

*Evaluation of 15 projects –
‘Supporting School Leavers’*

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The Policy Imperative

- The policy context for Day Care Services for people with disabilities has changed substantially
 - Move away from group-based service provision to a more community and employment focused approach
 - Move towards individualised planning and delivery of services
 - Need to assess the costs of new approaches to service provision
- The 15 projects are influenced by this context

15 Pilot Projects

- Funded by Genio in 2012
- Explore alternative ways of meeting work, education, training and recreation needs through mainstream services in 'real' community settings
- The projects aimed to:
 - Provide *innovative responses to delivering individualised supports* to prepare school leavers for independent lives
 - Provide **work-focused supports, job-focused training or further education**
 - Create **opportunities to socialise** and engage in desired recreational activities in the community

The projects

- 15 projects were funded
 - 14 projects provided information on their activities
 - Between 1 and 62 service users took part in the projects
 - Service users mostly had learning disabilities or autism – a minority had a physical disability
 - 58 service users were interviewed – 39 from the 14 projects and 19 from comparison projects
- The comparison group was not a control group
 - users of services that project participants would have attended had they not been in the new projects
 - similar in terms of age and disability status, but they were not matched to the new project participants
- Not all participants were school leavers
- Not all projects finished within the timeframe of the project

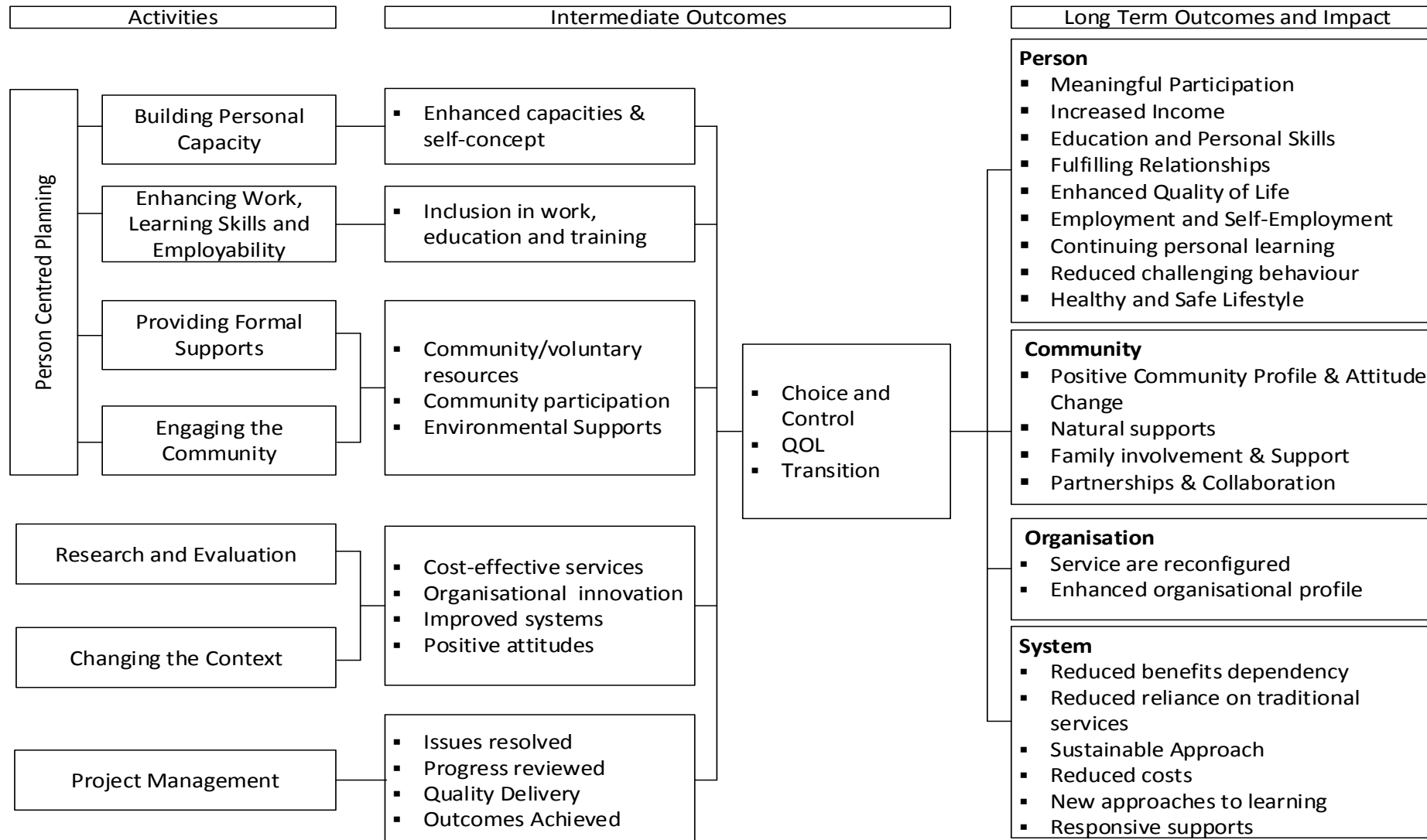
Methodology: Instruments

- The main data collection tools used in the study were:
 - The Quality Of Life Impact of Services Questionnaire (QOLIS)
 - Programme Logic Models
 - A measure of direct project costs
 - A Person Needs Profile

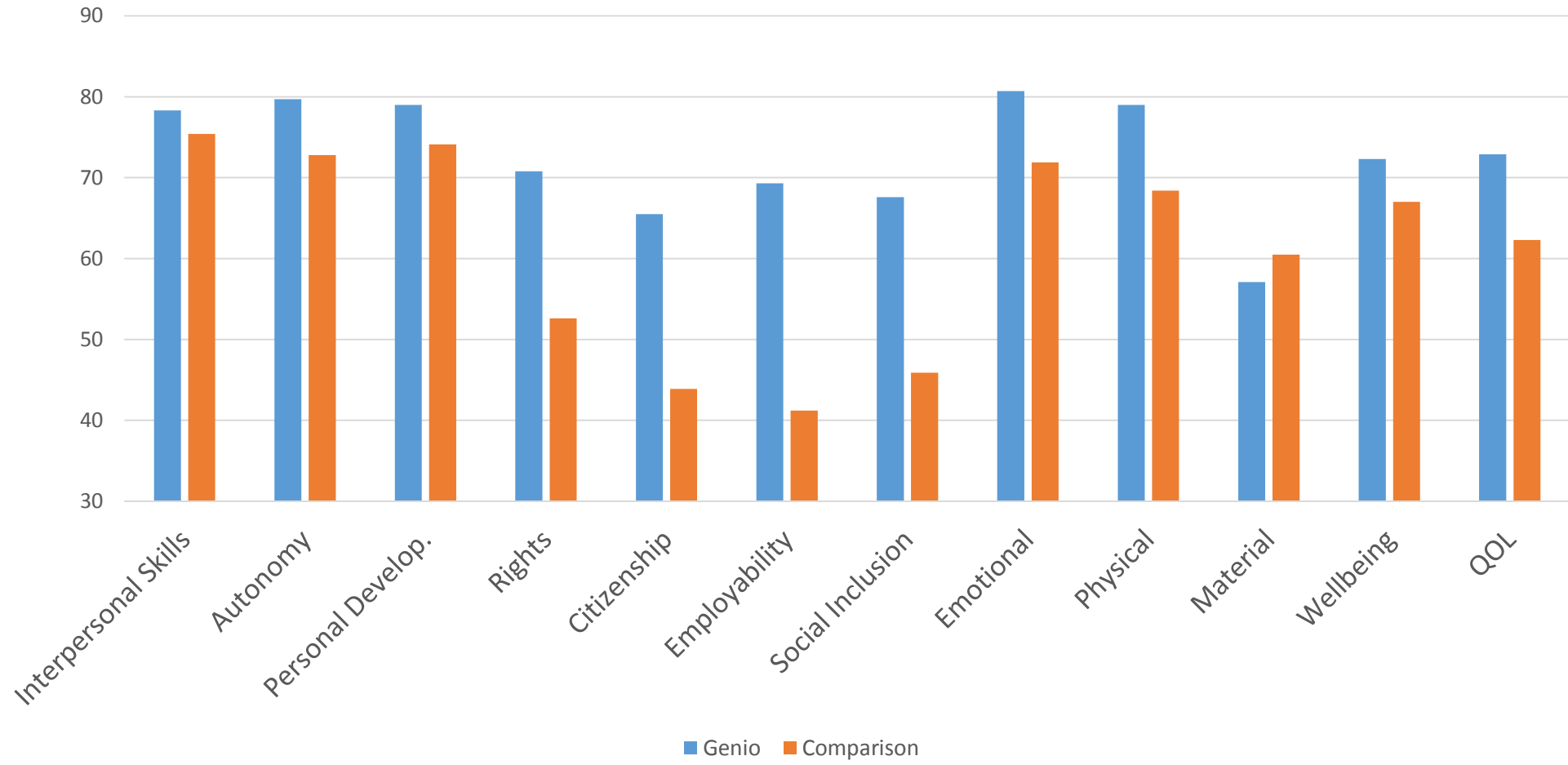
Research questions

- What activities did projects undertake?
- What were participants most satisfied with
- Were the costs of the projects higher or lower in comparison to traditional services?
- Was spending associated with better results?
- Was level of disability related to better results?
- What activities were most associated with better results?

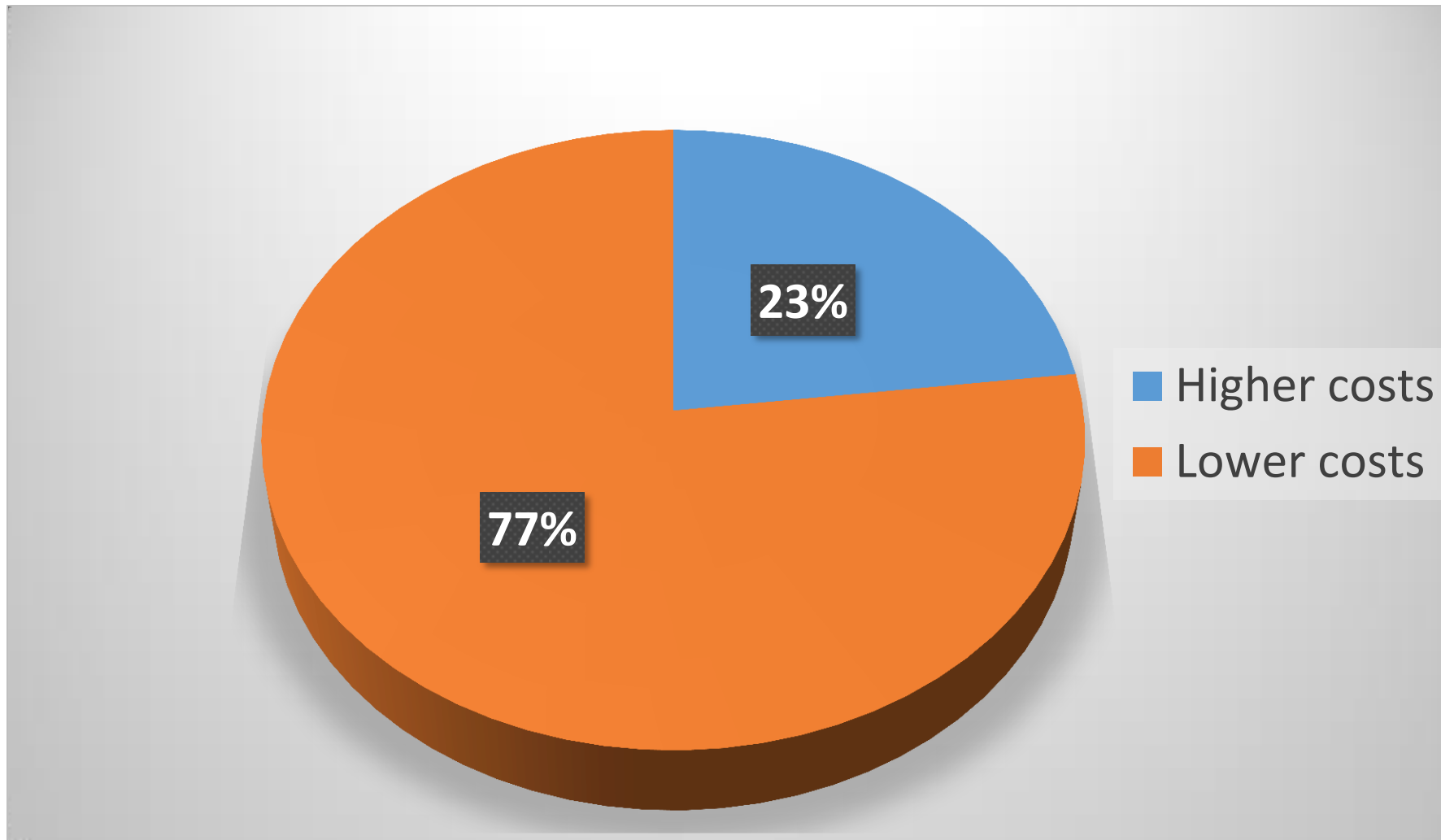
Overview of the Projects Programme Theory



Service user perceptions



Projects direct costs in compared to traditional services



Why were project ratings higher?

- *Were these higher ratings due to differences in levels of support needs?*
 - No consistent relationship
 - Projects with lower support needs profiles were not consistently rated more positively
 - Projects with equivalent or higher support needs profiles were in some cases rated significantly more positively
- *Were higher spending projects rated more highly?*
 - No consistent relationship
 - Many projects with higher QOLIS ratings were estimated to cost less than equivalent VFM study estimates
 - Projects with similar QOLIS ratings to comparison services were less costly than the costs reported in the VFM study.

What project activities were rated most highly?

	Activities with High QOL Impact (some projects)	Activities with High QOL (many projects)
<i>Person Facing Processes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualisation of support and interventions • Development of independence and personal and social skills • Further education and training • Work placement/employment and self-employment skills and support • Positive social and health life experiences • Communication and interpersonal skills • Community inclusion and participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building, rights and self-advocacy • Learning to learn, incidental and experimental learning • Mentoring, life coaching or counselling • Stress management

What project activities were rated most highly?

	Activities with High QOL Impact (some projects)	Activities with High QOL (many projects)
<i>Environment Facing Processes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community services and supports• Identifying community based resources, groups and volunteers• Sourcing direct supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing support to families and volunteers• Staff training
<i>System Facing Processes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organisational change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project management• Research, data collection and evaluation

Forces affecting upscaling the Genio Model

- New Directions implementation plan – positive forces
 - Requirement for specialist services to have a 3 year plan to reconfigure services
 - Commitment to implementing person-centred planning
 - Proposal to integrate Rehabilitative Training in New Directions
 - Proposal to align funding with the new approach and to introduce person-centred budget control
 - Strategy to integrate New Directions in sector plans under the Disability Act
 - Establishing links with Mainstream Guidance services
 - Transitioning work related services to other Departments

Forces affecting upscaling the Genio Model

- New Directions implementation plan – constraining forces
 - HSE capacity to implement the New Directions plan
 - Flexibility in the use of HSE funds to purchase mainstream services
Absence of inter-department action on an Integrated policy
 - Culture and ethos of DJEI and DSP –
 - DSP & DJEI commitment to New Directions
 - Flexibility for people with complex needs
 - Potential for combining funding from several Depts. to deliver an individualised package of services to an person

Forces affecting upscaling the Genio Model

- Other facilitating forces
 - Staff Training
 - Leadership commitment to change in specialist providers
 - Partnerships and collaboration with community organisations
 - Systematic approach to recruiting and training volunteers
 - Support from families and significant others
 - Potential cost savings
 - Positive attitudes of service users

Forces affecting upscaling the Genio Model

- Other constraining forces
 - Continuing use of medical model
 - Resistance to change within organisations
 - The absence of an explicit dissemination plan for each project
 - Difficulties in re-orienting service providers
 - Lack of cooperation between agencies
 - Creation of new coalitions in the community – interests may not coincide
 - Availability of volunteers in certain locations
 - Volunteer ‘fatigue’
 - Fear of losing existing services and supports
 - Availability of employment options
 - ‘Legacy’ services competing for limited resources
 - ‘Legacy’ service users

In conclusion

- The new projects showed considerable promise in terms of:
 - Increased participant user satisfaction
 - Lower or equivalent costs
 - For a range of participant need profiles
- The key issue is individualisation of services, not just of planning
- Scaling up involves significant implementation challenges, but will take place in a relatively positive policy context