

# Older Person's Survey

2023 Report



**ALONE**

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ALONE provides and coordinates services to support older people to age safely and securely at home. Our national network of fully trained staff are ready to work with older people across the country. We are committed to our vision of an Ireland where older people can age happily and securely in the comfort of their homes while maintaining strong connections to their local communities.

Feedback from the older people we support is vital. It helps us to improve, to adapt to the needs of those we serve, and to ensure we provide the best possible care and support.

Our annual survey for older people is one way that we gather feedback. This report sets out key findings from that survey, provides an overview of emerging themes, and outlines the steps that we are taking in response to the feedback we obtained.

This year we sent our survey by phone, e-mail, or post to 3,900 older people who were receiving or had recently received support from ALONE.

Those who took part in the survey were asked to answer questions about themselves, what services they had received in ALONE, positive or negative experiences with ALONE, recommendations for service improvements or innovations, and support from volunteers. The survey also included a short section with questions on the cost of living, to inform ALONE's pre-Budget submission and to support us in campaigning for supports for older people.

We would like to thank the 585 people who filled in the survey, and the family members, friends, ALONE staff, and volunteers who assisted them. The responses and insights we received are invaluable to us in our mission to better support older people across Ireland.

Overall, the feedback we received was very positive, indicating the vast majority of older people who we support are very satisfied with the support offered, would recommend ALONE to a friend, and that receiving support from ALONE has made a positive impact on their life. Additionally, a remarkably high number of people reported positive impacts from their Support and Befriending volunteers.

We recognise that not everyone had a positive experience with ALONE. We value the honesty of those who shared their challenges and concerns with us. We take this feedback seriously and are dedicated to addressing any issues raised, to enhance our services for everyone into the future.



“

“I've been through a very difficult journey... had many awful procedures, my recovery will take a long time! I live alone. My contact from ALONE has been very much appreciated. The team from Alone are all wonderful, especially my Support Coordinator she's helped me with many things. I can get very lonely so the calls are a big help to me, I'm always so grateful”

”

# Positive Impacts of ALONE Services



76% of older people who took part in the survey rated the service highly

76%

78% would recommend ALONE services to a friend

78%



80% were satisfied with the wait time to the Visitation Support and Befriending service

80%



85% were satisfied with the wait time to the Telephone Support and Befriending service

85%



# Positive Impacts of ALONE Services



The main impacts of getting support were that older people felt less lonely and happier

“Yes I was isolated with Covid at home on my own and was depressed and that’s when I seen Alone telephone no and I phoned and never looked back  
Thank you so much”



# Positive Impacts of ALONE Services



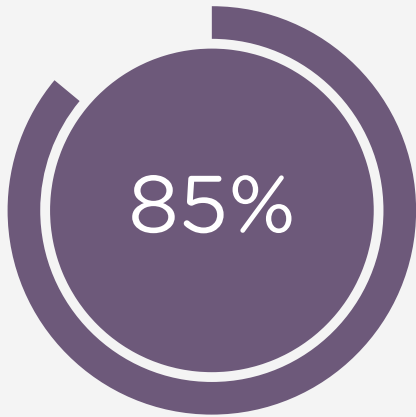
90% felt their Visitation Support and Befriending volunteer had positively impacted their life

“

“Kind caring honest always there when you need her. She is always only a phonecall away. Up to when I met her I wasn't interested in talking to anyone, but she has such a manner its unreal. I feel as if I could talk to her all day. She has been a great help to me”

”

# Positive Impacts of ALONE Services



85% felt Telephone Support and Befriending calls had a positive impact on their lives

“

“I speak to lovely people I now have new friends. Lovely ladies I feel I know them ”

”



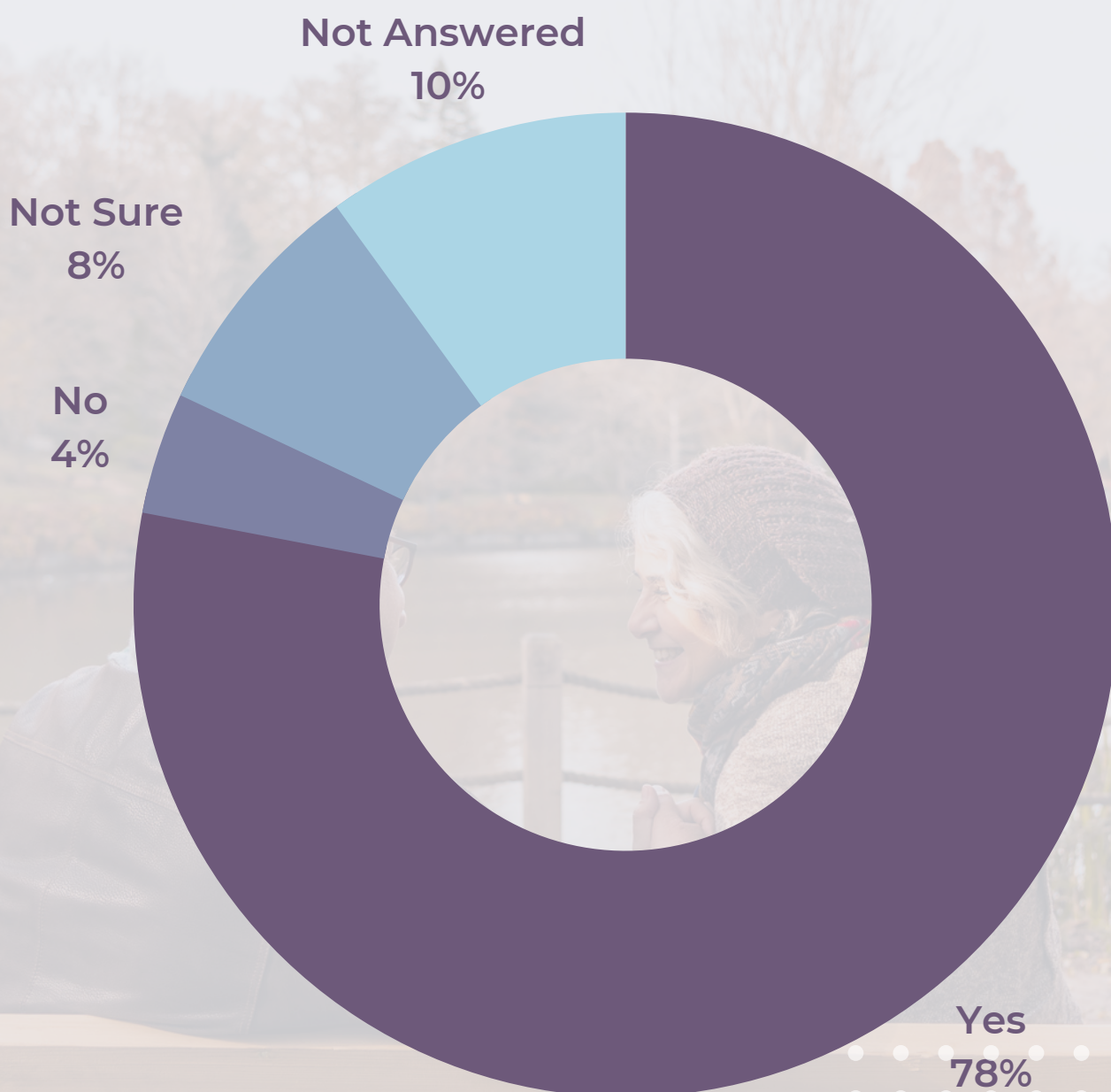
# Positive Impacts of ALONE Services

One of the main contributors to older people's satisfaction with ALONE services was the kind and friendly nature of staff and volunteers. Numerous older people mentioned feeling like someone cared about as the main benefit of the support they had received

“I know they are there. I hope I never get to the stage where I would be totally dependent on them but it is nice to know they are always a lifeline and an excellent one as well”



## Recommend ALONE to a Friend



# Optimising the Experiences of Older People in ALONE

## Lack of Contact from ALONE



Less than 10% of older people indicated they had not heard back from ALONE after an initial visit, their volunteer had stopped visiting, or they had not heard back about a piece of assistive technology

4% of older people suggested having ongoing contact as an improvement for ALONE services



## Actions



We have implemented a new tool for staff to allow them better monitor individuals who should be receiving check-in calls as part of our Visitation Support and Befriending service

We are reviewing our procedures around check-in calls for those waiting on a service, to ensure that everyone is kept informed and up-to-date



# Optimising the Experiences of Older People in ALONE



## Wait-time for Support and Befriending Services



Up to 20% of older people were not satisfied with the wait time to ALONE's befriending services

## Actions

We are continuing to recruit more volunteers to meet current demand for our services, and we are actively seeking funding to support volunteer recruitment campaigns





# Optimising the Experiences of Older People in ALONE

## Lack of Awareness of ALONE Services



22% of older people were unsure if the services provided by ALONE met their needs

Many older people told us they were unaware of the full range of services provided by ALONE



## Actions

We are reviewing our website and other promotional materials to ensure it is clear what services are provided by ALONE

# Optimising the Experiences of Older People in ALONE

## Assistance with Technology

Assistance with technology was frequently mentioned as a service that had really benefitted older people



Many older people indicated their Visitation Support and Befriending Volunteer or Support Coordinator had supported them in using technology

## Actions

We are rolling out Hi Digital skills training to our volunteers and staff, so that they can better support older people with using technology



# Optimising the Experiences of Older People in ALONE

## Challenges with Local Services



Many older people told us they had problems engaging with GP/Primary Care, going to social activities, getting transport, and obtaining homecare

About 2% of older people wanted ALONE to host more social activities, or offer transport to appointments or social activities



## Actions



We are persistently advocating for increased support for transport services for older people, and we are preparing a policy statement on this issue to ensure that this issue receives attention from Government

We continue to work as part of the Home Care coalition, advocating for reform of the homecare sector





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We extend our gratitude to everyone who took part in this survey. Your dedication and insights allow us improve our service with all the people we work with.


**Thank you from everyone at ALONE for being a crucial part of our mission.**



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Thank you for taking the time to read this report. If you have any questions or would like to discuss our findings further, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

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