MAX TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

This overview presentation is the first in a series of four. We recommend that these overviews are read in order. Please visit the MAX toolkit main page to access the other overview presentations.

About us

The MAX projects were funded by the Department of Health and Social Care via the **Quality and Outcomes of person-centred care Research Unit (QORU)** between 2012 and 2018.

QORU is based at the **Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU)** at the University of Kent. The unit established in 1974 and also includes researchers from the London School of Economics and Political Science, and Oxford University.

PSSRU carries out policy analysis, research and consultancy in the UK and abroad.

Relevant PSSRU work

Adult Social Care Outcomes Toolkit (ASCOT) which provides the measures of Social Care Related Quality of Life (SCRQoL) [**ASCOF 1A**] and Carer-reported quality of life [**ASCOF 1D**]

Adjusted Social Care Related Quality of life (Adjusted SCRQOL) calculation [**ASCOF 1J**]

Also involved in the initial development of the **Adult Social Care Survey (ASCS)** and **Personal Social Services Survey of Adult Carers Survey in England (PSS SACE or Carers Survey)**.

Please visit https://www.pssru.ac.uk/ to find out more

The MAX project

MAX stands for **Maximising the value of survey data in adult social care**.

The first MAX project was funded in 2012 in response to anecdotal evidence that many local authorities (LAs) were not using ASCS and PSS SACE data to guide local decision-making and service improvements as the government intended.

Purpose of project:

1. To find out why

2. To develop appropriate support

max project
maximising the value of survey
data in adult social care

About the surveys

Adult Social Care Survey (ASCS)	Carers Survey (PSS SACE)
Conducted annually since 2010/11	Conducted biennially since 2012/13
Developed by PSSRU* researchers and the SSUSG* using: • Stakeholder consultations • Cognitive interviews • Literature review • Interviews and focus groups Piloted with 18 LAs in 2010 using all three versions (community, residential, PWLD)	Developed by PSSRU* researchers and the SSUSG* using: • Literature review • Stakeholder consultations • Cognitive interviews Based on local carers survey (also developed at PSSRU) and piloted with 25 LAs in 2009
Local modifications can be made to survey and sample frame to maximise local relevance & value of survey data	
Produces **robust data** that can be used to inform **local performance monitoring and improvement activities**	

Further information about the development of the surveys can be found in the MAX toolkit.

* PSSRU (personal social services research unit) & SSUSG (Social Services User Survey Group)

Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework

	ASCOF outcomes measures from ASCS / PSS SACE	Survey
1A	Social care-related quality of life	ASCS
1B	The proportion of people who use services who have control over their daily life	ASCS
1D	Carer-reported quality of life	PSS SACE
1J	Enhancing quality of life for people with care and support needs [**from 2016/17 – can be measured using tool in MAX toolkit**]	ASCS
1L	Proportion of people who use services and their carers, who reported that they had as much social contact as they would like	Both
3A	Overall satisfaction of people who use service with their care and support	ASCS
3B	Overall satisfaction of carers with social services	PSS SACE
3C	The proportion of carers who report that they have been included or consulted in discussions about the person they care for	PSS SACE
3D	The proportion of people who use services and carers who find it easy to find information about services	Both
4A	The proportion of people who use services who feel safe	ASCS
4B	The proportion of people who use services who say that those services have made them feel safe and secure	ASCS

Questions that can be answered using survey data

Are any service users or carers reporting poor outcomes?

What may explain this?

How do we compare to other LAs and the national average?

What may explain any variations?

What factors are associated with good QOL?

What do we need to do to improve reported outcomes?

Why do some of our service users feel unsafe?

The MAX toolkit includes Excel-based analysis tools and guidance to help LAs explore these questions and more..

The MAX toolkit

Developed in partnership with local authority (LA) staff associated with the **Adult Social Care Survey** (ASCS) and **Personal Social Services Survey of Adult Carers in England** (PSS SACE or Carers Survey) and launched on 30 June 2016.
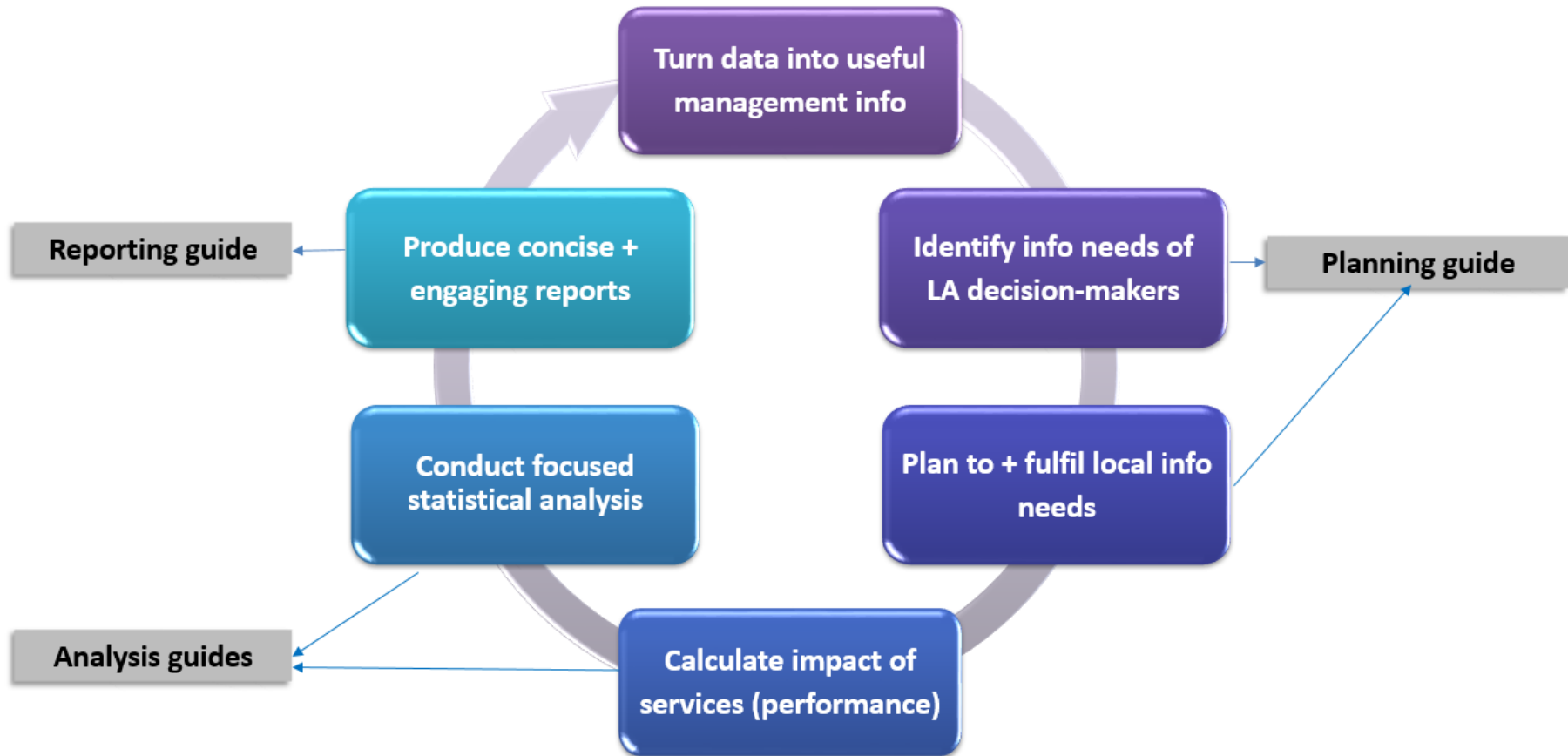
Aims to support LA analysts and their managers to:

- **Transform the national surveys into a large piece of local research**

- **Translate survey data into meaningful results that will inform local service & performance improvements**.

Supplements **NHS Digital** survey guidance and is designed to be implemented with minimal time and resources.

The MAX toolkit

Includes **guides** and a **range of associated tools** (including **Excel based analysis tools**) to support key stages of the survey process.

Development of the MAX toolkit

The design and content of the MAX toolkit was informed by:

- The **barriers** and **local practices** associated with collecting and using ASCS and PSS SACE data reported during earlier research and consultations;

- **Recommended strategies** (analysis, reporting and stakeholder engagement); and

- Guidelines drawn from **organisational change management literature**.

Additions and amendments were made in response to user-feedback collected during follow up project and to further streamline the elements. The MAX toolkit was finalised in early 2018.
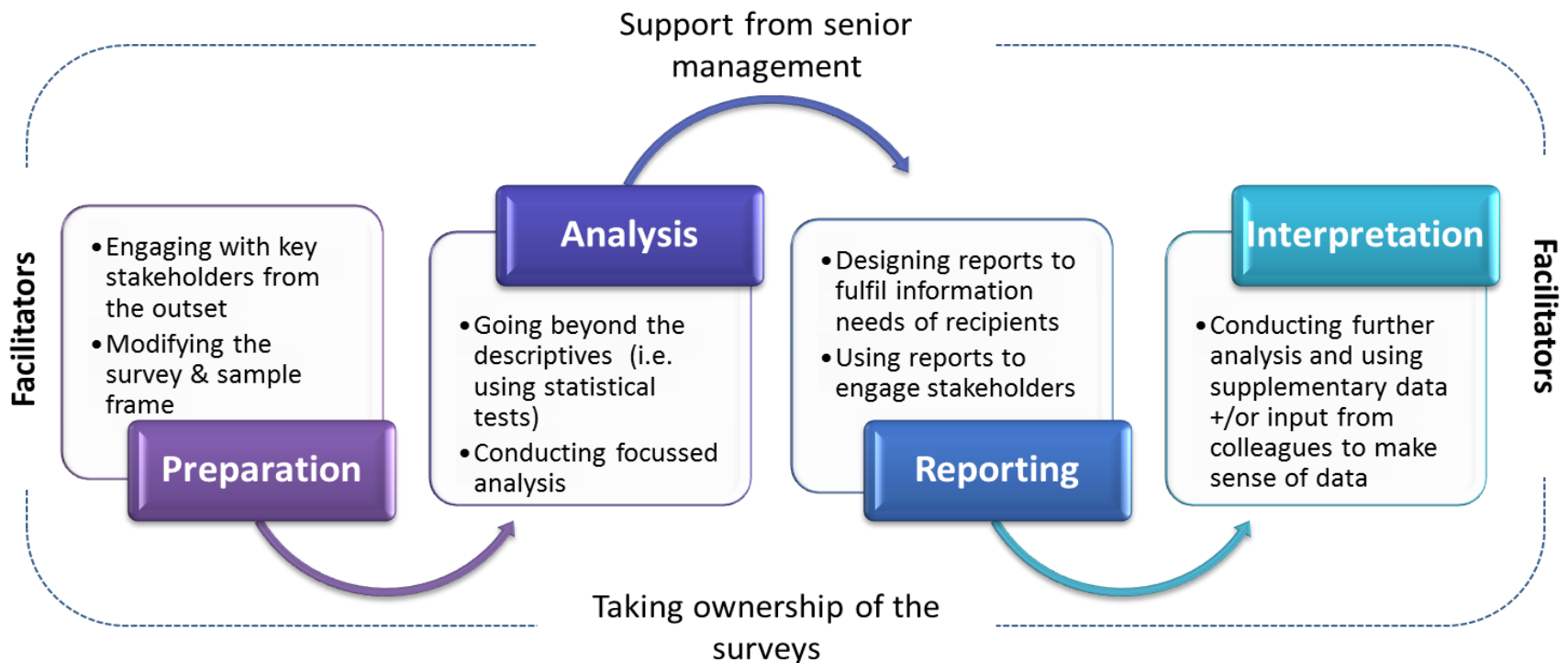
Research activities + consultations

Initial fact-finding work conducted between 2013-2014, and was completed by 139 staff from 95 LAs.

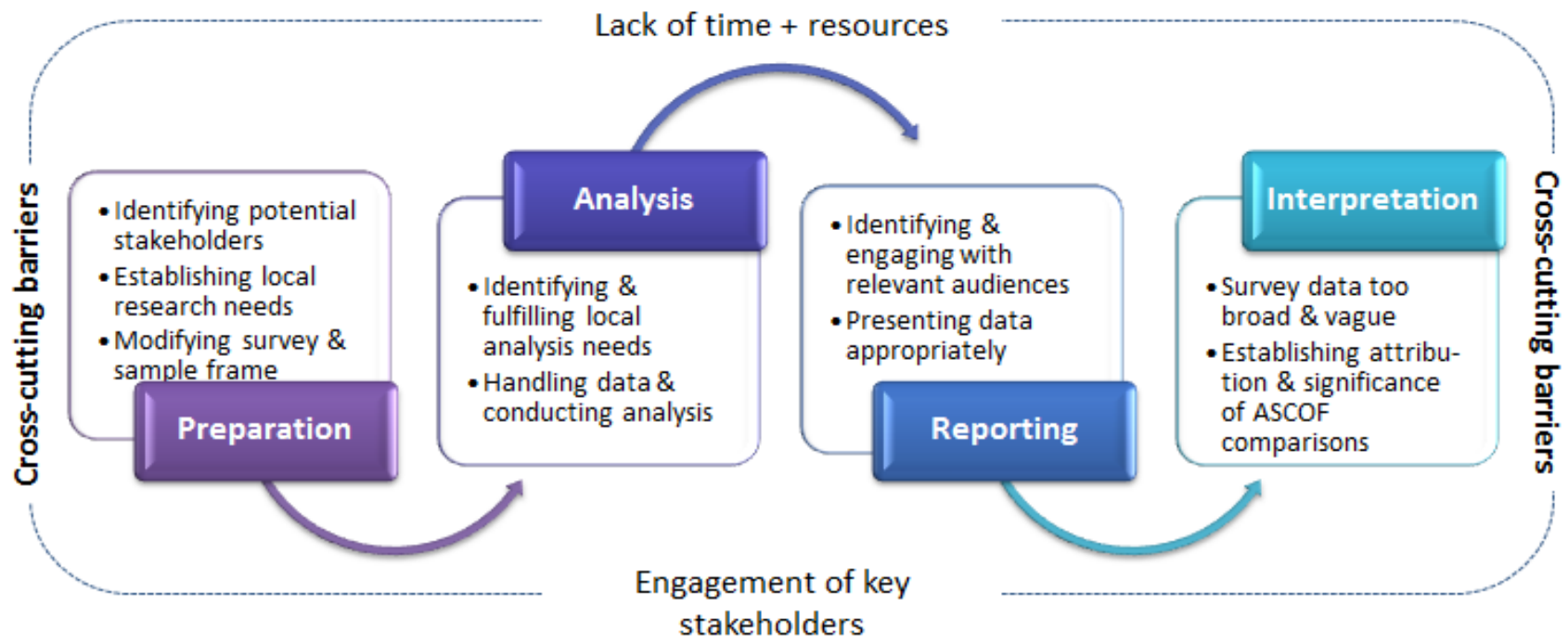| Activity	When	Details	No. of LAs
Online survey	Jun-Jul 2013	19 questions (multiple choice & open ended) sent to all LA survey leads in England.	100 staff (83 LAs)
Telephone interviews	Aug-Sep 2013	Semi-structured interviews, following up on responses to online survey.	30 staff (16 LAs)
Document review	Apr-Oct 2013	Review of 40+ internal and external LA reports based on ASCS or PSS SACE data.	18 LAs
Analysis workshops	Feb-Mar 2014	Conducted in north and south of England to explore how survey data could be analysed and what support was needed.	41 staff (31 LAs)

What supports local use of survey data?

Some LA staff described **facilitators** and **practices** implemented within their organisations that enhanced the local value and use of ASCS and PSS SACE data.

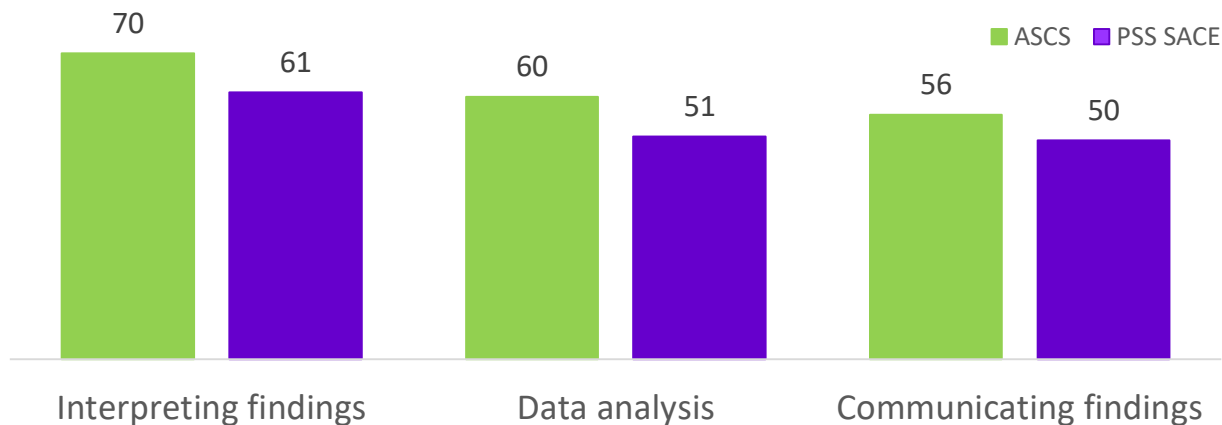Source: MAX online survey & telephone interviews

Why doesn't this always happen?

Barriers (cross-cutting & process-specific) to collecting and using ASCS and PSS SACE data were also reported and often limited the local value of survey data.

What LA staff asked us to do

LAs staff involved in earlier fact-finding activities were keen to share ideas with their LA colleagues and asked for a range of support…

Legend: ASCS, PSS SACE

Category	ASCS	PSS SACE
Interpreting findings	70	61
Data analysis	60	51
Communicating findings	56	50

Source: MAX online survey [N = 100]

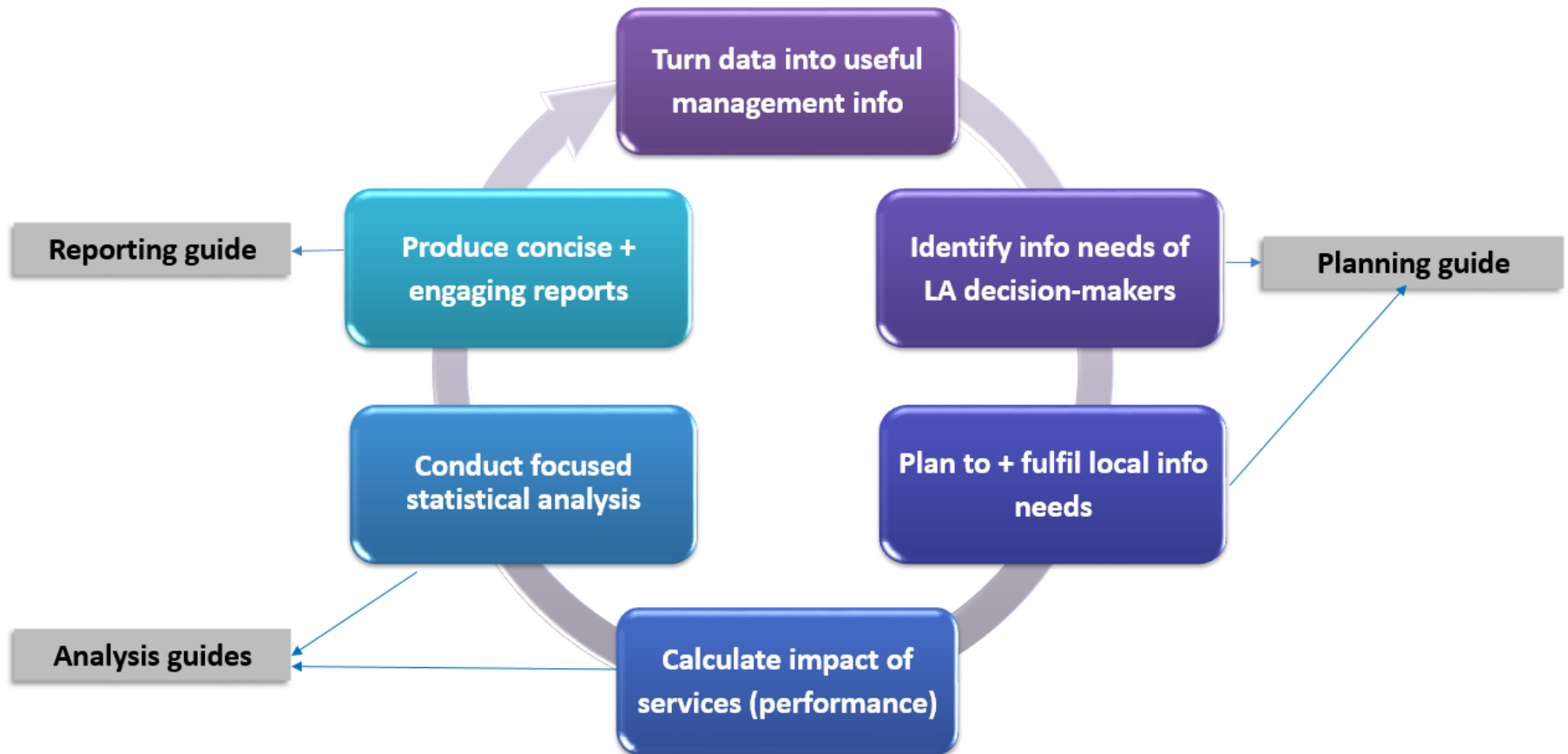…. but wide variations in support needs and widespread analysis resource limitations meant that developing appropriate support would not be an easy task!

The MAX toolkit

Developed in partnership with LA staff and launched via restricted access pages of project website on 30th June 2016. Aims to support analysts and their managers to:

- **Transform the ASCS & PSS SACE into a large piece of local research**; and

- **Translate survey data into meaningful results that will inform local service & performance improvements**.

Supplements **NHS Digital survey guidance** and is designed to be implemented with minimal time and resources.

The MAX toolkit includes **guides** and a **range of associated tools** (including **Excel based analysis tools**) to support key stages of the survey process.

Potential value of using the MAX toolkit

Maximise local value & use of survey data

- Guidance on how to identify + fulfil local information needs
- Examples of how LAs are currently using survey data locally

Streamline survey processes

- Suggestions on how to conduct focused analysis
- Strategies to reduce duplication of effort (esp. analysis)

Maximise use of existing resources

- Transform surveys into huge piece of local research
- Examples of how LAs use existing data to supplement findings

Recent changes to the MAX toolkit

Since launch in June 2016, **additions** to MAX toolkit include exploratory and further analysis guides, and more detailed step-by-step instructions for conducting analyses.

To help users to implement tools with minimal time and resources, the MAX toolkit was further **streamlined** in September 2017 to focus on three key steps:

1. **Plan the key stages of the survey process**;

2. **Conduct focused analysis**; and

3. **Produce concise and useful reports**.

Step 1: Plan the key stages of the survey process

MAX PLANNING GUIDE summarises a number of strategies that can be used to identify and fulfil local information needs using survey data. Includes links to **planning and engagement tools**.

Identify local information needs

- Engage with stakeholders

- Conduct document review

- Draw on general information needs

Fulfil local information needs

- Add local questions / modify sample frame

- Plan focused analysis

- Identify supplementary sources of data

Step 2: Conduct focused analysis

MAX ANALYSIS GUIDES provides guidance on how to conduct focused and useful analysis. Includes links to **Excel-based analysis tools**, **step-by-step instructions** and **training resources**.

Explore data: conduct **descriptive analysis** to:

- Establish general trends in reported outcomes
- Measure the impact of services on QOL
- Develop profiles
- Identify areas of potential interest or concern

Conduct further analysis: conduct **inferential analysis** to:

- Identify statistically significant relationships between survey variables (e.g. satisfaction and control) and/or differences between groups (e.g. based on age, primary support reason)

Analysis tools included in the MAX toolkit

Tool	Function
Cross-tabulations	**Descriptive**: explore relationship between two categorical variables (e.g. age + control)
Chi-square	**Inferential**: test whether relationship between two categorical variables is statistically significant [SS] (e.g. age + control)
Independent t-test	**Inferential**: test if difference between the means of two unrelated groups on the same continuous dependent variable is SS (e.g. SCRQoL for men vs. women).
ANOVA	**Inferential**: test if difference between the means of two or more unrelated groups on the same continuous dependent variable is SS (e.g. satisfaction + SCRQoL).
Adjustment calculators	Adjusts ASCOF 1A and 1D to provide more accurate estimates of service impact on service user and carer quality of life.

Step 3: Produce concise and useful reports

MAX reporting guide provides guidance on how to create short and engaging survey reports of key analysis findings. Also summarises preferences of report-recipients noted during earlier project activities.

- Determine key messages

- Establish most appropriate method of communication

- Write report

- Disseminate report and engage with stakeholders

Accompanied by a **supplementary reporting guide** which amalgamates recommended report-writing and data visualisation practices (e.g. how to use the inverted pyramid style of reporting).

Navigating the MAX toolkit

The guides can be accessed via the main toolkit page. The individual tools can be accessed via the guides or the downloads page.

HOW TO USE THE MAX TOOLKIT

The MAX toolkit contains a range of guides, tools and training resources, and is structured around the three stages of the survey process: **planning, analysis and interpretation**, and **reporting**. Links to the relevant elements are provided in the guides detailed below or on the downloads page. An overview of the MAX toolkit can also be accessed here.

Please note that the guides in the MAX toolkit should be read alongside the guidance provided by NHS Digital and are currently in draft form. You will be notified of any updates by email.

1. PLANNING THE KEY STAGES OF THE SURVEY PROCESS

Planning the key stages of the survey process can help you to transform the ASCS & PSS SACE into a large piece of local research.

The **MAX PLANNING GUIDE** summarises a range of strategies that you can use to identify and fulfil the information needs of the decision-makers and practitioners within your organisation using survey data and other existing resources.

Further information about the planning element of the MAX toolkit can be found in the MAX planning overview and the importance of planning and stakeholder engagement webinar presentation.

2. CONDUCTING FOCUSED EXPLORATORY & FURTHER ANALYSIS

Focused analysis can help you to translate ASCS & PSS SACE data into meaningful results that can guide local service and performance improvement activities.

Statistical tests and tools

Excel-based tests, step by step instructions and training resources can also be accessed on a separate analysis page.

Please note: the full functionality of the MAX spreadsheet tools requires that you have Microsoft Excel 2010 or later, and that you have also installed the *Analysis ToolPak* and *Real Statistics Resource Pack* add-in programmes. Instructions on how to install these add-ins can be accessed here.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?	EXAMPLE RESEARCH QUESTION	ANALYSIS	TOOL	INSTRUCTIONS	TUTORIAL	LINK
Describe dataset (in other words, conduct descripives analysis)						
Calculate more accurate estimates of service impact on quality of life	What is the impact of our services on carer-reported quality of life?	**Adjustment calculations**	●	●	●	X
Summarise and explore the relationship between two variables	Does satisfaction vary between different groups of service users (e.g. characterised by age,	**Cross tabulations**	●	●	●	X

Overview of the MAX toolkit elements

Further information about the three main elements of the MAX toolkit have been developed and are included in the MAX toolkit:

- Planning overview
- Analysis and interpretation overview
- Reporting overview

Pre-recorded presentations focusing on individual analysis tools, conducting further analysis and measuring impact are also provided.

Further Information

To find out more about the MAX project, download the reports on earlier research activities or access the MAX toolkit:

Website: www.maxproject.org.uk

Email: maxproject@kent.ac.uk

Disclaimer

Department of Health and Social Care disclaimer: The MAX toolkit and website are based on independent research commissioned and funded by the NIHR Policy Research Programme (Maximising the value of survey data in adult social care (MAX) project and the MAX toolkit implementation and impact project). The views expressed on the website and in publications are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the NHS, the NIHR, the Department of Health and Social Care or its arm's length bodies or other government departments.