

NI WATER CUSTOMER CARE REGISTER RESEARCH

A report prepared for Northern
Ireland Water

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CONTENTS

1

Background and
Methodology

2

Cross-cutting
themes

3

Awareness of the
Customer Care
Register

4

Perceptions
towards services
provided by the CCR

5

Barrier and drivers
for joining the CCR

6

Views on
Promotional
Materials

7

Summary and
takeaways

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Research Background

Northern Ireland Water commissioned Ipsos to conduct a programme of qualitative research.

This research examined views and awareness of Northern Ireland Water's Customer Care Register (CCR), explored perceptions towards services provided by the Customer Care Register, reviewed NI Water's promotional materials; and identified recommendations to increase awareness of the Customer Care Register (CCR), and to encourage eligible people to join.

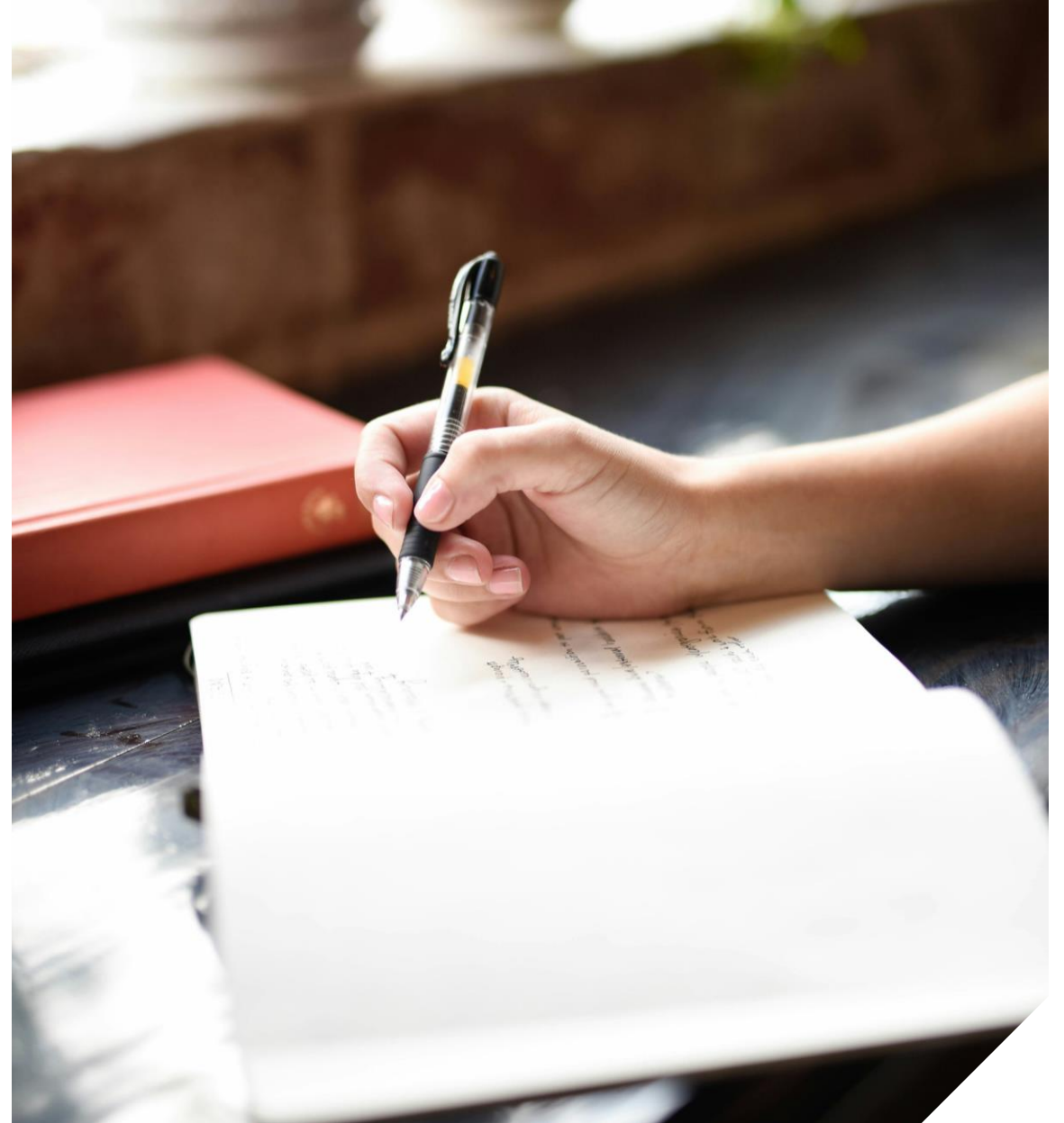
This research examined the views and opinions of two specific audiences;



Customers/ carers who are registered on the CCR and availed of the services offered by NI Water.



Customers/ carers who are not currently on the CCR but were eligible for this service.



Objectives of the research

The objectives of this research were;

- To explore levels of awareness of the CCR, and what services the CCR offers;
- To explore perceptions and levels of satisfaction towards the CCR;
- To identify any barriers and facilitators for joining the CCR;
- To review NI Water's current CCR communications materials, and
- To identify recommendations to increase awareness of the CCR, encourage eligible individuals to join and recommendations to increase satisfaction with the CCR.



Methodology

- This research required Ipsos to speak to different audiences. These included :
 - customers and/or carers of individuals who were eligible to be on the CCR but were not currently members of the Register (Non-CCR).
 - Members of the CCR.
- When speaking to the Non-CCR audience, two focus groups were completed for this research which consisted of 14 participants. A total of 8 of depth interviews were also conducted with those who were eligible but were not on the Register and customers or carers who were on the CCR.
- To ensure Ipsos spoke to participants who were relevant to this research, NI Water provided Ipsos with a sample list of customers who are on the CCR and had agreed to be contacted by Ipsos for a one-to-one depth interview. Due to recruitment challenges in engaging with this audience, slight amendments were made to the methodology, to instead employ one to one depth interviews with members who were on the CCR instead of the originally planned focus groups.
- The methods for depth interview delivery were chosen to enable those who may have a vulnerability or may not have felt digitally savvy to engage with an online discussion, the option to taken part in the research to ensure their views were heard.
- All fieldwork took place over Microsoft Teams or over telephone. Focus groups lasted 1.5 hours and depth interviews last between 45 mins to one hour.

Table: Profile of Focus Group Participants

Group	Target Audience	Number of Participants
1	Customers who are eligible but not currently registered on the CCR	7
2	Carers/ Influencers of those who are eligible but not currently on the CCR	7
TOTAL		14

Table: Profile of Depth Interview Participants

Group	Target Audience	Number of Participants
CCR Customers	Customers/ carers who are currently registered on the CCR	5
Non-CCR Customers	Customer/ Carers of those who are eligible but not currently on the CCR	8
TOTAL		13

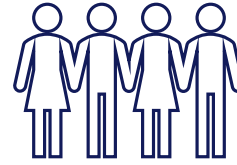
Circumstances of Non-CCR and CCR members

Circumstances and reasons that participants were on the CCR, or were eligible for membership, were individual. A list of some of the reasons for being on the CCR that participants shared during the research are as follows;



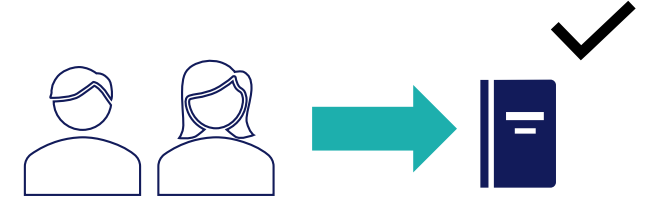
Non CCR Customers who are eligible

- CIPD – limited immune system function;
- Extreme asthmatic;
- Kidney Disease;
- Stroke Recovery;
- Cancer Recovery;
- Bowel Disease.



Carers and influencers of those eligible for the CCR

- Carer for individual in hospital;
- Carer for individual with dementia;
- Carer for cancer patient;
- Carer for stroke survivor;
- Carer for child with health condition;
- Carer for partner with limited mobility.



CCR Members

- Haemodialysis Patient
- Elderly;
- Physical disabilities;
- Heart attack survivor.

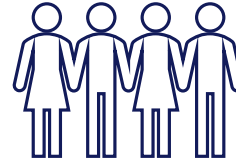
CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Emerging themes across the audience



Non CCR Customers who are eligible

- Frustration was clear due to lack of promotion and information of CCR.
- There was lack of awareness of the CCR and Non-CCR struggled to identify who the Register was for.
- Low awareness among Non-CCR customers regarding what services the CCR provides.
- Carers Contact Service and accessible formats of informational leaflets were praised, with Non-CCR members wanting more information on Quick Check 101 and doorstep password services.
- Imagery used on promotional materials was highlighted as not reflecting diverse vulnerabilities correctly which would dissuade those eligible from engaging with the CCR.
- Video of Priority Services Register was praised as not being too long, with inclusive imagery and easy to understand language.
- Main barrier highlighted was the lack of awareness of the CCR's existence as participants highlighted they could not use a service they were unaware of.



Carers and influencers of those eligible for the CCR

- Again, frustration was clear from carers and influencers who believed there needed to be more promotion of the Register.
- Akin to Non-CCR members, carers could not accurately define who the Register was for.
- Influencers and carers also lacked awareness of the CCR services.
- Carers praised different formats of informational leaflets and the Carer's Contact Services provided by the CCR. However, they wanted more information about these services to understand how they functioned.
- Imagery used within promotional materials was highlighted as important - carers and influencers wanted imagery to be representative of those that they cared for as "not all visibilities are visible".
- The Priority Services Register was praised in terms of its function. Promotional material for this service was seen as easy to understand.



CCR Members

- The length of time that CCR members had been on the Register varied, ranging from 5-15 years.
- Although they knew that they were on the Register, CCR members were not aware of all services that the Register offered members. All did recall receiving bottled water deliveries and most believed that this was the only function of the Register.
- When services were explained, CCR members did believe all services were useful, but questioned how much they would use services such as the doorstep password.
- Members did like the colour scheme used in promotional materials and also praised the Priority Serve Register video.
- Barriers to the CCR highlighted were the lack of promotion by NI Water and resulting lack of awareness among the public.

AWARENESS OF THE CUSTOMER CARE REGISTER

Key factors influencing Awareness of Customer Care Register



Non-CCR members unaware of CCR

Lack of awareness and understanding around what the CCR is and what it offers members.



Lack of visibility

Perceived limited information about the CCR, led to frustrations from those who are, or have family, eligible for these services.



CCR Members unaware of full offering

CCR members lack awareness of full services that are offered by the Register.

Lack of awareness and understanding of the CCR

Those who were not on the CCR reported **limited awareness of the Register**. This indicates there is a gap in awareness among potential beneficiaries. There was a lack of understanding around the services the Register offered customers. There was also confusion around who to contact, to join the CCR.

There is also **confusion around who the Register is for and what benefit it provides**. The term 'customer care' was generally associated with general customer service, rather than specific services for vulnerable customers.

However, in comparison, participants spontaneously recalled the Northern Ireland Electrics Customer Care Support Services for vulnerable customers. Although, participants highlighted that awareness may be higher due to electricity being a 'paid for' utility compared to water in Northern Ireland.

Individuals who were not on the CCR but were eligible, requested **increased visibility and promotion of the Register** to ensure that eligible individuals are aware of its existence.



This might be a bit ridiculous, but if you want to be on it, who do you actually contact to get put on it.

Non CCR Member, Male, 45-54



I imagine it is, when my mum was wasn't well a couple of years ago, she was on the electricity one (NIE CCR), where if there was going to be a power cut or anything, she had to have electricity, so is it something similar? Is it a Register of people who cannot be without water?

Non-CCR Member, Female, 45-54



So, you would have a read to see what it's all about, you know, because obviously I've never heard of it.

Non-CCR Member, Female, 45-54



I'm not aware of any of the other aspects of it, to be honest with you. I'm just aware of the fact that there is a Register.

CCR Member, Female, 65+

Frustration from those who were eligible yet unaware about the Register

There were feelings of frustration from carers of those eligible for the CCR, that they were not aware of the Register, or the services that it offered.

Participants believed that being part of the Register would have been incredibly useful in assisting with their personal circumstances.

Questions were raised by Non-CCR participants wanting to know how long the Register had existed. Participants who believed this was a recent service highlighted that it was a good step to assist vulnerable customers. However, those who believed it had been active for a longer period of time were more critical relating to the the lack of promotion about the Register.

It would be important to know when it came into existence. And when it [CCR] did come into existence, did anyone think about telling the general public?

Non-CCR Member, Male, 65+

How long has this been running for? In my world it is relatively new because I didn't hear about it.

Non-CCR Member, Female, 65+





I'm not aware of what they are. Feel a bit like I'm in a room with the light switch stuff. I know there's other stuff out there, but I don't actually know what it is.

CCR Member, Male, 55-64



"I am not aware of any other [benefits]. I'm assuming there is. I don't, you know, I don't think, but I don't know what they are. I don't know what they are.

CCR Member, Male, 55-64



There's never been a major problem. But I mean, as far as the delivered bottle of water coming towards Christmas and stuff like that, so can't really complain. I know that there'll be a heads up and stuff for the waters to go off or there's parks and stuff like that, but as I said, we've never had to use them.

CCR Member, Female, 25-34

Those who are on the CCR had limited awareness of the services offered by NI Water

Those that availed of the CCR highlighted high levels of satisfaction. This largely related to the annual water delivery during the Christmas period, which was seen as beneficial for participants. Yet, whilst all were positive about receiving bottled water, some were unsure how this water was meant to be used.

Awareness of the full range of services offered, was very low.

Furthermore, any **awareness appears to have been incidental rather than the result of proactive outreach by NI Water.**

Whilst some could not recall how

they became aware of the CCR, awareness often came from indirect means, such as word of mouth, through community groups, and referrals from services such as community health workers or occupational therapists.

Case Study 1 – Customer Care Register Member



This individual is a member of the CCR. He has been a member of the Register for a number of years. He reflects on his experience of being on the CCR as mixed, highlighting that there have been instances where he has felt let down by NI Water, but also sees the benefits of being on the Register.

The participant has a medical condition which means he requires consistent access to an uninterrupted water supply.



I'm on the Register because I'm a [redacted medical reason] patient and I have a [redacted machine] at home. I've got a [redacted] machine upstairs. I need a constant water supply.

The CCR member does not know how he became aware of the CCR.



I probably got something through the post asking was anyone in the household, a person with particular needs? And I obviously ticked a box or something like that.

He reflected that it was straightforward to get onto the Register. He provided NI Water with his medical information and NI Water did not make it difficult for him to become a member.



It [was] very simply my medical condition. That was it. And the fact that I need a regular water supply for my machine

The participant had mixed experiences of being on the CCR. He felt that there were instances where he had been left down, these negative experiences were strong memories.



They let me down off and on. There's no pattern to it, no system to it. They just switch off the water supply and I do not get any contact from them to let me know...I lifted the phone and rang them [NI Water], and they said they weren't in a position to help me.

PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CCR

Key factors on Perceptions towards services provided by the CCR



Lack of understanding of CCR services

There were misconceptions around what the CCR offers members. This was highlighted across both Non CCR and CCR members.



CCR services viewed positively

The different services offered by the CCR were viewed positively when explained, but participants would like more information on the specifics of how the services function.



CCR Members struggle to recall range of services, but annual water delivery beneficial

CCR members reflect that they had a positive experience with the CCR but struggled to recall the full services offered on the CCR.

Misconception around the services the CCR offers customers

There was **limited awareness of the services that NI Water's CCR offered** across both CCR and non-CCR customers.

Those **who were not CCR customers had the lowest levels of awareness.** This is perhaps unsurprising, as most participants within this group were not aware the CCR existed, prior to the research taking place.

Confusion around what services the Register offered was evident across all participants. CCR customers also struggled to identify what

services the Register offered, despite being a member of the Register. Whilst they recalled receiving bottled water and an annual telephone call from NI Water, there was limited awareness of the additional benefits being on the Register offered.

Both CCR and Non-CCR participants suggested a need for increased promotion of the Register. Participants felt that this would increase awareness of the CCR, and in turn, increase awareness of the services offered.





It doesn't sound like a bad thing... if someone was really unwell and unable to make the call, at least they are going to accept a call on their behalf, from their nominated person I think that is good.

Non-CCR Member, Female, 45-54



Well, no, that would be a good, that would be a good idea really, because some people just don't really like being on the phone. Get. Some people might get a wee bit confused or something. So, it would be good if somebody that you wanted to be in contact with

Non-CCR Member, Male, 45-54



And I wasn't aware of that, but now, obviously I am, I think it's a great service and if in fact it works, and I'm sure it does at this stage, but no, I am well impressed with the fact that it is available in the background.

Non-CCR Member, Female, 65+

Carers Contact Service was viewed positively

The concept of the Carers Contact Service was praised by both Non-CCR and CCR members.

Non-CCR participants noted that having a nominated individual who could contact NI Water on their behalf was welcomed.

Additionally, participants felt this service could help carers to be correctly informed of any information that NI Water would be sending out to a vulnerable person.

These participants were impressed that this service was available, as it could offer peace of mind that information was

being received. However, some felt that they would also like to see a 'dual contact' option, contacting both the vulnerable customer and the nominated individual at the same time, to ensure that all parties are kept informed of updates.

There was a request for more information about this specific service. This included requests to understand how frequently contact could be expected between NI Water and a nominated carer, and if there was a specific department that would need to be contacted, to discuss the service.

Bogus callers and Doorstep password scheme received a mixed opinion

The Bogus Caller's Scheme and the Doorstep Password Scheme received mixed reviews, for a variety of reasons.

Participants understood the added security benefit of the Bogus Caller Verification system and the Doorstep Password Scheme. This was viewed as positive that there were steps NI Water were taking to promote security for certain customers who could be elderly customers, vulnerable individuals and generally, those concerned about home security.

However, CCR customers questioned how much they would actually utilise these services despite viewing them as important.

Furthermore, there were concerns around the practicality and real-world implementation of how these services would work. Non-CCR customers wanted more information on how the Password scheme would function, for example, would it be a password set by the customer, by NI Water or would it be a general password for the Register.

In addition, potential pain points were

identified around calling the 101 Police Non-Emergency number, as there were concerns raised around the speed at which queries would be handled.

Participants felt that there was an overlap in the security services and did not see the need for both a Doorstep Password Scheme and the Quick Check 101.

As such, more information and clearer guidance about these two services would be beneficial, to explain the utility and benefit of the services to customers.



It would depend on the response rate from the 101 number. If you phone up, somebody arrives at your door. And you say, hold on a wee second, I'll just go and check that you're on the Register. Now. How long is long enough and how long is too long?

Non-CCR Member, Male, 65+



You get an elderly person who maybe answers the door and whoever it is in the cold call, but was calling just mutters off any password there and, you know, person confused, just lets him on and, you know. So, No, I think it's better that it's just a caller on the phone.

Non-CCR Member, Female, 65+





Well, it's simply for checking identity. There's, in my area, it's quite a quiet we area, but there's an awful lot of kind of cold callers that come to the door, so they actually know if people are actually genuine, because you tend to go on the positive that these people are actually there for the right reason. But it would be nice to have a number that you could phone up and a lot of people that come to the door say that you can ring a number which they will give you, but it's good to know that you've got a number that is independent. So that actually is a good idea.

CCR Member, Male, 55-64

Accessible formats for leaflet information was welcome

Having leaflets available in various accessible formats was welcomed by both CCR-members and non-CCR members.

Large print for leaflets was seen as important for individuals with poor eyesight. Additionally, participants agreed that braille and CD/audio tape formats of informational leaflets for individuals with impacted visual impairments, would be beneficial.



I think they have the option that you can definitely get it on paper, especially in the larger prints these days. So, it is definitely a good idea.

CCR Member, Male, 55-64



Well, that's good because, I mean, my neighbours next door are blind, and my husband's eyesight now has gone rack and ruined. That's who I care for. And so even the large print would be. Would be great for him. I know, I know the guy next to me would use to see the audio. So, it is handy to have all those things.

Non-CCR Customer, Female, 65+



CCR Customers were largely positive regarding their perception and experience of the Register

Members of the CCR had overall positive interactions utilising the Register. NI Water were supportive and kept the respective nominated contact carer informed of water interruptions, annual contact phone call contact, and on time water deliveries.

Despite utilisation of this service,

it was not clear for participants that this service was called “Carer’s Contact Service”. As such, they also highlighted that they thought this was normal practice to nominate an individual for NI Water to contact, and not that this was a specified service that was offered because of CCR membership.



I think it's great. Even just in the perspective that I'm getting water brought to the door.

CCR Member, Male, 55-64

Case Study 2 – Customer Care Register Member



This individual only became aware of the CCR, when his mother was added to the Register a number of years ago. He began looking into the services available in more recent years. When he enquired, he discovered that he had also been added, due to his mother being on the Register. He believes the CCR has offered many benefits but was only explicitly aware of the water deliveries that he receives.

This CCR member highlighted that he was unaware that he was on the Register and could not recall how his mother was initially added to the Register.



"It wasn't something that she actively went looking for. It was something that came to the doorstep at that time. And then they said, I was signed up by default."

He was unaware of the full benefits of being on the Register but recalled the water deliveries as 'superb'.



"For me to carry that amount of water, that would actually be several trips.... So, for the actual, the water board to bring it to the door is superb."



"I am not aware of any other [benefits]. I'm assuming there is...but I don't know what they are. I don't know what they are."

The CCR member was not aware of the additional services offered by NI Water for those on the CCR. However, when the services were explained to him, he did perceive these services to be extremely useful, especially the Bogus Callers (Quick Check 101) and Doorstep Password Scheme.



"Absolutely. Yes ... Like I said, I would have a lot of people coming to the door and I don't like to do call calls on the doorstep. I don't like, you know, kind of charity calls and stuff like that. Charities need money, but I don't like it when a random strange person comes to the door asking me for money or bank details. So, to have something like that there that's put in place to protect, I think it's definitely a good idea."

BARRIERS AND DRIVERS FOR JOINING THE REGISTER

Key findings of barrier and drivers for joining the CCR



Lack of Awareness

Lack of awareness for Non-CCR members and carers was a key barrier. Participants highlighted that they could not join a service if were unaware it existed.



Personal Perception of Vulnerability

Eligible members did not always view themselves as vulnerable and therefore did not immediately see a need to join the Register, This was exacerbated by a lack of information about eligibility.



CCR support is vital for members of the Register

CCR offered members crucial support, including health, safety and consistent reassurance of water provision during emergency situations.



What's the criteria to make the thing to get onto? I'm sure not everybody can just join this service."

Non-CCR Member, Male, 55-64



"What would prevent people is the rigmarole that they would have to go through to be on the Register."

Non-CCR Member, Male, 65+



Well, first of all, they need to make people aware of it, because I wasn't aware of it. Do you know what I mean? So, they're not going to get people to use it if people don't know it's there

Non-CCR Member, Female, 65+



I don't think it's advertised enough and as I say, I didn't know about it until I had, you know, was made aware. And I think it was actually, as I say, my disabilities got to the stage where I needed, occupational therapist and other services. And it wasn't until then that I even knew about it. I never knew it existed; you know.

CCR Member, Female, 25-34

Lack of awareness was a key barrier for joining the Register

Participants from all audiences highlighted that the lack of awareness or visibility of NI Water's CCR was a substantial barrier preventing individuals joining the Register.

This lack of awareness impacted the knowledge that eligible customers or carers had on the service itself and the benefits the Register offered.

In addition, **individuals highlighted a lack of awareness relating to eligibility** for the Register and therefore, felt that the CCR might not be aimed at

them.

Furthermore, lack of knowledge relating to requirements of the Register, such as who is eligible and how to join, led to concerns surrounding the registration process. Participants felt that organisations can have too much 'red tape' in terms of proving an individual's identity, and some felt that the act of joining the Register would be difficult.

Apprehension around joining the Register

Participants highlighted that eligible individuals might be dissuaded from joining the Register due to perceptions of vulnerability this might create. Joining the Register might be seen as an admission of vulnerability by the customer, which might deter individuals from joining up to this service despite the perceived benefits.

In addition, there was a perception that individuals may not consider themselves to be most in need of the Register, based on social comparison to other eligible individuals. The eligible individual may not believe that they could be suitable for the Register as they perceive others in society to be more vulnerable compared to their own circumstances.



It's getting them [eligible customers] to go on the Register in the first place or whatever, you know.... someone who maybe in the very, very early stages of dementia and nobody really knows it, you know, that sort of way, and you might be more vulnerable, but you don't think you're vulnerable.

Non-CCR Member, Male, 45-54



Health, safety and support functions were all highlighted as motivating factors for joining CCR

Those eligible for the Register highlighted the importance of reliable services during emergencies such as disruptions to water supply.

The assurance of being provided priority assistance, such as the provision of bottled water during water interruptions was a compelling reason for joining the Register.

When informed of the CCR's inclusivity for various needs, such as individuals with disabilities, older consumers, and those with serious medical conditions, was seen as positive.

This broad eligibility can encourage individuals who fall into these categories to join, as they recognise the Register's potential to cater to their specific requirements.

The Carer's Contact Service was considered a motivating reason to join the Register. The ability to designate a carer or relative who can liaise with NI Water was seen as a valuable service. This would offer peace of mind and convenience for those who may not always be in a position you handle matters personally.

The security features, such as the bogus caller scheme and doorstep password, provided an added layer of safety and reassurance for some,

which can be motivating factors for individuals concerned about security. The ability to verify the identity of NI Water representatives can help prevent scams and unauthorised access to homes.



"If there was a water shortage...they'd have to deliver them water."

Non-CCR Member, Female, 45-54



"If somebody was really unwell and wasn't able to make the call, at least they're going to accept a call on their behalf back from someone else."

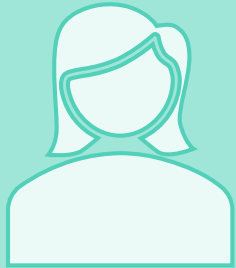
Non-CCR Member, Female, 45-54



"I have problems with my feet, my knees, my ankles, my back, I'm a shoulder now with having a pacemaker. So, for me to carry that amount of water, that would actually be several trips. You know, I would begin at night and then I'd bring that in as part of other shopping or get it delivered as far as something else. So, for the actual, the water board to bring it to the door is superb."

CCR Member, Male, 55-64

Case Study 3 – Non-Customer Care Register Member



This individual was not a member of the CCR however she was eligible to be on this due to being a vulnerable customer. She was unaware that this was a service offered by NI Water and believed it was important to increase promotion of this Register to make it more widely known, especially to those who would be eligible.

The individual was not aware of the CCR and believed that it was for individuals with certain situations that required access to water.

Whenever I first thought about it, I thought it was, you know, people that really, really needed water, you know, that have a condition. So, like, if you really needed water, so you like you're, you know, house bound or whatever they needed to make sure that those people had water. I think it's really the whole thing from start to finish to making sure that everybody receives good quality water.

She believed the CCR promotional material could have been improved and that the imagery that was highlighted in the leaflet did not fully reflect the Register's target audience.

Not everybody who's vulnerable is elderly. That's everybody who needs that services. You could have a 20-year-old at home who is life limited but needs water. So fully accessible you know means from that onwards you know that way.

The individual identified lack of knowledge around the Register and suggested how this could be rectified.

See, people don't know. They probably need like a TV ad or something. You know, one of them big massive billboards maybe.

She also highlighted that promoting the CCR in more settings would help to increase awareness.

Even at the, the doctors or, you know, pass them around the churches, you know, on those wee community groups that people go to, you know, and not just for the elderly, moms and toddlers as well. You know, if you pass it on to like a church organization and that's all churches...pass it on to all of those organizations so they can explain to, to the community maybe, because they probably don't know. I would say people don't know.



CCR offers crucial support for its members

Those that were CCR members highlighted **the essential need for constant access to water**, due to their specific vulnerability.

In addition, **the security measures that were offered did help offer peace of mind** to vulnerable individuals that were on this Register. Knowing there was a system in place to prioritise the needs of vulnerable

customers was identified as a key driver which could motivate people to join the Register.

Again, lack of awareness was highlighted by CCR members, who highlighted that there needed to be greater promotion of CCR services so eligible people could avail of the Register's benefits.

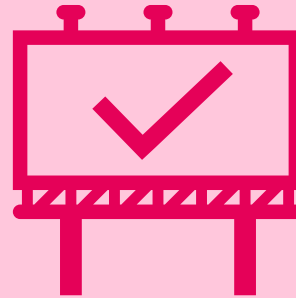
VIEWS ON PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

Factors which influence Views on the promotional materials



Visual Representation:

The imagery used in promotional materials should reflect a broader range of demographics to ensure inclusivity and relevance to all potential users.



Clarity and Design:

There is room for improvement in the design of materials to enhance readability and engagement, such as using larger fonts and more visible colour contrasts.



Need for Broader Distribution:

Participants suggested a more strategic distribution of materials in locations accessed by potential users, such as health centres and community events.

Language and colour of NI Water brochure was praised, but imagery needed to be more inclusive

The NI Water promotional stimulus was well received, language used was seen as being easy to understand and the colours were deemed as suitable for NI Water.

However, the promotional material must reflect the target audience more accurately.

Eligible participants did not believe the advertising was targeted towards them due to imagery of elderly people perceived as not accurately representing the people that can join the CCR. As such, eligible customers did not feel the information would be relevant to them.

The information was generally considered to be clear and concise and presented in a clear format.

CCR members **highlighted they were not always aware of the services available**, and more effective signposting would inform members of the utility and benefits offered by the CCR.



It's pretty clear, straightforward and easy to understand.

CCR Member, Male, 45-54



The information on the actual leaflet is very clear and concise.

CCR Member, Male, 55-64

Figure: NI Water Customer Care Register Brochure stimulus





I've got two issues [with the NI Water leaflet] straight away. Okay, one, we have a person in a wheelchair. Turn over the other side. And we've got a lady, grey hair, who would appear to be mature. Does this customer care not relate to all people of all ages? And disability is not only people in wheelchairs. Disability is not site only."

Non-CCR Member, Male, 55-64

The NI Water website also received a mixed reception.

The font that was used on the website regarding the CCR needed to be made more accessible. Participants wanted clearer sized text that could be enlarged making the information easier to read and process.

However, participants did think that the content was easily understood and there was not an overwhelming amount of information on the website.

In addition, concerns around the location of the page under 'Schools and the Community' were highlighted. Participants felt the page may be difficult to locate.

Again, imagery was highlighted as needing to represent who the CCR was for. Older demographic participants felt imagery used promoted a connotation between being elderly and being vulnerable and stressed that this was not always the case.

Both CCR and Non-CCR members did approve of the option to register for the CCR by providing the relevant details on the NI Water website. There was a consensus that this was useful way to join the CCR for most, although others noted that some may wish to join using other formats.



Personally, reading through it, I mean, it's pretty clear. No, it could do with putting the font up a wee bit.

CCR Member, Female, 55-64

Figure: NI Water Website - CCR Webpage

Schools and the community
Customer care register

Registration
To register for this service please fill in the form below. Alternatively, telephone Waterline on 03457 440000. Customers with hearing difficulties can use Typetalk through Waterline.

Full Name*
Address*
Postcode*
Telephone Number*

Registration Reason (Mark as appropriate - multiple selections are permitted)

- Outlets
- Need information in audio format
- Large print
- Deaf or hard of hearing
- Speaking difficulties
- Other

Language was clear to understand, but font size was not seen as overly accessible

The NIE Customer Care brochure received more of a mixed reception from all audiences.

Overall, the language was viewed as easy to understand, and participants felt that the information was broken down into digestible amounts of information with clear headings in bolded blue text.

The addition of the registration document and clear indications of a joint approach resonated with participants.

The idea of having one area where similar utility registers were promoted was welcomed by both CCR and Non-CCR members for increasing knowledge about

the existence of these services, and ease to join.

The font of NIE Brochure was highlighted as not being as accessible by those in the CCR and Non-CCR audiences. The font was highlighted as a challenge to read due to its size, specifically referencing the "Data Protection" text box, with participants indicating they struggled to read this.

Participants were able to identify that the main message of the leaflet was to communicate the services that are available.



"Like there's a wee square on page three as a data protection. I can't read that at all. Even with my glasses on, I can't read that. I haven't got a clue what it's saying here. I really don't."

CCR Member, Female, 25-34

Figure: NIE Customer Care Register Brochure stimulus



Priority Service Register Video was praised across the board

The Priority Service Register video advertisement was very well received by both Non-CCR and CCR.

The inclusivity of the imagery, the colour scheme was eye-catching without being too over-stimulating, **the language was easy to understand**, and the content was easy to follow. The accessible sign language which accompanied the voiceover was also viewed positively.

The information on eligibility for this

service was clear for participants and the representation of different eligible audiences with clear instructions on how to join was welcomed by participants.

The one-point of contact for key utility services in Great Britain was also highlighted as a 'no brainer' for Non-CCR and CCR members. This also led to questions around why something similar was not employed in NI.

Figure: Priority Service Register Advertisement Stimulus



That is brilliant. That it covers absolutely everything and, and everybody and. Yeah, no one could be left out because everybody was included.

Non-CCR Member, Male, 65+



I like the service because it covers everybody and everything's all together. You're registering into the one, the one thing, and everybody's there, connected.

Non-CCR Member, Female, 45-54



Everything was clear to the point. Addressed all the people in their different situations, experiencing crisis in their health circumstances. It meant that people in crisis weren't having to contact all the utilities separately.

CCR Member, Male, 65+



I don't think older people want to be reminded that they're old and grey. Same with the previous one of a gentleman in a wheelchair who is with his carer [The NIE Brochure], it looked as if he was in a nursing home... What's the Northern Ireland Water call it? Critical Care Register or Care Register. We're not all immobile and we're not all old and grey."

CCR Member, Male, 55-64

A variety of media should be utilised to enhance visibility of Register

There were multiple different mediums which participants recommended, to promote awareness of NI Water's CCR. These included TV, radio, leaflets at services/settings which the general population and vulnerable audiences would frequent such as GPs, doctors' surgeries and dentists.

CCR customers also highlighted the importance of making everyone aware of this Register as it would reach a wide audience of people and if there were vulnerable customers who

missed it, they might have a carer or family member who can relay the information to them. As such, social media was highlighted as a key component which would help reach a wide demographic of people.

The video example garnered the most positive feedback overall, and participants suggested that running a TV campaign at peak viewing times could be an effective way of reaching vulnerable audiences.

SUMMARY AND TAKEAWAYS

Summary and Takeaways (1/2)

- There is a **lack of awareness of the CCR**, reported by those not on the CCR and by carers and influencers who had a caring responsibility for someone who was eligible, but not currently on the Register. These participants **struggled to identify who was eligible for the CCR**. CCR members were also unable to identify who would be eligible to join the Register and were often unsure how they had joined.
- **There was frustration from participants who were eligible but not on the Register**, as they felt it was something that would heavily benefit either themselves or the individual they were caring for. **Greater promotion from NI Water** is imperative to ensure relevant audiences are aware that this service exists.
- **Lack of awareness was highlighted as a key barrier across all audiences** for why eligible individuals may not join the CCR. Increased promotion of the Register was highlighted as a potential solution. Additionally, participants did not always deem themselves to be vulnerable, which acted as a barrier to join the CCR. Therefore, greater clarity on eligibility, and the diverse range of people who can join, may be beneficial.
- **There was limited awareness of the services that the Register offered, which was reflected across all audiences.** Those who were not on the Register were unaware of the services it offered, whereas those who availed of this service were only able to recall the bottled water deliveries and the yearly telephone communication from NI Water. This suggests greater promotion of the services among CCR members and non CCR members, would be beneficial.
- When the range of services were explained to participants, most of the services were praised by participants. **The Carer's Contact Service and accessible format of Information leaflets from NI Water were praised as incredibly useful.** However, there was a **mixed reception towards the security aspects the Register offered such as the Quick Check 101 and Doorstep Password Scheme**. Although they recognised the utility of these services, those who were not on the Register wanted more information on the practicalities of how these services would work. **CCR members** felt that the **security aspects of the CCR were important and useful, however they were unsure if they would use these services themselves.**

Summary and Takeaways (2/2)

- **CCR members did have high levels of customer satisfaction with the CCR**, despite not availing of the full range of services available. This was largely due to positive feedback relating to the yearly bottled water delivery. NI Water should ensure promotion of the full range of services available to CCR members, perhaps by promoting the services during the yearly water delivery, or phone call.
- **The services that were offered by the CCR, and the benefit they could provide vulnerable individuals, was seen as a motivating factor** for eligible individuals to join the CCR. The Register offered security, support and assurance of a consistent water supply, which would be vital for vulnerable consumers who require an uninterrupted water supply.
- **The inclusive nature of the CCR was also praised**, as the broad eligibility of the Register means those who fall into this vulnerable audience would be more inclined to join a service which would cater to their needs. However, there needs to be more information to provide clarity on the eligibility criteria to reassure those who are eligible that they should join the Register.
- The imagery used in promotional materials was an area of contention for participants. They felt that the imagery used to represent 'vulnerable customers' was not inclusive, due to the depiction of elderly consumers. **Non-CCR members stressed that 'not all disabilities are visible' and elderly participants highlighted issues with the association of elderly people being vulnerable.** Participants mentioned the addition of a simple tag line stating that 'not all disabilities are visible', would help to rectify this issue.
- The font size used in promotional materials was referenced. This was something that participants felt the NI Water brochure did well, but something that they felt could be improved on the website. It is important that promotional materials meets accessibility standards.
- **Both Non-CCR and CCR members believed that there should be increased promotion of the Register** and the services it offers. They suggested that using multiple channels, such as TV, radio, social media and physical leaflets would help to make the population more aware that this service exists.
- **To increase awareness of the CCR and encourage eligible customers to join, NI Water should increase promotion of the CCR, the services and the benefits of the Register, and provide information detailing eligibility.**

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