

ASCOT in Practice:

Servicio de Información e Investigación Social (SiiS)

An interview with Madalen Saizarbitoria from the Eguía-Careaga Foundation at the SiiS
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Introduction

SiiS is a bibliographic collection and social research organisation founded in 1972. Its objective is to support the development of social policies in the Basque County, especially related to disability, long-term care services and family care.

The Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa (Spain), with technical support provided by the Eguía Careaga Foundation at the SiiS, carried out a survey to measure the quality of life (QoL) of long-term care services users in Gipuzkoa. The questionnaire was sent to around 13,000 long-term care users, aged 65 and over. 3,042 responses were received.

The survey, including ASCOT-SCT4 (translated into Basque and Spanish), was sent to all older people with sufficient cognitive capacity, who reside in nursing homes and in the community, receiving home care, day centres services, personal assistance and carers allowance.

The survey data were analysed to establish the QoL of people receiving long-term care services in Gipuzkoa, and to compare which combinations of services generate better QoL.

The survey will be repeated in the future. Its frequency is yet to be determined. The final report is available [here](#).

How did you first hear about ASCOT? Why did you decide to use it?

Madalen: *I heard about ASCOT a long time ago - 10 years, maybe more - and it sounded interesting. But there wasn't a translation available and we were also very busy, so we could not take it forward at the time.*

Years later, when the Provincial Government contacted us with the idea of evaluating services and plans to create an evaluation agency, we immediately thought that ASCOT would be a suitable tool within this project. We suggested a collaboration with Jose-Luis Fernandez at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). We proposed it to the government, and they thought it was a good idea, so we started using ASCOT last year.

The questionnaire was sent to people living in their own homes and residential care, who have at least grade one dependency level recognised by government. The invite letter came from the government asking people to answer. The findings have been published as a report and there was interest by the media too.

The plan is to repeat the evaluation and collect ASCOT, periodically. We do not know how often yet. The intention is to extend the data collection to other groups of service users, like younger adults with disability and socially excluded people.

Have you encountered any challenges?

Madalen: *The first challenge was to translate ASCOT SCT4 into Basque! Second, a lot of people using care services have cognitive impairment. There was a Spanish translation of ASCOT-SCT4 available. We translated it into Basque but have found that we also need the Easy Read for Older People (ASCOT-ER OP) and Proxy version (ASCOT-Proxy) because self-reporting was sometimes difficult, especially for care home residents. This is something we hope to look into.*

Has ASCOT influenced any decisions, policies or service improvements?

Madalen: *Yes, I think so. Some care facilities had more personalized care than others, e.g., residents were actively involved in planning their care. Residents, who reported more personalization, would also report better quality of life using ASCOT.*

Our government is trying to promote personalization in care. ASCOT, as an external and recognized measure, will help them promote this within facilities.

For further information about the Adult Social Care Outcomes Toolkit (ASCOT), including how to access the Toolkit and translations, see here: <https://research.kent.ac.uk/ascot/>