# The FACE RAS and '£ per point': How do they compare?

One of the major challenges of personalisation is how to allocate resources in a manner that is fair, sustainable and proportionate to need. Some councils use a simple '£ per points' approach as recommended by the Common RAS and In Control, whilst others use more complex algorithms such as those embedded in the FACE RAS.

Simon Duffy, co-founder of In Control, claimed in a recently published paper that 'there is little evidence that more complex algorithms result in an allocation that is fair and sustainable 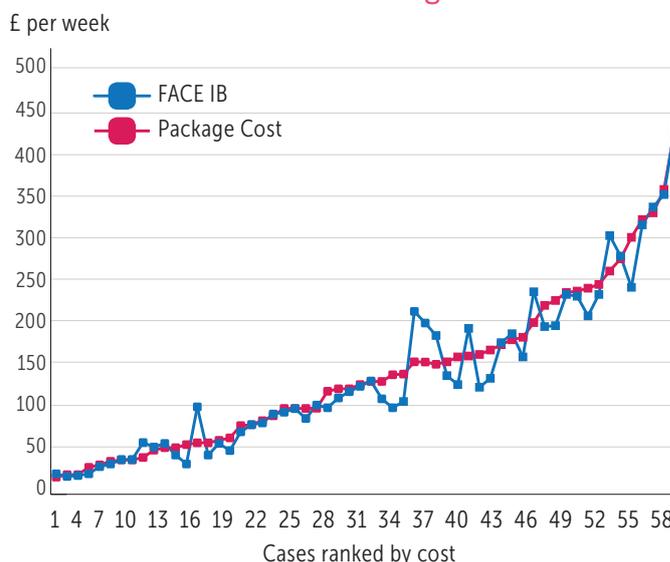for all'. A council agreed to collect data for a study to objectively compare the two methods and therefore test the validity of this statement.

58 service users were assessed using both the FACE Needs Profile and the council's long-established SSAQ and indicative budgets were calculated from both. As the figures below illustrate, the FACE RAS allocations were far more in line with the costs of the support allocated post support planning.

## '£ per point' IB vs Package Cost

£ per week



Legend: £ per point IB, Package Cost
Cases ranked by cost

## FACE IB vs Package Cost

£ per week
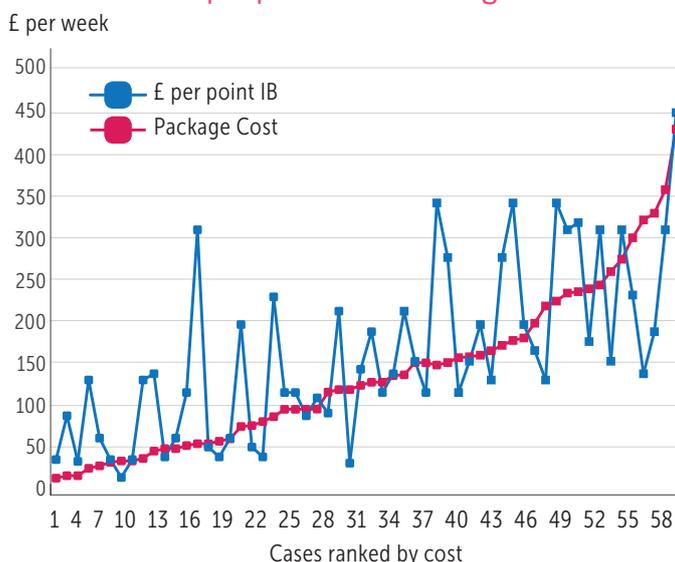


Legend: FACE IB, Package Cost
Cases ranked by cost

The accuracy achieved by the two methods was statistically analysed with the results shown below. The correlation between indicative budget and support costs is much higher for the FACE RAS and over 90% of the variation in costs is explained by the FACE model, compared to around 50% by the SSAQ, showing that the FACE tool captures the information relevant to accurately predicting costs but the SSAQ does not.

| Accuracy of RAS – all cases | £ per point | FACE |
|---|---|---|
| Correlation between IB and support package costs (all cases) | 0.73 | 0.96 |
| Variation in costs explained by assessed needs (all cases) | 53% | 92% |

It is often proposed that the '£ per points method' is most accurate for low and medium need cases. This was tested by removing high needs cases from the sample (see table below). In fact, the '£ per point' method fared even worse, whereas the FACE RAS maintained a similar level of accuracy.

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| Accuracy of RAS – low-medium needs cases | £ per point | FACE |
|---|---|---|
| Correlation between IB and support package costs (low-medium needs) | 0.67 | 0.95 |
| Variation in costs explained by assessed needs (low-medium needs) | 45% | 90% |

Low-medium needs = care package less than £300 per week.

These results demonstrate that an SSAQ-based '£ per point method' is not up to the task of providing an accurate allocation – in contrast to the FACE assessment and algorithm.

## Sustainability

In selecting a method of resource allocation, councils need to consider the financial impact of inaccuracy of allocation. The table below displays the financial impact of inaccuracy for the study sample using a range of scenarios.

For example, if all IBs that resulted in an under-allocation (compared to the actual package cost) were topped up by 50% of the difference during support planning in order to meet the service user's needs; and if all IBs that over-allocated were reduced by 33% during support planning, this would lead to a 17% overspend using '£ per points', but a 0.4% saving using FACE.

Even with a 10% deflator, the '£ per points' method results in a 9% overspend (middle row) and if over-allocation is not reduced, overspend is over 25%.

| Net overspend/underspend if during support planning: | £ per point | FACE |
|---|---|---|
| 50% of IB under-allocation is topped up and 33% of over-allocation is reduced down | 17% | -0.4% |
| IB is deflated by 10%, 50% of under-allocation is topped up, 33% of any over-allocation is reduced down | 9% | -2.7% |
| 50% of under-allocation is topped up but any over-allocation is unaltered | 27% | 1.3% |

This study demonstrates that a properly-developed RAS provides a fair, robust, sustainable and accurate method of allocating budget according to need – indeed, far fairer and more sustainable than traditional social care assessment methods which do not allow for spend prediction in this way. The FACE RAS serves over 20% of adult social care in England.

These are the words of one council:

"In Rochdale Council, our commitment and drive towards equality for all adults in need of support across the borough led us to take the obviously challenging decision to ask [Imosphere] to develop a single common RAS model for use across all our service user groups. Our initial concerns regarding this approach (such as not meeting our financial targets, dealing with large numbers of challenges and the financial climate being a barrier to achieving real personalisation) have been largely allayed ...... we have already achieved a number of genuine self directed support success stories in the face of significant financial pressure - and are confident that through the use of the FACE RAS, we have both set and already built on the foundations for equality and fairness for everyone without compromising on quality of support or our budgetary targets."

Sheila Downey, Executive Director Adult Social Services, Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Full details of this study will be published by Imosphere in the near future. To receive a copy or further details about the FACE RAS please e-mail us at info@imosphere.co.uk.