

Gathering and using insight on disabled people

Knowing your audience is essential. Learning from the wealth of information available can help you to have more impact with your resources, especially finances.

We have created a number of engagement resources that encourage you to think about the ways you include disabled people. This sheet provides top tips on how to be more effective in gathering and using insight. There are specific points to consider and places to look when gathering information on disability and disabled people.





What information do you need?

There is a lot of information available to help you reach disabled people, so it is important to have a clear idea of what you want to find out.

Examples might be to understand the number of disabled people taking part in sport. Or find out how many people with a physical impairment live in a particular place. Activity Alliance, along with other organisations, have studies involving disabled people, which could provide some useful context.

Data sources

There are several useful sources of data online which are free (and easy) to access, though some require a short registration process. Some of the main ones are:

Name	Internet address	Description
Active Lives survey	activelives.sportengland.org	Sport and activity participation figures published by Sport England.
PANSI	pansi.org.uk	Figures for selected impairments at a local authority and district level for people aged 18-64, published by the Institute of Public Care.
POPPI	poppi.org.uk	Figures for impairments and health issues for people aged 65 and over, published by the Institute of Public Care.
NOMIS	nomisweb.co.uk	Sources of information (e.g. census data) which help to show the size of disability populations locally.
Care Quality Commission	cqc.org.uk	A variety of data is available, showing details of providers and establishments.

Map key stakeholders and gather information

There is a range of organisations, from the third, health and private sectors, charities, and those run by disabled people themselves, who specialise or have an interest in disability equality.

The knowledge they have can be vital. It is important to understand who the key organisations and individuals are locally, with a view to establishing relationships with them and determining what information you need to know.

You should think about mapping out influencers and stakeholders for your particular project. You can gather information on local organisations from sources like the Charity Commission website, Companies House and County Sports Partnerships. Try searching online too. A list may already exist for local areas etc.

Disabled people and disability organisations often act as trusted gatekeepers. They can open doors to new audiences. Take time to understand who these gatekeepers are and build up trust with them.

Once you understand the information available, you will also know whether further research is needed. Carrying out research such as questionnaires, focus groups, or interviews with disabled people can help you add further depth to your understanding. If you are doing research about disabled people, involving disabled people in the project or co-producing this, is important. Here are a few things to think about:

- Use a variety of methods (e.g. questionnaires, focus groups) to ensure the picture you build is a more reliable one. Do not just rely on one source of evidence.
- When carrying out research, make sure your questions are easy to understand, accessible, you offer support and/or have alternative formats available.
- Ensure your research is accessible to people from different impairment groups (e.g. if a telephone survey is used, ensure how people with a hearing impairment may be able to take part).

Refer to the **Effective Engagement Resource** on how you may want to group these stakeholders based on interest and influencers.



Check and test

It is a good idea to test what you have found – and consulting with your partners locally is a good way to do this.

Check to see if you have any gaps in your data. Some tips here are to:

- Keep in mind that disabled people are not all the same, make sure you include views of people from a variety of backgrounds (e.g. a cross section of ages and a good gender mix.) Also, consider other information such as the impact of social or economic factors in people's lives.
- Check to ensure that you do not just have the views of people you speak with regularly – take the time to reach out to those you don't always hear from.
- If something does not feel or look right, or is surprising, consult with others to explore this further.

Use the information to make an impact

Having the information is just the start – it now needs putting into practice! Use the information you have gathered to develop an action plan and adapt your working practices.

Seeds for Success have several examples of good practice on how insight is gathered and used. For more information go to [Seeds for Success website](#).



Find all our research on our website, this sheet is part of our engagement resource.

Read all the sheets here activityalliance.org.uk/engagement

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This document is available in Word format. Please contact us if you need support. Activity Alliance is the operating name for the English Federation of Disability Sport. Registered Charity no. 1075180