

32% of service users stated that the benefit had lasted for longer than a day.

77% of respondents commented on the benefits of therapy; themes were increased relaxation (47%), reduced anxiety (44%) and improved sleep (26%).

59% of respondents had reflexology in courses of 4–6 treatments.

“It helps because I feel more relaxed; sleeping is improved and my pains are not so bad”

Additionally, 16 questionnaires have been offered to those receiving complementary therapy in direct combination with other interventions (‘Back to Back’ therapy). In this group, 10 individual returns is a response rate of 63%. All those offered ‘Back to Back’ treatments had complex needs. In commentaries, respondents remark on physical benefit, but also indicate emotional support and well-being.

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SERVICE USER EVALUATION OF THE BENEFITS OF COMPLEMENTARY THERAPY IN HOSPICE CARE

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Complementary therapy (CT) is now a key component of care and support in hospice services and can be offered singly or in combination with other interventions, for example, emotional or bereavement support.

Service user evaluation is the best measure of effective outcome from care and support programmes.

The hospice offers Reflexology, Simple Massage and Reiki currently, in Day Hospice, Outpatient and Home settings.

The hospice introduced a self-completed user evaluation questionnaire in 2008 and has modified that to measure the benefits of combined therapies.

The questionnaire is offered to all CT service users after four completed therapy sessions.

The evaluation is structured to seek the user’s views on overall benefits, length of effect and frequency of treatment to maximise quality of life.

Results to-date (from 54 questionnaires offered and 44 returned; a response rate of 81%) indicate that 43% of participants felt that the therapy had offered benefits in addition to having an effect on the problem that they had initially.