

Summary findings

meeting basic physical and social needs so excludes things that might

Domestic help every two weeks for two hours

Groups agreed that someone who is sight impaired could do some cleaning, but having regular help to give the home a

Another way in which a holiday could be more expensive is as a result of going to a (specialist) hotel rather than self-catering accommodation which is considered an adequate minimum for fully sighted people, but which

Social activities and holiday: £8.98

Travel: £6.50

Household goods and services: £5.01

Other (healthcare, electricity, miscellaneous): £5.11

Total additions: £50.49

Total weekly budget: £249.09

Conclusions and policy implications

This research clearly shows how living with partial sight can bring additional costs in reaching a minimum acceptable standard of living. It demonstrates the wide range of costs that people face across different areas of life, and shows how these costs are justified by reasoned arguments by people who experience sight impairment.

The size of these costs vary greatly for different items. The largest expenses overall come from things people have to pay for regularly, like a cleaner, extra travel or a mobile phone contract, rather than one-off purchases when these are costed over a period of time.

This means that the biggest costs come not from buying specialist equipment that directly relates to sight loss. They occur as a result of how people who are sight impaired lead their lives.

These wider additional costs of living are not well recognised by the benefits system. Many people who are sight impaired are unlikely to have the characteristics to be awarded sufficient points under the Personal Independence Payments (PIPs) system to create an entitlement, even though they face the additional costs identified in this study. Evidence such as has been collected in the present study could help in future to adapt such a list to ensure that it more fairly reflects areas where costs occur.

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