker | 15 | 13 | 7 | 7 |
| Doctor or a nurse..... | 11 | 11 | 4 | 5 |
| The Pension Service (including Local Service) | 12 | 11 | 9 | 7 |
| Jobcentre Plus..... | 9 | 10 | 2 | 3 |
| Local authority | 7 | 7 | 4 | 5 |
| The NHS or a hospital | 5 | 6 | 2 | 2 |
| Home help | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (formerly War Pensions) | 1 | 1 | * | * |
| From a voluntary-sector organisation or customers' representative group | 26 | 27 | 14 | 13 |
| Citizens advice bureau (CAB) | 17 | 17 | 7 | 6 |
| Other groups including age-related or community organisations (for example, Age Concern, Help the Aged, Contact a Family) or local places of worship | 10 | 10 | 5 | 5 |
| Disability group or organisation (for example, Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)) | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Carers group or organisation (for example, Princess Royal Trust for Carers)..... | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| No, none of these..... | 8 | 6 | 9 | 10 |
| I did not need help or guidance filling in the form..... | Does not apply | | 16 | 11 |
| Don't know or can't remember | Does not apply | | 2 | 1 |
| Not stated..... | 11 | 11 | 17 | 13 |

If you have received help or guidance with filling in your claim form, please answer questions 20 and 21. Otherwise, please move on to question 22.

| | | | |
|-----------|---|-------------|-------------|
| 20 | Please say what type of help or guidance you received when filling in your claim form. Please tick all that apply. | | |
| | <i>Base: All who received help or guidance when filling in their claim form (2007: 1,206, 2008: 1,363)</i> | | |
| | | 2007 | 2008 |
| | | % | % |
| | Help with understanding the questions | 48 | 46 |
| | Help to fully describe disability-related needs ¹⁴ | 30 | n/a |
| | Help with telling me which benefit to claim for | 46 | 44 |
| | Help with writing | 16 | 15 |
| | Help with finding documents to enclose with the form | 17 | 16 |
| | Help with reading the text | 7 | 5 |
| | Help with interpreting the form into another language..... | 2 | 3 |
| | Other..... | 5 | 9 |
| | Don't know or can't remember | 2 | 2 |
| | Not stated | 17 | 24 |

| | | | |
|-----------|--|-------------|-------------|
| 21 | How useful, if at all, did you find the help or guidance you were offered when you filled in your claim form? Please tick one box only. | | |
| | <i>Base: All who received help or guidance when filling in their claim form (2007: 1,206; 2008: 1,363)</i> | | |
| | | 2007 | 2008 |
| | | % | % |
| | Very useful | 67 | 61 |
| | Fairly useful | 15 | 13 |
| | Not very useful | 2 | 1 |
| | Not useful at all | 1 | 1 |
| | Don't know or can't remember | 2 | 3 |
| | Not stated | 13 | 22 |

Everyone should answer question 22.

| | | | |
|-----------|---|-------------|-------------|
| 22 | Did you have any difficulties or problems when dealing with the Disability and Carers Service? Please tick one box only. | | |
| | | 2007 | 2008 |
| | | % | % |
| | Yes, I had problems | 11 | 12 |
| | No, I did not have any problems..... | 79 | 79 |
| | Don't know or can't remember | 5 | 5 |
| | Not stated..... | 5 | 5 |

¹⁴ Please note this statement was asked of everybody (both customers of DLA/AA and CA) in the 2007 survey but was not asked of CA customers in the 2008 survey.

If you experienced any difficulties or problems when dealing with the DCS, please answer questions 23 to 25. Otherwise, please move on to question 26.

| | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------|--------------------|------|
| 23 | <p>What difficulties or problems did you have when dealing with the Disability and Carers Service? Please tick all the boxes that apply. <i>Base: All who had difficulties or problems when dealing with the Disability and Carers Service (2007: 228; 2008: 250)</i></p> | | | |
| 24 | <p>And which of these difficulties or problems did you make a formal complaint about, if any? Please tick all the boxes that apply. <i>Base: All who had difficulties or problems when dealing with the Disability and Carers Service (2008: 250)</i></p> | | | |
| | | Question 23 | Question 24 | |
| | | 2007 | 2008 | 2008 |
| | | % | % | % |
| | Challenging the decision on my claim ¹⁵ | 22 | 34 | 10 |
| | Lack of communication, or not being kept informed..... | 33 | 36 | 7 |
| | Getting through on the phone | 23 | 32 | 5 |
| | Given different answers to the same question by different staff | 32 | 33 | 6 |
| | Staff were slow in dealing with my request or problem..... | 20 | 26 | 7 |
| | Delays in receiving my benefit payments..... | 33 | 34 | 4 |
| | Staff were not interested in my problem..... | 9 | 17 | 5 |
| | Staff lacked knowledge or were not helpful..... | 17 | 22 | 5 |
| | Understanding how my benefit payment was worked out | 24 | 33 | 8 |
| | The service made too many mistakes, or was not efficient enough..... | 15 | 17 | 4 |
| | Staff were unfriendly | 5 | 10 | 4 |
| | The Disability and Carers Service lost some of my information | 15 | 14 | 5 |
| | Getting hold of information in a different format (for example, in large print, in Braille, on audio tape or in another language)..... | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| | Other | 17 | 10 | 3 |
| | None of these | n/a | n/a | 27 |
| | Not stated | 14 | 11 | 51 |

¹⁵ Please note there have been slight changes to the wording of the statements in this question since 2007. E.g in 2007 this read "I had problems when I challenged the decision on my claim"

If you made a formal complaint to the Disability and Carers Service, please answer question 25. Otherwise, please move on to question 26.

25 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with how your complaint or complaints were handled? Please tick one box only.

Base: All who had difficulties or problems when dealing with the Disability and Carers Service and made a formal complaint (2007:19; 2008: 54)

| | 2007 | 2008 |
|--|------|------|
| | N | N |
| Very satisfied | 3 | 7 |
| Fairly satisfied | 5 | 10 |
| Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | 1 | 8 |
| Fairly dissatisfied | 3 | 4 |
| Very dissatisfied | 5 | 13 |
| Don't know or can't remember | 0 | 2 |
| Not stated | 2 | 10 |

Improving the service you receive

Everyone should answer questions 26 and 27.

26 Which improvements, if any, would you most like to see made to the service provided by the Disability and Carers Service?
Please tick no more than three boxes.

| | 2007 | 2008 |
|---|------|------|
| | % | % |
| Easier-to-understand claim forms | 48 | 45 |
| Easier-to-understand guidance issued with claim forms | 25 | 26 |
| Help filling in the claim forms | 24 | 22 |
| Customers kept better informed..... | 18 | 18 |
| Clearer explanation of how my benefit payment was worked out ... | 21 | 21 |
| Clearer information and guidelines (for example, in customer information leaflets and booklets) | 16 | 18 |
| Phone and textphone calls answered more quickly | 12 | 14 |
| Longer opening hours | 8 | 9 |
| Phone and textphone calls returned more promptly..... | 7 | 7 |
| Better attitude from staff..... | 5 | 5 |
| Other | 6 | 14 |
| Don't know | 7 | 10 |
| Not stated | 13 | 8 |

Overall satisfaction with the service you receive

| 27 | Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service you currently receive from the Disability and Carers Service? | | 2007 | 2008 |
|----|--|--|------|-----------|
| | Please tick one box only. | | | |
| | | | % | % |
| | Very satisfied | | 56 | 56 |
| | Fairly satisfied | | 29 | 28 |
| | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | | 6 | 6 |
| | Fairly dissatisfied | | 2 | 2 |
| | Very dissatisfied | | 2 | 2 |
| | Don't know | | 1 | 1 |
| | Not stated | | 4 | 4 |

About You

We would be grateful if you would answer the following questions so that we can look at the views of different customer groups. This valuable information will help to make sure that we treat all customers fairly. As with the rest of this questionnaire, we will keep all the information you provide confidential.

| A Which of these ethnic groups do you consider you belong to? | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| | 07 | 08 |
| | % | % |
| Please tick one box only. | | |
| White | 91 | 90 |
| British..... | 88 | 88 |
| Irish | 1 | 1 |
| Any other white background..... | 1 | 1 |
| Mixed | * | 1 |
| White and Black Caribbean..... | * | * |
| White and Black African..... | * | * |
| White and Asian..... | * | * |
| Any other mixed background | * | * |
| Asian or Asian British | 4 | 4 |
| Indian | 1 | 1 |
| Pakistani | 2 | 2 |
| Bangladeshi | * | * |
| Any other Asian background | * | * |
| Black or Black British | 1 | 1 |
| Caribbean | * | * |
| African..... | 1 | 1 |
| Any other Black background | * | 0 |
| Chinese or other ethnic group | * | 1 |
| Chinese..... | * | * |
| Any other ethnic group..... | * | 1 |
| Not stated | 4 | 3 |

| C1. The Disability and Carers Service may want to do some further research over the next 12 months. If you are willing to take part in further possible research, Ipsos MORI will need to pass on your details, and the answers you have given in this survey, to the Disability and Carers Service. The answers you give will in no way affect any benefits you receive or any claim you are making. If you are willing to take part, please tick ‘Yes’, Otherwise, tick ‘No’.? Please tick one box | | 2008 |
|---|--|------|
| | | % |
| Yes..... | | 41 |
| No | | 49 |
| Not stated..... | | 10 |

| B How long ago did you make your first claim for Carer’s Allowance? Please tick one box | | |
|--|----|----|
| | 07 | 08 |
| | % | % |
| Less than three years ago | 80 | 74 |
| Three years ago or more | 6 | 8 |
| Don’t know or can’t remember..... | 7 | 5 |
| Does not apply..... | 3 | 2 |
| Not stated | 5 | 10 |

2007 DCS Customer Survey fieldwork details

- Self-completion questionnaires were sent to a sample of 5,001 customers who either claim or receive Carer's Allowance (CA).
- Fieldwork was conducted between 15 October and 14 December 2007.
- Results are based on a total of 2,134 questionnaires – an unadjusted response rate for Carer's Allowance of 43%.