

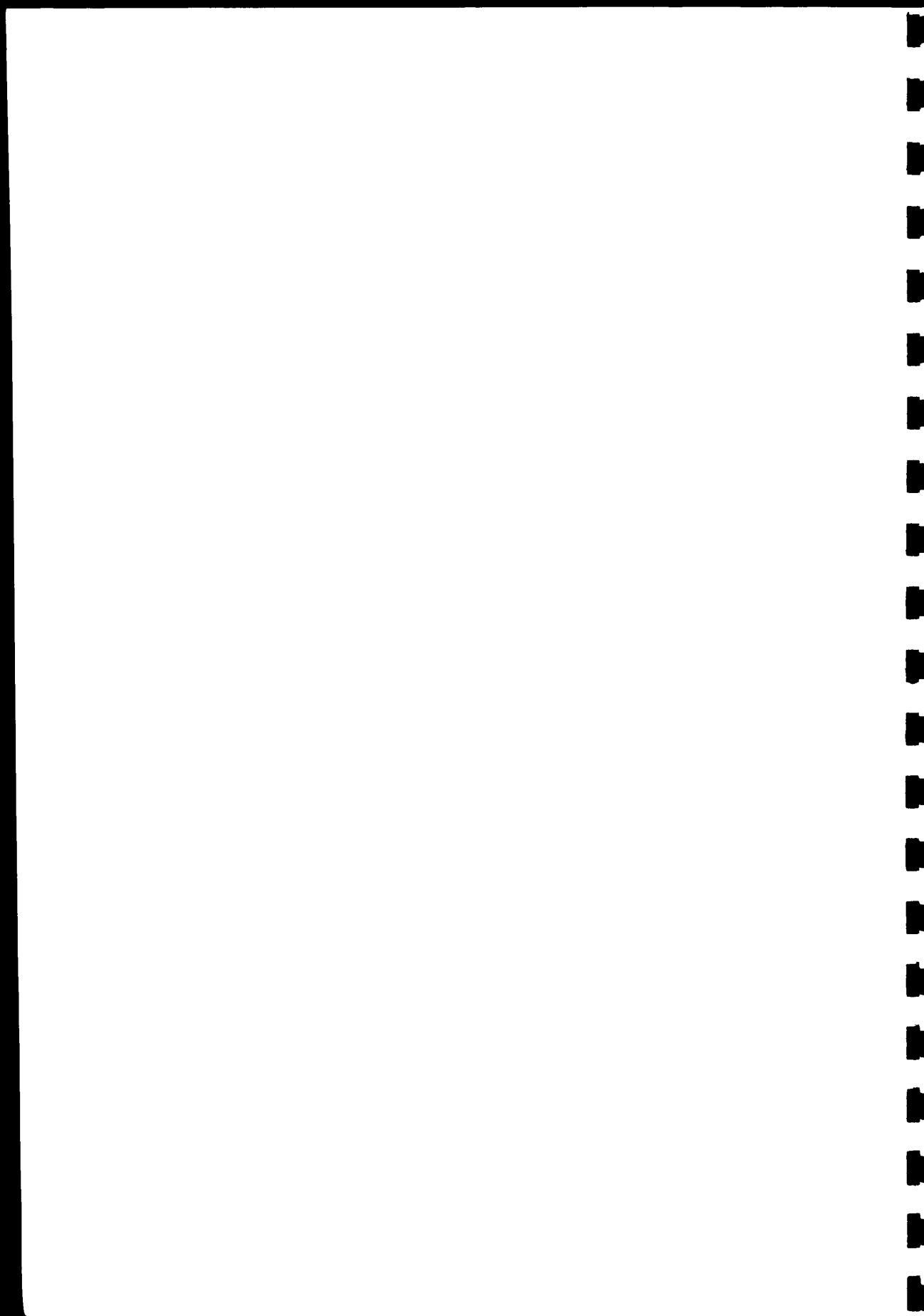
**INFORMATION ON  
OBTAINING THE VIEWS OF  
USERS OF SERVICES PROVIDED  
BY PROFESSIONS ALLIED TO  
MEDICINE**

***CONSUMER FEEDBACK  
RESOURCE***

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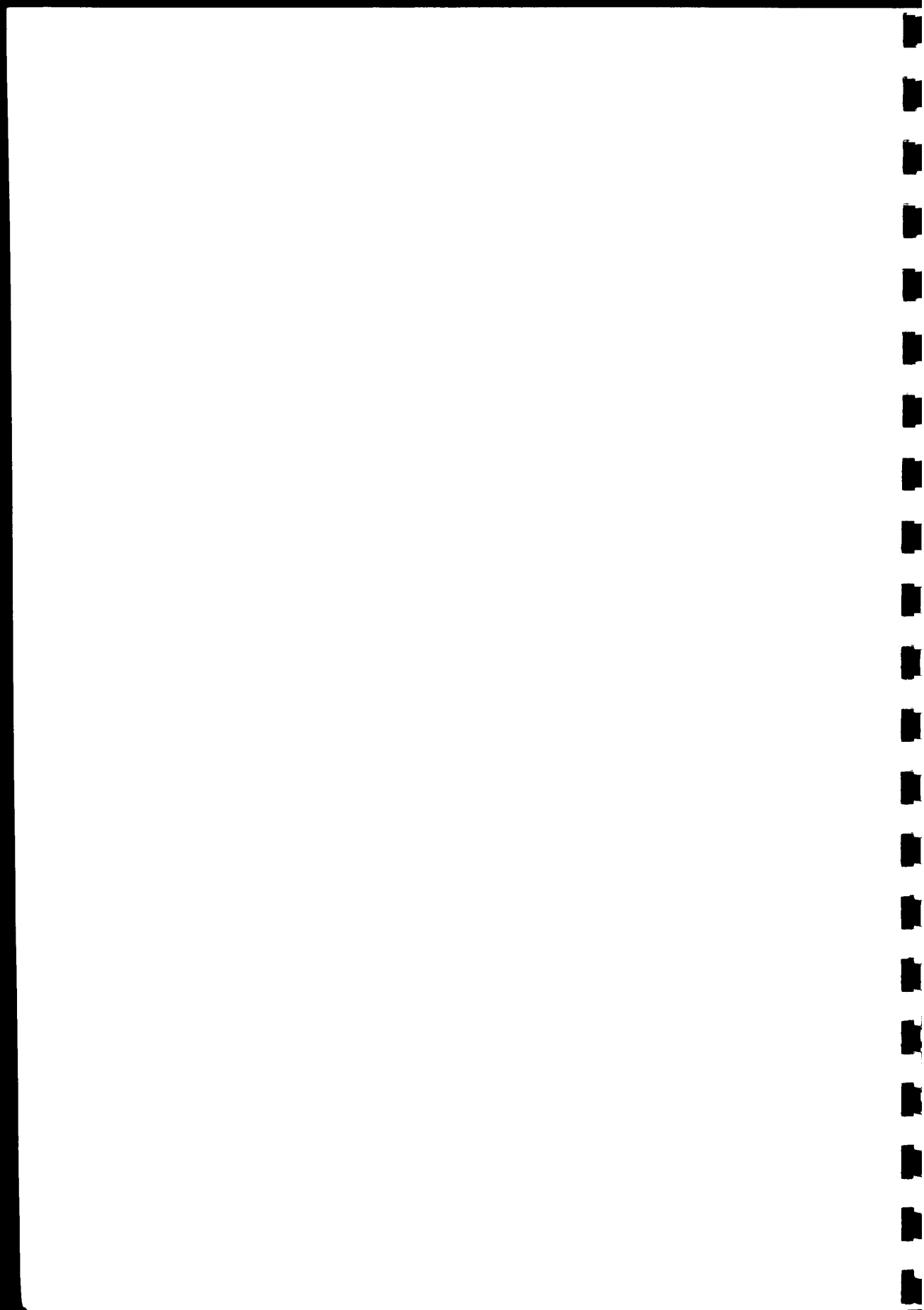


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## **CONTENTS**

Introduction	1
Literature Overview of Consumer Feedback in Services Provided by Professions Allied to Medicine	2
Current Projects	6
Organisation Contact List	8
Areas for Questions	10



## **INTRODUCTION**

These information sheets will be of use to health service staff or Community Health Councils who wish to find out the views of users of services provided by professions allied to medicine. For the purposes of this pack professions allied to medicine covers chiropodists, dieticians, occupational therapists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, speech therapists and x-ray departments.

The purpose of these sheets is:

- 1 to give an overview of what has previously been carried out in this field
- 2 to give details of some of the current major projects
- 3 to list some organisations which may be able to carry out research
- 4 to provide a checklist of what appear to be the most important areas for users of these services.

Information on the use of feedback methods is available separately and is also provided in full detail in:

McIver S. Obtaining the Views of Users of Health Services. London: Kings Fund Centre, 1991.

Details of any type of user feedback project using survey or non-survey methods are welcomed by the Consumer Feedback Resource so that we can develop the advice for these services. Please send the information to:

Shirley McIver  
Manager  
Consumer Feedback Resource  
King's Fund Centre  
126 Albert Street  
London  
NW1 7NF  
Tel: 071-267 6111

July 1991

## **LITERATURE OVERVIEW OF CONSUMER FEEDBACK IN SERVICES PROVIDED BY PROFESSIONS ALLIED TO MEDICINE**

For the purposes of this literature overview, professions allied to medicine covers the following services: chiropody, dietetics, occupational therapy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, speech therapy and x-ray services. These services have been grouped together because similar issues arise for users in the use of each of these services.

Very few documented surveys of users' views of these services have been undertaken compared to other service areas but several of the professional bodies are looking at getting users' views in order to inform their members of the best way to proceed, e.g. Chartered Society of Physiotherapists, Association of Speech Therapists. (See Organisation Contact List for addresses).

### **Chiropody Services**

Surveys of chiropody services undertaken by user representative organisations have involved interviews with elderly people in the community to find out the gaps in service provision. (1,2) The greatest need reported was for more services to enable elderly people to remain mobile longer. These included more toe nail cutting services, more domiciliary visits, more health education, transport to clinics, emergency clinic sessions, a reduction in waiting lists and improved booking services. A report by Age Concern Greater London details different areas where services need improving for users and suggests some solutions. These areas include services for black and ethnic minority groups and services for people in private nursing homes. Surveys have also been undertaken by professionals to find out the views of their existing users. (See Current Projects.) Questions have been asked about how users were referred to the service, to identify problems with the waiting list and appointment system and to find out users' views of clinical treatment and their need for information.

### **Dietetics**

Surveys have been undertaken by dietitians to improve the clinical services they offer. A survey of Muslim Asian mothers' attitudes regarding infant feeding practices and dental health found a need to train health professionals more and provide continuing education for families and communities. (17) Surveys of dietetic services provided in health centres have also been undertaken and questions asked about patients' views of the appointment system, referral and information source. (See Current Projects.)

### **Occupational Therapy**

Two surveys of users of occupational therapy services have been identified. Stockwell et al investigated which treatments offered by an occupational therapy service users in a psychiatric unit found most helpful. (3) The researchers found that users considered individual psychotherapy most useful but there were difficulties in using the particular questionnaire chosen. In contrast another survey of users' views found that users felt the more traditional occupational therapy



activities such as arts and crafts and social activities had contributed as much to their recovery as psychotherapy. (18) A survey by East Dorset Community Health Council of 139 users, using a postal questionnaire, found that users were satisfied with the service they received but would like more time with the therapist because they found it beneficial. (4)

### **Pharmacy Services**

Several surveys of pharmacy services have focused on the cost effectiveness of pharmacists providing primary health care advice and the need to reduce the cost of expensive prescription bills. This has led researchers to investigate users' views of changes made to improve efficiency. (5,6,) Research on the introduction of a practice formulary found patient satisfaction was affected by changes in medicine and lack of information about medicines. (5) Interviews with 54 mothers using community pharmacy services found that mothers considered the advice given by pharmacists part of a useful network of sources for advice to use rather than going to the general practitioner. (6) The Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee has drawn up a list of additional services that community pharmacists could provide and incorporated them in a patients' charter. (7) Other research has surveyed the users of acute hospital pharmacies for their views. Surveys highlight the need for more privacy for consultations between pharmacy staff and users. (8)

### **Physiotherapy Services**

Surveys by professionals of users' views have looked at their perceptions of the outcome of the physiotherapy they have received. (9,10) One postal survey of users attending an elderly rehabilitation unit received an 86% response rate and asked users to assess different outcomes such as pain relief, movement and limb function, general mobility and independence. Surveys of users in the community have found a need for more services than are currently being provided. (11,12) A survey of multiple-sclerosis sufferers found a strongly expressed need for more physiotherapy, occupational therapy and chiropody services. (12) Only 67 per cent of sufferers were satisfied with the way they had been treated by health and/or social services. Many surveys also include questions about transport to physiotherapy services, accessibility, information given and staff attitude. (9,10). Work on the development of standards for physiotherapy by Bromley et al includes a model patient questionnaire (13).

### **Speech Therapy**

Patient representative organisations have identified a need for the provision of more speech therapy services. (14) Surveys of users by professionals have asked both users and carers for their views (See Current Projects.) Questions have been asked about referral, information given before assessment, waiting times, information given about condition, outcome of treatment, relationship with staff, facilities in waiting areas and the need for support groups. Surveys have revealed a need for more information for carers, more information before referral and more support for carers through the provision of support groups.

### **X-ray Services**

Patients may be attending x-ray departments for different procedures which give rise to quite different expectations and issues. Surveys of users attending for ultrasound, for example, have included questions about allowing partners in with the patient (15). Other surveys have asked questions about accessibility, reception staff, waiting area, information given and levels of anxiety (See Current Projects.) Obtaining the Views of Outpatients (16) includes an example of a questionnaire for users referred to diagnostic services in outpatients which asks users how easily they found their way to the department.

## References

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11. Burke P. One door on which to knock. *Social Work Today* 1990 May 31:15-18.
12. Williams E, McKeran R, Bellingham G. The uptake of available services and benefits for patients with multiple sclerosis in a South London borough. *Public Health* 1988;102:169-175.
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## **CURRENT PROJECTS**

These projects are ones that have been undertaken to develop good practice in the field of consumer feedback or quality improvement in professions allied to medicine.

### **All Services**

Mr Henderson  
Research Officer  
Brent Health Authority  
District Headquarters  
Central Middlesex Hospital  
Acton Lane  
London  
NW10 7NS

Tel: 081-965 5733

A short self-completion questionnaire has been distributed to all health centres and clinics in Brent and several specialities including chiropody, dietetics and speech therapy, have been asked to distribute it. The questionnaire covers referral to the clinic, information source, frequency of attendance, appointment systems, preferred choice of time, views on the facilities provided, suggestions for improvements, communications with and attitudes to staff, GP facilities and demographic information.

### **Chiropody**

Ms J Salmon  
Chief III Chiropodist  
West London Hospital  
Hammersmith Road  
London  
W6 7DQ

Tel: 081-846 1234

A survey of users' views of the chiropody service using a self-completion questionnaire has been carried out. Monitoring and evaluation will take place to measure success in achieving changes.

### **Physiotherapy**

Karen Beeton  
Physiotherapist  
The Royal Free Hospital  
Pond Street  
Hampstead  
London  
NW3 2QG

Tel: 071-794 0500

A survey has been undertaken of users' views of the Physiotherapy Department as part of project work for a Certificate in Research Methodology. The aim of the survey is to find out how users' satisfaction levels change at various intervals after discharge. Questions about outcome of treatment have been included.

Linda Vasey  
Senior Physiotherapist  
Doncaster Royal Infirmary  
Armthorpe Road  
Doncaster  
DN2 5LT

A survey was initially undertaken of patient satisfaction with the physiotherapy department. After undertaking comparative studies with other physiotherapy areas in the United Kingdom a workshop is being considered to compare results from different centres and to develop a standards survey.

### **Speech Therapy**

Ruth Horner  
Chief Speech Therapist (Adult Care)  
St Albans City Hospital  
Waverley Road  
St Albans  
Herts  
AL3 5PN

Tel: 0727-66122

Have undertaken a survey of users' views of the speech therapy service and developed standards for the service.

### **X-ray**

Sara Callen  
EEG Department  
Severalls Hospital  
Boxted Road  
Colchester  
Essex  
CO4 5HG

Tel: 0206-852271

A survey has been undertaken of users' views of an EEG Department as part of project work for a degree.

## **ORGANISATION CONTACT LIST**

This is a list of organisations offering advice and assistance to those seeking to obtain information from users of services provided by professions allied to medicine. This list is not comprehensive and inclusion does not imply endorsement by the King's Fund Centre.

CASPE Ltd  
14 Palace Court  
Bayswater  
London  
W2 4HT  
Tel: 071-229 8739

Health Policy Advisory Unit  
PO Box 344  
Sheffield  
S1 1AZ

Association For All Speech Impaired Children (AFASIC)  
347 Central Markets  
Smithfield  
London  
EC1A 9NH  
Tel: 071-236 3672

The Society of Chiropodists  
53 Welbeck Street  
London  
W1M 7HE  
Tel: 071-935 6359

Royal Pharmaceutical Society  
1 Lambeth High Street  
London  
SE1 7JN  
Tel: 071-735 9141

The British Dietetic Association  
7th Floor, Elizabeth House  
22 Suffolk Street  
Queensway  
Birmingham

College of Occupational Therapists/  
British Association of Occupational Therapists  
6-8 Marshalsea Road  
Southwark  
SE1 1HL  
Tel: 071-357 6480

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy  
14 Bedford Row  
London  
WC1R 4ED  
Tel: 071-242 1941

College of Speech Therapists  
Harold Poster House  
6 Lechmere Road  
London  
Tel: 081-451 1087

Society of Radiographers  
14 Upper Wimpole Street  
London  
W1M 8BN  
Tel: 071-935 5726

## **AREAS FOR QUESTIONS**

This list contains suggestions for areas which could be covered in a survey to obtain the views of users of services provided by professions allied to medicine. The list has been compiled from previous research into the views of users of services provided by professions allied to medicine but it is not intended to be exhaustive.

### **ORGANISATION**

- Is the liaison with other professionals organised to give users a seamless service?
- Are users given a choice of appointment time?
- How are appointments made?
- Do users have any difficulties in making appointments?
- How was the user referred to the service?
- How long after being referred to the service did the user receive an appointment?

### **ENVIRONMENT**

- Where do users receive treatment, e.g. department, day hospital, rehabilitation unit, at home?
- Do users have sufficient privacy whilst they are receiving treatment or having a consultation with staff?
- Do waiting areas have refreshments, up-to-date reading material, toilets for users with disabilities and sufficient, appropriate seating?
- How easily can users find the department?

### **ACCESS**

- How do users travel to the service?
- Do they have any difficulties getting to the service, e.g. long waits for ambulances?
- Are there any groups of people who need the service who are not receiving it?

### **INFORMATION**

- What information is given to users before they are referred to the service and is this information sufficient and accurate?
- Are users able to identify staff easily?
- What information is given to users about their condition and treatment or drug prescriptions?
- What information is given to users as tests or procedures are conducted?
- Do users understand the information given to them?
- Was it clear who users should report to?



- Do users experience continuity in their treatment, e.g. same staff at each treatment session?
- Are users clear about what is going to happen next?

### **STAFF ATTITUDE**

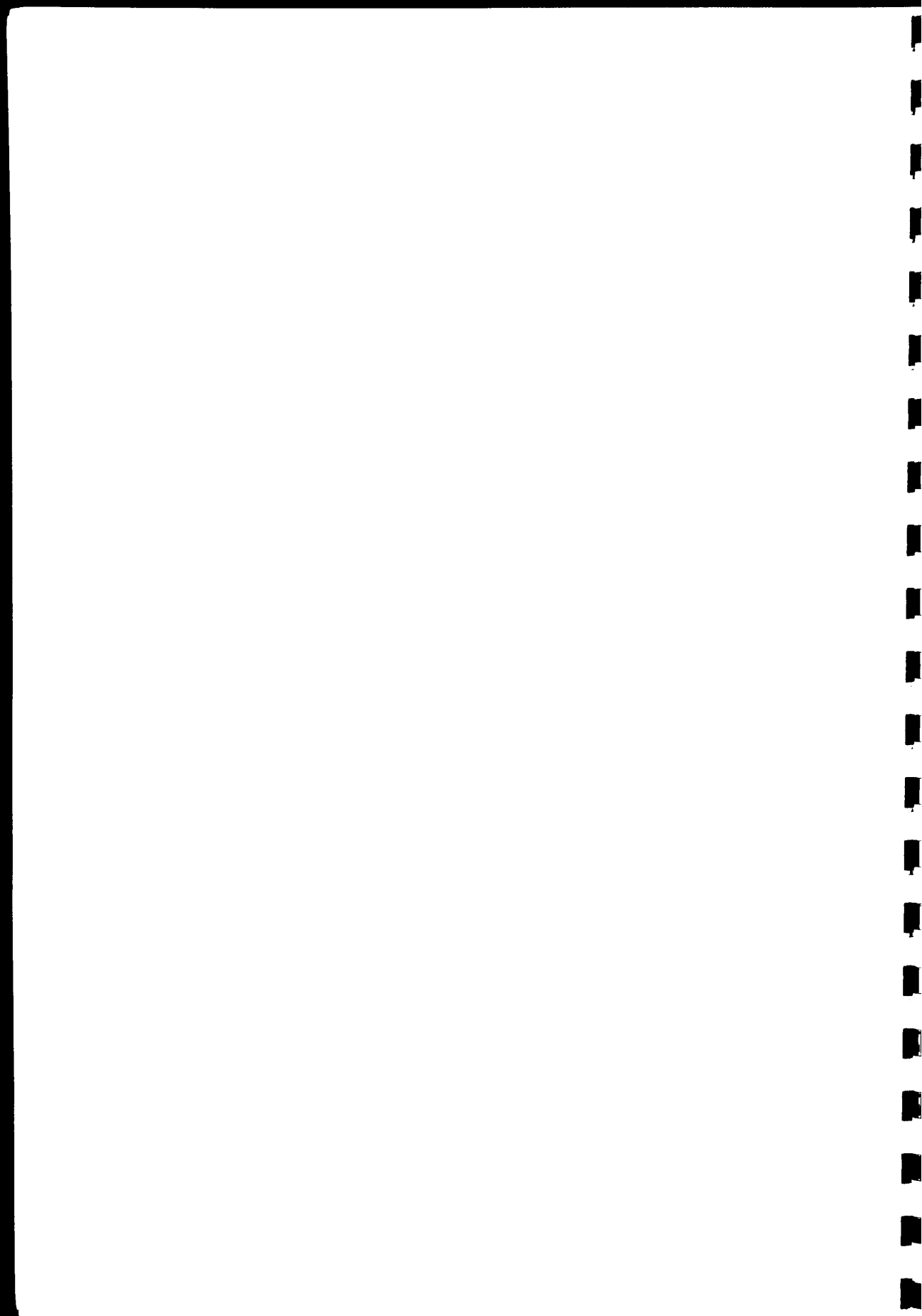
- Do users feel able to ask questions and discuss their problems with staff?
- Is the reception of users organised and friendly – are users greeted by name and do users know where to go and what to do?

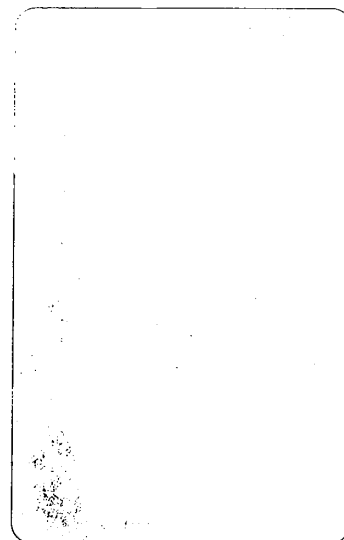
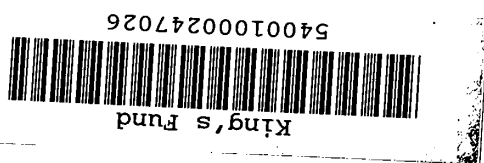
### **PATIENT OUTCOMES**

- What conditions are users referred to the service for?
- Which treatments do users receive?
- What benefits do users gain from attending a service for treatment?

### **CARERS**

- Are carers involved in treatments and consultations enough?
- Do users wish carers to be more involved in their treatments and consultations?
- Do carers receive enough support in helping users at home?





The King's Fund Centre is a health services development agency which promotes improvements in health and social care. We do this by working with people in health services, in social services, in voluntary agencies, and with the users of their services. We encourage people to try out new ideas, provide financial or practical support to new developments, and enable experiences to be shared through workshops, conferences and publications. Our aim is to ensure that good developments in health and social care are widely taken up.