

Living with sight loss

Updating the national picture

RNIB

Supporting people
with sight loss

In partnership with

NatCen
Social Research

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Introduction

People with sight loss experience inequality across many areas of their lives. This report takes information from two national surveys to describe the extent of those inequalities for British adults in the period 2010 to 2013.

Three years ago, RNIB and NatCen Social Research published **Circumstances of People with Sight Loss**, which used the results of the **Life Opportunities Survey (LOS)** and **Understanding Society (USoc)** to describe the lives of people with sight loss. Both surveys have since been updated and this report presents the latest findings.

Our aim is to highlight the circumstances of adults with sight loss across a wide range of areas, and make comparisons with adults without impairments, after controlling for differences in age and sex profile.

For simplicity this report focuses on comparisons between adults with sight loss and adults without any impairments. However we provide an accompanying set of Excel tables which include comparisons between adults with sight loss, adults with any other impairment, adults with no impairment, and all adults.

The report is arranged into topic areas which include key facts and simple tables of results. We've also drawn on the survey data to create fictional "case studies". These are stories written using composites of different survey responses. We hope they give a vivid sense of what the results might mean for individual people.

Methodology

The Life Opportunities Survey (LOS) is longitudinal, which means it follows respondents over time and collects information on changes in their situations and experiences. Respondents were interviewed for the first time at Wave One (June 2009 – March 2011). The findings were used for the **Circumstances of People with Sight Loss report**. A second set of interviews were conducted at Wave Two (June 2010 – March 2012), and it is these responses that we examine here. The findings presented throughout this report are drawn from LOS unless otherwise specified.

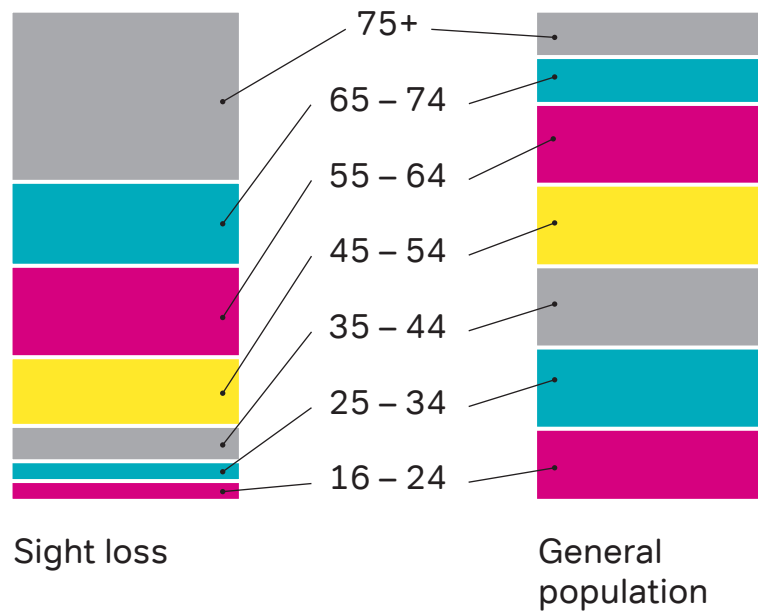
Understanding Society (USoc) is a major survey of the socio-economic circumstances and attitudes of people living in Britain. It is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. The sample is drawn from the whole population and is, like LOS, longitudinal. The Wellbeing section of this report uses USoc data from the period January 2012 to December 2013.

Together, RNIB and NatCen Social Research looked at the survey questions and agreed which topics were suitable for analysis. For each topic we calculated what proportion of the adult sight loss population gave a particular response. The proportion of people with other types of impairment and with no impairment was then also calculated for comparison. Unless otherwise stated, differences mentioned in the report have been found to be statistically significant.

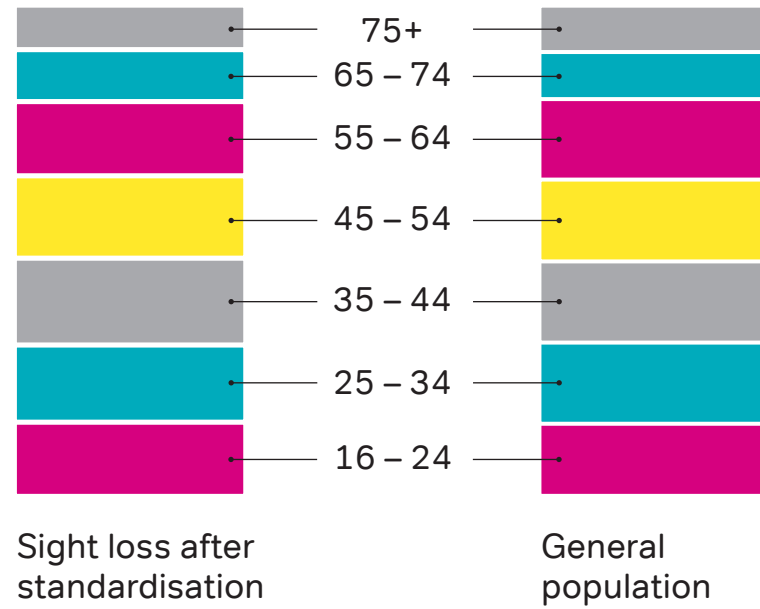
Throughout the report, summed percentages don't always add up exactly due to rounding.

The results presented in this report are standardised for age and sex. This means that any differences we observe between groups cannot simply be attributed to the fact people with sight loss are older than the sighted population.

People with sight loss are more likely to be older than the rest of the population



After standardising, the age profile is made to be the same



Data from USoc

How did we define sight loss?

We used self-reported measures to identify which respondents have sight loss. This means we looked at whether, in their own judgement, respondents said they had difficulties seeing. Although respondents' own reports aren't an objective assessment, they do provide a good indication of who's affected by sight loss.

For the LOS dataset, we classified a respondent as a person with sight loss if they reported that they have:

- difficulty seeing or wear glasses or contact lenses
- **and** “moderate” or “great” difficulty either seeing ordinary newsprint at arm's length or clearly seeing the face of someone across a room
- **and** this limits the amount or kind of activities that the respondent could do.

In the USoc survey all respondents were asked whether they had “any long-standing physical or mental impairment, illness or disability”.

Respondents who said yes were then asked whether this meant that they had substantial difficulties in various areas of their life, including “sight (apart from wearing standard glasses)”. For the USoc analyses, people with sight loss were identified by this follow-up question.

Demographics

Table 1: Percentage of respondents belonging to each age group (not standardised)

Age group	Percentage of respondents with sight loss	Percentage of respondents with no impairment
16-24	3	17
25-34	6	17
35-44	8	20
45-54	19	16
55-64	15	15
65-74	14	10
75+	35	6

Before standardising for age and sex, the age profile of LOS respondents with sight loss is older than that of respondents with no impairment because the risk of sight loss is linked to age.

More than a third of respondents with sight loss were 75 or over, compared with six per cent of respondents without impairments. Only 16 per cent of respondents with sight loss were aged under 45, compared with 53 per cent of people without an impairment.

This shows why standardisation is important if we want to make meaningful comparisons between groups.

Table 2: Percentage of respondents in each country (standardised for age and sex)

Country	Percentage of respondents with sight loss	Percentage of respondents with no impairment
England	81	87
Wales	8	5
Scotland	11	9

After standardisation, the proportion of respondents with sight loss who are in England is slightly lower than for those with no impairment, and the proportion in Wales and Scotland is slightly higher.

Table 3: Percentage of respondents belonging to each ethnic group (standardised for age and sex)

Ethnic group	Percentage of respondents with sight loss	Percentage of respondents with no impairment
White	91	90
Mixed	0	1
Asian or Asian British	6	5
Black or Black British	3	2
Chinese or other ethnic group	0	2

After standardisation, the ethnicity profile of respondents with sight loss is similar to that of respondents without impairments.

Wellbeing

The latest figures show that USoc respondents with sight loss are nearly three times as likely as people with no impairment to report feeling depressed.

Table 4: Feeling unhappy or depressed, by impairment (standardised for age and sex)

Feeling unhappy or depressed	Percentage of USoc respondents with sight loss	Percentage of USoc respondents with no impairment
Not at all	24	46
No more than usual	32	40
Rather more than usual	32	13
Much more than usual	11	2

44 per cent of respondents with sight loss have recently felt more unhappy or depressed than usual, compared with 15 per cent of respondents with no impairment.

When respondents with sight loss are compared with respondents with no impairment, the former are more likely to report feeling constantly under strain, losing more sleep, losing confidence and believing they are useless.

Health

Respondents with sight loss are 24 times more likely than respondents with no impairment to report bad or very bad general health than those without any impairment.

Table 5: General health of respondents, by impairment (standardised for age and sex)

General health	Percentage of respondents with sight loss	Percentage of respondents with any other impairment	Percentage of respondents with no impairment
Very good	23	17	48
Good	28	34	43
Fair	26	32	9
Bad	19	14	1
Very bad	5	3	0

24 per cent of respondents with sight loss reported that their general health was bad or very bad, compared with 17 per cent of respondents with another impairment, and one per cent of respondents without an impairment.

50 per cent of respondents with sight loss reported good or very good general health compared with 91 per cent of people without impairments.

Table 6: Difficulty accessing the health service in the last 12 months, by impairment (standardised for age and sex)

Difficulty accessing the health service in the last 12 months	Percentage of respondents with sight loss	Percentage of respondents with no impairment
No difficulty	71	85
Some difficulty	22	13
A lot of difficulty	7	2

Nearly a third of respondents with sight loss reported some or a lot of difficulty accessing the health service in the last 12 months, compared with 15 per cent of respondents with no impairment.

The survey asked for the causes of difficulty. People were able to offer more than one reason. 27 per cent of respondents with sight loss replied. For this group, the most common cause of difficulty was in getting an appointment (61 per cent, compared with 72 per cent of respondents without impairments). Over a third reported difficulty contacting by phone.

Difficulties with transport, lack of help with communication, and lack of confidence were each reported by about a fifth of respondents with sight loss.

Learning

Most respondents with sight loss have formal qualifications and a large majority feel they have access to learning opportunities, but comparisons to respondents with no impairments still show signs of inequality.

Table 7: Highest level of qualification, by impairment (standardised for age and sex)

Level of qualification	Percentage of respondents with sight loss	Percentage of respondents with no impairment
Degree level qualification	19	28
Higher educational qualification	9	10
A Levels or Highers	15	14
ONC National Level BTEC	7	6
O Level or GCSE equivalent (Grade A-C)	25	20
GCSE grade D-G or CSE grade 2-5	10	6
Other qualifications	14	13
No formal qualifications	2	2

Three quarters of respondents with sight loss were educated to at least O Level or GCSE at Grade A to C. This proportion is similar to those without impairments (79 per cent). However respondents with sight loss were much less likely than people with no impairments to have a degree level qualification (19 per cent compared with 28 per cent).

64 per cent of respondents with sight loss said they had access to learning opportunities, compared with 86 per cent of people with no impairment. When asked what limits access to learning opportunities, the most commonly reported barrier was financial. 48 per cent of respondents with sight loss reported that lack of money limited their access to learning opportunities, as did 54 per cent of respondents with no impairment.

Respondents with sight loss were more likely than those without impairments to say they were limited by a health condition or illness (39 per cent compared with two per cent). But they were less likely to say they were too busy with work or family to access learning opportunities (16 per cent compared with 40 per cent).

Case study: Martha

Martha is in her mid sixties. About ten years ago her eyesight began to deteriorate, and it is continuing to get worse. Martha has several chronic health conditions: arthritis, chronic bronchitis and blood pressure, all of which were first diagnosed in her forties. She often struggles to arrange medical appointments, because it's hard to get through to her doctor on the phone.

She retired from her managerial job in human resources about eight years ago. She found her job quite stressful, and has enjoyed retirement.

She has been married for thirty years and lives with her husband and adult son. Her daughter lives in the same city as her and she sees her and her two grandchildren at least weekly. Martha has always lived in the same neighbourhood, although she does not talk much to neighbours and would not feel able to ask them for something if she needed to. With her deteriorating sight, she increasingly feels unsafe in some public places, such as bus stops and train stations, but otherwise quite likes the area where she lives.

There is a local University of the Third Age that she is confident in being able to get to. She does classes in flower arranging there, and enjoys the feel and smell of the flowers. She is also part of a local book group. Her son helps her to get copies of the books that they discuss in audio format.



Work

Respondents with sight loss are less likely to be in work than respondents with no impairments.

Table 8: Any paid work in the last week, by impairment (standardised for age and sex)

Paid work in the last week	Percentage of respondents with sight loss	Percentage of respondents with no impairment
Yes	44	60
No	56	40

Respondents with sight loss were considerably less likely than those without impairments to have had any paid work in the last week.

Respondents in work were asked what has helped them to work. 28 per cent of respondents with sight loss said modified hours or days or reduced work hours, compared with nine per cent of respondents with no impairment. Respondents with sight loss were more than twice as likely as people without impairments to say tax credits (16 per cent compared with seven per cent). Eight per cent of respondents with sight loss said changes to their work area or work equipment, compared with three per cent of respondents with no impairment.

Respondents reporting that they were limited in what work they could do were asked what limited them. The most common answers for respondents with sight loss were a health condition, illness, or impairment (74 per cent) and disability related reasons (56 per cent). A third said anxiety or lack of confidence, compared with six per cent of respondents with no impairment. A quarter said they had difficulty with transport, compared with six per cent of respondents with no impairment.

Among those who weren't working, respondents with sight loss were about as likely as those without impairments to have looked for work in the last four weeks (12 per cent compared to 13 per cent). Among those with sight loss who didn't look for work, 59 per cent said it was because they were long term sick or disabled.

Finances

Respondents with sight loss are less likely to be high earners and more likely to be on a low income.

Table 9: Personal gross income, by impairment (standardised for age and sex)

Income band	Percentage of respondents with sight loss	Percentage of respondents with no impairment
Less than £100 a week	19	13
£100 - £199	30	20
£200 - £299	20	19
£300 - £399	12	13
£400 - £499	10	11
£500 - £599	4	6
£600 - £699	2	5
£700 - £799	1	4
£800 - £899	0	2
£900 - £999	1	2
Over £1000 a week	1	6

Nearly half of respondents with sight loss earn less than £200 a week compared with a third of respondents with no impairment.

Nine per cent of respondents with sight loss earn more than £500 a week, compared with 25 per cent of respondents with no impairment.

The majority of respondents with sight loss reported either owning their accommodation outright or buying their accommodation with the help of a mortgage or loan (53 per cent). However this proportion was lower than respondents with other impairments (60 per cent) and those without impairments (74 per cent).

The survey asked what respondents' households would be able to afford. 87 per cent of respondents with sight loss could pay to eat meat, chicken or fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day, compared with 96 per cent of respondents with no impairment. 82 per cent of respondents with sight loss could afford to keep their home adequately warm compared with 94 respondents with no impairment. 60 per cent of respondents with sight loss could pay for a week's annual holiday away from home, compared with 80 per cent of respondents with no impairment. Respondents with severe sight loss were even less able to pay for a week's annual holiday away from home (54 per cent).

Just under half of respondents with sight loss could only make ends meet with some or great difficulty (compared with 28 per cent of respondents with no impairment). Of all the regions, London had the highest proportion of respondents with sight loss who made ends meet with great difficulty (24 per cent).

Limited income was the most common reason for difficulties managing financially (82 per cent of respondents with sight loss, compared with 78 per cent of respondents with no impairment).

Case study: Simon

Simon is in his mid-forties and has been partially sighted since childhood. He is not married but he lives at home with his mother. His mother has multiple health conditions and Simon helps to look after her. He assists with her personal care, does most of the household shopping and chores, and manages the finances. Many of these tasks are complicated for Simon because of his own sight impairment.

Simon had a few short-term jobs in his twenties, and one in his thirties which did not work out. He feels that they did not make an effort to address his needs there. In recent years he has found that every job seems to require previous experience, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to account for his absences from the labour market.

He and his mother worry a lot about how they will manage financially each month. Their housing situation is fine, because Simon is still living at home, but they tend to keep the heating off even when the weather is very cold. This is even more of an issue for Simon and his mother because they spend a large part of the time at home. Simon finds it difficult and expensive to get to the supermarket in town, and so does much of the household shopping at their local corner shop. The staff are friendly and helpful there, but the food is expensive and there is a very limited range of fresh fruit and vegetables available.

In his early forties Simon developed cardiovascular disease. His condition is linked to his weight: reduced mobility and poor diet have contributed to obesity. He is in discomfort much of the time. He is on Employment and Support Allowance: he is due to be reassessed soon and is feeling anxious about this.



Benefits and Social Services

Respondents with sight loss are more likely than those without impairments to have had difficulties accessing benefits services.

Table 10: Benefits received by respondents, by impairment (standardised for age and sex)

Benefits received	Percentage of respondents with sight loss	Percentage of respondents with no impairment
Receives Child benefit	19	15
Receives Income support	9	2
Receives Tax credits	17	11
Receives Other state benefits	36	7

Respondents with sight loss were about five times more likely to receive other benefits.

Table 11: Difficulty accessing benefits service, by impairment (standardised for age and sex)

Difficulty accessing benefits service	Percentage of respondents with sight loss	Percentage of respondents with no impairment
No difficulty	62	75
Some difficulty	23	16
A lot of difficulty	15	9

Respondents with sight loss reported difficulty accessing benefits services more often than respondents without impairments.

The survey asked for the causes of difficulty. Most respondents with sight loss reporting a difficulty said that the problems were caused by difficulty contacting by phone (65 per cent) and unhelpful or inexperienced staff (57 per cent). Many also reported difficulties caused by lack of help with communication (41 per cent), lack of accessible information (40 per cent), and not providing a home visit (31 per cent).

The survey asked how much difficulty respondents had accessing social services in the preceding twelve months. 22 per cent of respondents with sight loss had some difficulty, and 24 per cent had a lot of difficulty. By contrast, 18 per cent of respondents without impairments had some difficulty and six per cent had no difficulty. This shows that the proportion of respondents with sight loss who had a lot of difficulty was four times as large as the proportion of respondents without an impairment.

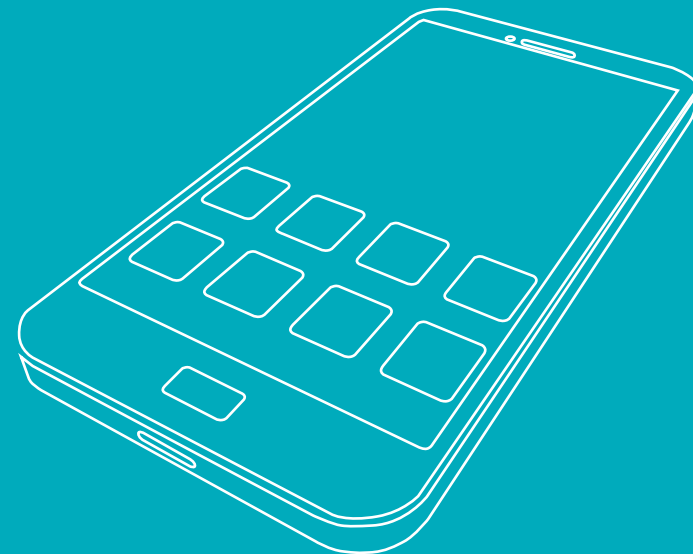
Case study: Usef

Usef is in his early twenties and has a long-term health condition, as a result of which he has difficulties with sight, mobility, sensing danger and needs some help with personal care. He is single and lives at home with his parents, grandmother and uncle. He would like to move out of the family home, but does not expect to be able to in the foreseeable future.

Usef is unemployed and is actively seeking work. He had some work experience when at school and the Jobcentre helped organise a short-term work placement for him, but otherwise he hasn't had paid work. He has been turned down for several jobs, and he feels that this was because of his health condition. He has GCSEs and several vocational qualifications.

Usef doesn't get out much. He has a few good friends from school that he stays in touch with. But he doesn't have the money to go out much with them, and doesn't always feel very safe or comfortable when he does. He tends to stay in contact by mobile phone and via online social networking sites.

His poor health and lack of work opportunities really gets him down. He feels that he is not playing a "useful role in things", can't see how his work and social situation will improve. His wellbeing score is low.



Participation

The survey’s findings suggest that respondents with sight loss face barriers to participation in a range of life areas.

Table 12: Areas where respondents’ participation is limited (standardised for age and sex)

Areas where participation is limited	Percentage of respondents with severe sight loss	Percentage of respondents with sight loss (inc severe sight loss)	Percentage of respondents with no impairment
Education	29	21	6
Work	46	35	9
Transport	45	29	7
Personal relationships	20	15	2
Leisure	42	35	11
None of these	35	44	76

In education, work, transport, personal relationships and leisure, a considerably higher percentage of respondents with sight loss reported that their participation was limited, when compared with those without an impairment. Respondents with severe sight loss were even more likely to report limitations.

The majority of respondents with sight loss said their participation was limited by their health condition, illness or impairment (58 per cent) or their disability (39 per cent). Nearly a third (32 per cent) said they were limited for financial reasons. Other people's attitudes also hindered participation for 16 per cent of respondents with sight loss, compared with just four per cent of people with no impairment.

Although respondents with and without sight loss showed similar levels of interest in going on holiday, visiting friends, spending time with family, and going to arts activities, respondents with sight loss were less likely to have done these things as much as they'd like in the previous 12 months. For instance 22 per cent of respondents with sight loss had gone on holiday as much as they'd like, compared with 42 per cent of respondents with no impairment. Fewer than one in five respondents with sight loss had gone to the theatre, cinema or another arts activity compared with nearly one in three respondents without an impairment.

Respondents without impairments are three times as likely to play as much sport as they'd like as respondents with sight loss. This gap is particularly wide among 65 to 74 year olds, where four per cent of respondents with sight loss play the amount of sport they want to, compared with 22 per cent of people without impairments.

16 per cent of respondents with sight loss experienced some difficulty in accessing culture, sport and leisure services over the last 12 months. This is four times as large as the proportion of respondents without impairments (four per cent) and fifty per cent higher than that of respondents with another impairment (ten per cent).

Accessibility

Table 13: Difficulty going into buildings, by impairment and severity of impairment (standardised for age and sex)

Difficulty going into buildings	Percentage of respondents with severe sight loss	Percentage of respondents with sight loss (inc severe sight loss)	Percentage of respondents with no impairment
Always	7	4	0
Often	9	5	0
Sometimes	26	23	2
Rarely	9	8	3
Never	50	59	94

Over the last year, a third of respondents with sight loss had difficulty going into buildings at least sometimes, rising to 41 per cent among those with severe sight loss.

A third of respondents with sight loss had difficulty moving about and finding their way around buildings at least some of the time in the last 12 months.

Nearly a third of respondents with sight loss had difficulty using the facilities in buildings at least sometimes in the last 12 months.

The survey asked what type of buildings respondents have these difficulties in. Among those who had difficulties the top answer was shops (67 per cent). 44 per cent said hospital and 36 per cent said pubs, bars, or restaurants.

Common causes of difficulty were the transport getting to the building, lack of ramps and handrails in approach areas, stairs, doors and narrow corridors, inadequate lifts or escalators, and the attitudes of others.

Respondents were asked what stops them travelling on local buses as much as they would like. The most common answer for respondents with sight loss was not wanting or needing to (41 per cent), with the next most common being cost (25 per cent, compared with 13 per cent of respondents with no impairment).

When asked what stops them travelling on local trains as much as they would like, 55 per cent of respondents with sight loss did not need or want to, and 24 per cent said cost (compared with 12 per cent of respondents without impairments). For both buses and trains, cost affected respondents with sight loss more than those without impairments.

Case study: Gail

Gail is in her early twenties and has been partially sighted since birth. It has been a nearly a year since she left university, and she has been looking for work for most of that time. She had some support at school from her local authority, and then at university from Disabled Students' Allowance. During the holidays, all of Gail's friends got temporary jobs in bars, restaurants or call centres, but she didn't look for temporary work as she thought most of these jobs would not be accessible for her and there was no financial need to get a job.

Gail is now back at home living with her parents. She has applied for dozens of jobs, and although she gets quite a few interviews she has not had any offers yet. She was recently shaken up when she got lost attending an interview in London. She was unable to see street names and was unable to get a signal on her phone to check her location. She was so late that she missed the interview and her confidence was badly affected.



Discrimination and hate crimes

Table 14: Felt they had been a victim of a hate crime, by impairment and severity of impairment (standardised for age and sex)

Felt they had been a victim of hate crime	Percentage of respondents with severe sight loss	Percentage of respondents with sight loss (inc severe sight loss)	Percentage of respondents with any other impairment	Percentage of respondents with no impairment
Yes	21	13	8	3
No	79	87	92	97

Respondents with sight loss, particularly those with severe sight loss, were more likely to report feeling they had been a victim of a hate crime than respondents with other impairments or no impairments.

Differences in experiences of hate crime also appear to be age related. One in five respondents with sight loss aged 45 to 54 years old said they had been a victim, compared with one in fifty aged over 65.

10 per cent of respondents with sight loss said they experienced discrimination because of a disability, compared with six per cent of respondents with other impairments.

Respondents with sight loss were also more likely than respondents without impairments to report discrimination on the basis of age and sex.

When the survey asked who had discriminated against them, 12 per cent of respondents with sight loss replied. 44 per cent of those reporting discrimination said they had been discriminated against by people in the street, 33 per cent said an employer, 33 per cent said health staff such as a GP, nurse, or hospital employee, 23 per cent said friends or neighbours, and 22 per cent said retail staff.

Case study: Malcolm

Malcolm is in his early forties, he is single and on long term sickness benefit. He has a health condition which impacts on his mobility, ability to lift, his bladder control and his sight. He is clinically depressed, and was first diagnosed more than a decade ago.

He last had a job in 2010, doing semi-skilled manual work. He would like to work, but would be unable to start within two weeks and he is not actively looking for a job. He is struggling financially but expects that to get better in coming year.

His parents came to Britain from the Caribbean in the 1960s. He has no contact with them now. He avoids places like bus stops and train stations, shopping centres, and other public places because he does not feel safe. He has been insulted in public places before because of his sexual orientation. He does feel that most people can be trusted and he values local friendships.



Relationships

Respondents with sight loss were 50 per cent more likely to live alone than those with no impairment (21 per cent compared with 14 per cent).

Table 15: How many people the respondent feels close to, by impairment (standardised for age and sex)

How many people the respondent feels close to	Percentage of respondents with sight loss	Percentage of respondents with no impairment
None	2	1
One or two	14	7
Three, four or five	37	30
Six or more	47	62

When questioned about social contact, the majority of respondents with sight loss said they felt close to three or more people (84 per cent, compared with 92 per cent of people without an impairment).

72 per cent of respondents with sight loss had seen three or more people they were close to in the past week (compared with 81 per cent of people with no impairment). Nearly a third of respondents with sight loss meet those they feel close to less often than they would like, compared with one in five people with no impairment.

Respondents with severe sight loss were more likely to report difficulty with transport as a factor in not seeing people (34 per cent compared with 15 per cent of respondents with sight loss and four per cent of respondents with no impairment).

Table 16: Is there anyone living with the respondent who they look after, by impairment (standardised for age and sex)

Is there anyone living with the respondent who they look after	Percentage of respondents with sight loss	Percentage of respondents with no impairment
Yes	16	8
No	84	92

The proportion of respondents with sight loss who look after someone they live with (16 per cent) is twice as high as the proportion of respondents without impairments who do so (eight per cent).

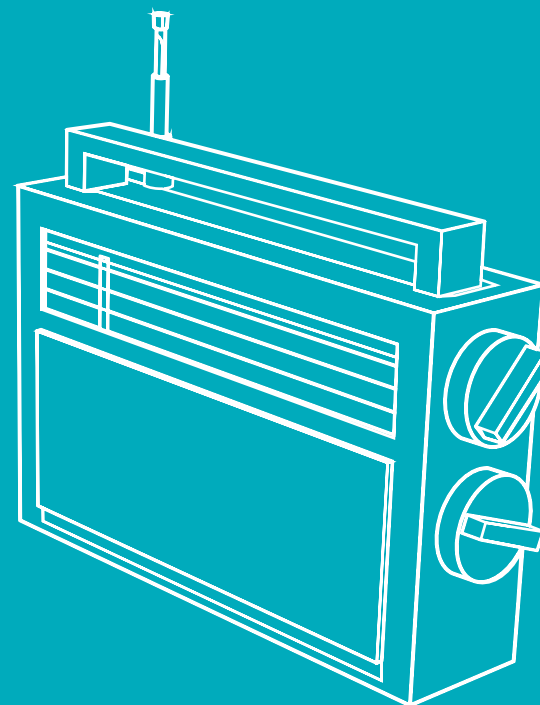
11 per cent of respondents with sight loss look after or give help to someone who doesn't live with them, which is similar to the proportion of respondents with no impairments (12 per cent).

Carers with sight loss were more likely than carers with no impairment to spend 35 hours or more looking after others (25 per cent compared with 13 per cent).

Case study: Edward

Edward is in his late-eighties. He lives with his 84 year old wife, Isadora, who has dementia. Edward is Isadora's main carer. He has a carer come in to look after Isadora for three hours each weekday morning. This is enough time for him to go out for breakfast in a café near his home, and to buy any shopping for the day from a local corner shop. He knows the people who run the café and the shop well and enjoys seeing them most days. He also gets respite care one evening a month when his veterans' group meets in the town centre.

Edward retired from the Navy 25 years ago. His pension is enough for them to get by on: they don't need to buy much, the house is sufficiently well insulated, and their main entertainment is the radio. They bought their home in a coastal town outright when he retired, and so have no mortgage repayments. He enjoys the sea air there and he knows some people in the area through the veterans' group.



Conclusion

Since the previous waves of USoc and LOS, circumstances have worsened in some respects for blind and partially sighted people. 44 per cent reported feeling more than usually depressed, which was significantly higher than in the previous wave of the survey (38 per cent).

The proportion of blind and partially sighted respondents who earn £500 or more a week is significantly lower, at nine per cent, than in the previous wave of the survey (13 per cent). However, the proportion earning less than £200 a week is also significantly lower than previously (48 per cent compared to 54 per cent).

In other areas, such as accessing health and benefits services, respondents' circumstances have remained stable since the last wave.

Key areas of inequality are employment, participation, and experience of hate crime. All three of these areas pose concern, as a much higher percentage of respondents with sight loss report difficulties than those without impairments.

Prepared for RNIB by Kate Flynn
and Chris Lord
April 2015

In the next 15 minutes, someone in the UK will be told: “You are losing your sight”. We’re RNIB and our practical and emotional support helps people who are blind and partially sighted to face the future with confidence. For advice on staying in work, technology for everyday tasks, or simply someone to talk to, we’re here. Find out how our advice and shared practice can help you to support everyone affected by sight loss:

rnib.org.uk/professionals

Royal National Institute of Blind People
105 Judd Street
London WC1H 9NE
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