

TOP TIPS

**Helping
people get
from A to B**

**Top Tips on
supporting
people to
plan**

3 Support – **who** will support the person?

Talk through the four very different types of support that disabled people can use to get on with their lives.

Specialist support providers

Specialist support providers are services specially designed to serve disabled people. There is a wide range of these services, but they share a common purpose in having been set up to offer support to disabled people and must therefore serve several different individuals.

Individual support services

These are support services that are developed to serve an individual. They are designed for and delivered to one individual and, ideally, that individual controls them.

Family and friends

This is the support that is provided from love – by friends and family. It is support for a particular individual from the people who value them.

Natural support

This is the support that occurs naturally within the community. It is not special help for disabled people but is support that is available to anyone taking part in the community.

**These different types of support can all be valuable.
There are some pros and cons for each type of support:**

	Pros	Cons
Specialist support providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The person can get the chance to meet other disabled people. ● The person has no personal responsibility for the service. ● The support provider may have some useful expertise. ● The support provider will be regulated by Social Services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It marks the person out as being different from other people. ● Their needs may be hard to meet when there are lots of people getting help at the same time. ● They will have less control over the service and who is recruited.

	Pros	Cons
Individual support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The person gets the maximum possible control over their support – who supports them, when, where and how. ● They can meet new people through their supporter. It is easier to change things over time. ● It is easier to mix paid and unpaid supports. ● They may have more flexibility about how their support money is spent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Others may think that the supporter is in charge of the person. ● Their supporter can cut them off from other citizens. ● They are responsible for controlling and changing the service. ● They are likely to be accountable to Social Services and others for their actions.

	Pros	Cons
Family and friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The people supporting the person are people they love and trust. ● Their family will keep them connected to other family members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is hard to control when someone gets this kind of support without using guilt. ● It is hard to control how the people they love support them.
Natural support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● They are treated just like everybody else around. ● They are seen to be present for their own sake. ● People supporting them are expert in doing their particular job. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The support ends when their involvement ends. ● There may need to be adaptations for them to join in. ● They may have to get people supporting them in the community to learn about their special needs.

The main kinds of support services

Here are the different types of support service. See if any options fit with what the person wants and needs. Remember that many services are only offered to groups. There's a section coming up later on how to organise individual support.

Adult Placement Services Some people want to live with a family even if their own family can no longer support them. So Adult Placement Services have been set up to link people into family homes and then provide the family with some ongoing additional support.

Adult training centres Adult Training Centres or day centres provide a continuation of school-time support. The quality and nature of the support available varies enormously from place to place, but it is hard for these services to be very individualised when they typically have to provide support to many different people at the same time.

Community networks KeyRing, one particular organisation, has pioneered the development of networks of people with learning difficulties. Each person has their own ordinary place to live but is linked together with other members and supported by a Community Living Worker. This service is very successful at offering people their own place combined with support ‘around the corner’, mutual support and community connections.

Domiciliary services Local Authorities and service providers tend to offer home help services where workers go into someone’s home to provide limited support services. Although these services vary from locality to locality they tend to be more focused on supporting older people and doing things for people in their own homes.

Local authority hostels In addition to Adult Training Centres the main service that Local Authorities tend to provide directly is Hostels. As their name suggests these are often large buildings in which many people live. Support is usually provided but the amount of support that can be offered within a Hostel can be limited.

Mental handicap hospitals There are still a few hospitals left, although a number have been renamed Residential Campuses. Government policy since the 1970s has been to close hospitals following the discovery of serious human rights abuses and research which has consistently shown that hospitals do not offer good support to people with learning difficulties.

Registered care homes This is the most common support option for people with learning difficulties and it means that someone's home and support are controlled by an organisation and that they will live with a number of other people they haven't chosen to live with. Homes are registered and monitored by national care standards organisations but many people find such homes far from 'home-like'. The support is normally shared in ways that often limit what the person can do.

Registered nursing homes These are similar to Registered Care Homes, except that nurses must give some of the support and the rules that govern them are slightly different. There are Registered Nursing Homes for the elderly that take in some people with learning difficulties although these homes seem to have little to offer them. There are also specialist nursing homes for people with learning difficulties that take people who other services have found too challenging.

Residential respite services Respite services are generally support services for families to give them a break from supporting their children or adult sons or daughters. In general these services offer people the chance to stay for a short period in a building along with a number of other disabled people. Although these services are often highly valued by people with few choices, those in control of their resources often do much more imaginative things for respite.

Residential schools Some children and young adults end up getting support in residential schools. These schools have grown up because some people get excluded both from mainstream schools and from their local special schools.

Sheltered communities or village communities There are a number of organisations that have set up Village Communities in the countryside. Many of these communities were developed as a progressive alternative to mental handicap hospitals in the post-war years and they foster an ethos that is less institutional than a hospital within a country village setting.

Sheltered workshops A Sheltered Workshop is a working environment that is mainly for disabled people. Some people really value these work places, although workshops that cater only for people with learning difficulties sometimes offer only the most boring or anti-social forms of work.

Social business Some disabled people have set up their own businesses or co-operative efforts and operate within the commercial world (sometimes with a subsidy). Some people with learning difficulties, for example Swindon People First, have even entered the care business.

Supported employment Some organisations support people to take up ordinary jobs while helping the employer to provide support on the job (and back-up support). This service has proved successful even with people with very significant disabilities and is largely constrained by the poverty trap created for many people by the existing benefits system.

Supported living services A few support providers will only provide support to people living in their own homes. Registered Care Homes have also started to provide some support to people in their own homes. Often these services are provided to people with more significant disabilities or complex behaviour because the provision can be individualised and doesn't put people into complicated group settings.

Therapists and other specialists There are a number of specialists who offer advice, therapy or other one-off services to people with learning difficulties. They include:

- psychiatrists
- psychologists
- speech and language therapists
- psychiatric and community nurses
- art, drama or music therapists
- counsellors.

It is difficult to comment on the wide range of genuine skills and expertise that are contained in this list. Many skilled people are doing good work under these titles.

But while there may be some advantages in specialisation there is also a severe danger that these services, while they are branded as special, become isolated and are delivered to lower standards and are less accessible than the mainstream services they are intended to improve upon.

These risks are made greater by the fact that it is difficult to hold any of these professionals accountable for their actions. In some cases, practice can go unchallenged for years.

Finding out more

Start by talking to the person about how much they want to find out about different providers.

There are lots of ways to find out about local service providers:

Through the local authority However, do not just ask the person's social worker. Ask for a directory of local services and the list of authorised service providers. (Someone's social worker may themselves be unaware of all the options available.)

Through a local advocacy service If there is a local advocacy service in the area, ask them who the local service providers are. They will not only know many of the providers, they may also be willing to tell the person something about their reputations.

Ask other disabled people and their families People who have had good or bad experiences of different services are good sources of advice and information.

Use the Yellow Pages or the Internet Information about local services may also be available by standard methods of sharing information.

You have thought about the services that are available. Now support the person to think about who is already in their life and may be able to offer paid or unpaid support.

Here is an example from Janet's plan:

Who do you know who will support you?	When will they support you?	What will they support you to do?	Will they get paid to support you?
Mum	When I go to the hairdressers	Mum will support me to get to my appointments on time, help me pay and make sure I get home safely.	No

Who do you know who will support you?	When will they support you?	What will they support you to do?	Will they get paid to support you?
Anne (my friend)	Comes round on a Sunday night	We will go and get a take-away and watch TV.	No
Nicola	Wednesday before tea for 2 hours	Nicola helps me sort out my bills, helps me budget my money and sorts out any benefit queries I have.	Yes
James	Flexible hours over the week but no more than 20 hours	James will help me with the general day-to-day things around the house and will help me get to the places I need to be each day.	Yes

3 Support – what kind of person?

Now you've supported the person to:

- see if there are local services that suit them
- think about the people in their life and how those people can support them.

You may discover now that there is still a need to recruit some new supporters to fill in the gaps or do the jobs that others are unable to do.

Here is a table that may help the person to think about who would be right for the job.

Supports wanted and needed (1)	Skills needed (2)	Personality characteristics needed (3)	Shared common interests (would be desirable to have) (4)
Support needed to go swimming.	A swimmer.	Energetic. Motivated.	Scuba diving. White water rafting.
Theatre	Drama.	Outgoing. Likes performing in front of crowds.	Previous acting experience.
Gym	Knowledge of gym equipment and safety features. Knowledge about dietary needs of a person actively involved in sports.	Healthy and fit (no current limiting sports injuries). Willing to take on a fitness challenge.	Have an interest in charity fun runs, sponsored events, etc.

From the information you have gathered in column 2 and column 3 you need to now decide which of these skills and characteristics are essential (what you can't do without and which of these skills are desirable (someone can do without these if they have to as they may get this support from existing friends, etc.)

**Here is a table where you can capture this information.
This is often called a person specification**

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● swimmer ● experience of gym equipment /knowledge of safety features on gym equipment ● moderate level of fitness ● in good health with no limiting sports injuries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● be out going ● be interested in taking on new sporting challenges ● have past experience of charity and sponsored events ● be motivated and be able to motivate others through enthusiasm.

3 Support – what will the supporters do?

Help the person to decide what roles they want their supporter to play

The roles that the person wants their supporters to play will depend on their goals.

Here are just some of the different kinds of roles that people might want a supporter to play:

Benefits adviser Some people specialise in helping with benefits and personal finances. Local Authorities or local voluntary organisations often employ these people and their services are usually free.

Circle of support This term describes a situation where a group of people come together to offer support and advice. The Circle is normally based around a group of people who care about the person and then others might be invited to join the group.

Come-in supporter This describes the role of someone who is paid to provide support and who comes into the person's home to help them there or to help them participate in ordinary community activities. There are different ways they can support the person. They can:

- do tasks for the person
- do tasks with the person
- offer guidance or support as the person does the task

Community connector Some people specialise in helping others make better use of their own community networks and in helping build better community resources for them. For example, LEAF is an organisation in Scotland that specialises in helping people improve their relationships with others.

Good neighbour These are people who live nearby and who can offer specific support. This can be a paid or volunteer role. KeyRing's 'living support networks' use this kind of support in two ways – (a) first by engaging a Community Living Worker or Volunteer who lives locally and (b) by making it a requirement that members of the Network offer neighbourly support to each other.

Job coach Job Coaches help people to work their way into ordinary jobs by offering on-the-job support. They help the person to do the job bit by bit and can do the parts of the job that are too difficult at first.

Life sharer A Life Sharer is a person who is recruited to share a large part of their life with the person. They may or may not live with the person but spend a lot of time together. This is a really good system of support if someone doesn't want a lot of chopping and changing.

Skills trainer or tutor Some people specialise in helping others develop specific skills.

Service brokers Brokers specialise in helping to organise and purchase support. They don't offer any further support than that. This service is like an independent form of care management and there are only a few such services in the UK. (See the information about brokers on In Control's website.)

Support tenants or supportive flatmate Support Tenants are people who are recruited as a flatmate and who offer some support in exchange for a subsidised rent or some other form of payment.

This is a really good way for someone to pick who they live with and to get support around the house in a less structured way than with come-in supporters. It can work really well and lead to good, long-lasting friendships.

But, like any such arrangement, the person may find they don't get on with their flatmate and may need to ask their flatmate to leave. If the person wants to stay in control of this arrangement, they need to give them a licence to live in the house, not a tenancy. **A tenancy makes it harder to end the arrangement at the right time.**

Help the person to think about how their support can be arranged to suit them. What role do they want their supporters to play?

Some roles will work better for the person than others. In particular, it's important to work out if support is to be based in the house – maybe using a Support Tenant – or whether the person wants their support to be on a 'come-in' basis.

Job description

Here is an **example** and a **blank table** to capture the roles of supporters:

Job title	Main purpose of the job	Who the supporter is directly accountable to	The main tasks of the job
Come-in supporter	Daily one-to-one support	Me and my parents	Day to day co-ordination of events and travel. Guidance with tasks I'm not confident about.

Job title	Main purpose of the job	Who the supporter is directly accountable to	The main tasks of the job
Live-in supporter	Minimal support and reassurance	Me	Make sure you are able to help during the night in the event of an emergency or illness.

Job title	Main purpose of the job	Who the supporter is directly accountable to	The main tasks of the job

Job title	Main purpose of the job	Who the supporter is directly accountable to	The main tasks of the job

4 **How will the support be managed?**

Getting the right support is important. Making sure the support stays good – by managing it well – is also important.

Some of the things to think about are:

- recruiting people
- making sure they understand the job
- making sure they do what they are supposed to do
- supporting them to get satisfaction in their work and developing their abilities and work interests
- who will pay them and how.

There is a table to fill in In the Driving Seat.

Here's an example:

Who will find my supporters? – recruit them	Who will manage them? – make sure they know what to do – and make sure they do what they are supposed to do	Who will pay them and manage my support money?
I will advertise with the help of my mum and dad and we will interview together.	I will give the supporters a plan which will tell them the support I need and me and my mum will have monthly meetings to make sure we are all happy with the support.	My mum will manage my support money and make sure the supporters get paid but she will also show me every two months what I have spent to help me understand my money.

4 **How will the support be managed?**

Finding paid supporters – recruitment

Now the person is clear about the job they have created and the kind of people they are looking for. So, it's time to think about the best process for finding them.

These are some ways:

- place job advert in newspapers
- contact recruitment agencies and job centres
- ask family and friends and ask them to ask around
- use the Internet
- post advert in newsagents, college notice boards, etc.

Once the person has got their message out there, you need to think about how they can select someone from the people who come forward.

A good person specification should help because you can, in relation to each of the qualities on the specification, ask the question: **‘How will we find out if they have that quality?’**

There are different ways of finding out those answers depending on what the person is looking for.

Here are some possibilities to explore with the person:

- having an interview, where you can ask specific questions. (Think of putting in ‘scenario questions’ – ‘What would you do if...?’)
- getting people to fill out an application form that asks them certain questions
- spending time with the person where you can observe them and how they operate
- getting references from others who have worked with the person
- setting people tests.



If the person doesn't speak, then they need people around to help them be involved as much as they can.

In particular, they may want the chance to spend some time with the person, then have people who know them well to help them weigh up whether the candidate would be a good person for them.

How will the support be managed?

Managing supporters

Finding supporters is not the end of the task. It is the beginning. The person needs to manage their supporters.

This is not always easy as they need to constantly ensure that:

- the support is right and changes to suit the person and how their life is going
- the supporters are satisfied in their jobs.

Some people with learning difficulties will be able to employ their own supporters if they can understand what the responsibilities involve.



Some people may be able to co-employ their supporters with an organisation or another individual. Some people will not be able to employ or co-employ their supporters. Rather, they will need a representative to employ their supporters for them. This could be an individual or a Trust acting for the individual.

4 How will the support be managed?

Using the support of friends and family

The final kind of support is the support from those who love and care about the person.

For many people a plan that suits them will be one where they are not just getting support from paid people. Fortunately, there are lots of ways that money can be used to get support besides employing support staff.

Paying someone their expenses It's ok to pay someone their expenses for travel, eating, entrance fees, etc. Expenses are also not taxable and so are a good way to reward someone who would have to pay taxes if they were a paid supporter.

Buying something they can share If someone wants to do something that involves the purchase of some equipment then they could reward a supporter by letting them borrow or share that equipment. One family bought a mobile home by the sea as a flexible and affordable form of respite. This caravan also gave them something they could share with others.

Paying for a holiday It's ok to pay all the costs of someone supporting the person to go on holiday. For example, one young man has paid for the rent on a holiday cottage so that he and his brother can go fishing together. This is a fraction of the cost of a week in respite care. Another lady paid for a holiday abroad and the costs for her two sisters. This was much less expensive than paying paid supporters to go with her on holiday.

Paying for treats It's ok to buy people treats like getting dinner for other people after a day out. This is a nice way of thanking people for their help and letting people know they are not taken for granted.

Employing family or friends Many disabled people much prefer to employ people they already know as family or friends to give them support. You may need to talk to your local authority about when it's OK to do this.

Once disabled people believe they will not be punished for using resources flexibly, they will quickly seek imaginative ways of using those resources. They are then likely to get many times more value out of the same pound as a human service organisation that doesn't work as flexibly.

Here is a summary of the main things someone has to think about when making their support plan:

Do	Don't
<p>Do ask people if they would like to help. It is hard to ask for help sometimes, but people often need 'permission' to help.</p>	<p>Don't assume that nobody wants to help. People are often more than willing to help out and will often see helping as a pleasure not a burden.</p>
<p>Do identify all the people the person knows. Important sources of support are: family, friends and their friends.</p>	<p>Don't be limited to getting support from staff or 'volunteers'. The best person to help someone learn a trade or develop computer skills is someone who is an expert in the relevant field.</p>
<p>Do use your contacts to find supporters. There are lots of ways of advertising and recruiting staff or other supporters.</p>	<p>Don't assume that there is only one way to recruit support. Not everybody needs to be recruited by answering an advert in a newspaper.</p>
<p>Do think about possible shared interests and enthusiasms. If someone is a big fan of the Beatles, wouldn't it be more natural to be supported by a fellow fan?</p>	<p>Don't assume 'work' must be a burden. Look for people who will enjoy working with the person.</p>

Do	Don't
<p>Do help the person to choose their own supporters. For some people this will mean doing much more than just having an interview. They should try to spend real time together.</p>	<p>Don't rely on professionals alone. Professional skills can be great but the fundamental issue is whether someone has the right personality that suits the person.</p>
<p>Do think about paying for support. Can the person employ staff or is it better to have someone employ the staff on their behalf?</p>	<p>Don't assume everyone has to be paid by an organisation or by a Local Authority.</p>
<p>Do be prepared to pay. There's nothing wrong with paying for support. There may even be people who will support someone to learn a job, e.g. paying a carpenter to support the person as an apprentice.</p>	<p>Don't assume certain types of people must be paid and others must never be paid (although it's clearly good to make sure that the person has people in their life, like their parents, who are only there because of love).</p>
<p>Do sell the person's strong points. There will be people out there who would really like to work with someone just like them, e.g. a real Beatles enthusiast.</p>	<p>Don't let the person define themselves just by their disability. If someone has autism, this is important, but it doesn't define who the person is.</p>

Do	Don't
Do tell the truth. Don't kid people about how difficult things might be. You only want to see people recruited who will stick by the person.	Don't just let the person use jargon or labels to describe themselves – plain speaking will work much better.
Do be clear about what exact help the person is looking for. To support the person well supporters need to know how and when support is needed.	Don't expect one person to do everything. Just as a family needs help so does a paid supporter. If a supporter has nobody to talk to about things, then the responsibility of supporting someone can lead to conflict and stress.
Do provide written information. Plans and policies should be written and agreed to by all the important people.	Don't leave everything vague. People need guidance and often bad support comes from not providing people with adequate information.
Do let people say 'no'. It is better to ask somebody to help and be rejected than to miss the chance of somebody good being involved.	Don't use guilt. It's hard to do a good job if you don't really want to do it.

Do	Don't
<p>Do make sure the support makes sense. Get support that fits well with the person's goals and ambitions.</p>	<p>Don't ignore the person's own dreams. If they want to live in their own home then it doesn't make sense to be looking for support in a registered home.</p>
<p>Do use the community. The community is full of resources: good people, groups of all kinds, schools, leisure centres, shops, places of work, museums and galleries.</p>	<p>Don't rely on segregated services. Institutional services cut people off from the community and all it has to offer. The person can get out of touch and be isolated.</p>
<p>Do make sure the support makes the person stronger. It should help the person be in control, have a plan, earn money, have a home and be part of the community.</p>	<p>Don't let the support take over the person's life, keep them poor, homeless or isolated.</p>

5 How much will the support cost?

Below is a table to help budget the money that will come in and go out.

In the future there will be a version of this on the In Control website that will add everything up. It's not ready yet.

Use a pencil so that you can keep rubbing out till the figures add up.

Support Budget for:

Money in	
Social Services	
Health Authority / Primary Care Trust	
Supporting People	
Independent Living Fund	
Money out	
Team Leader	
Pension	
National Insurance	
Support Worker	
Pension	
National Insurance	
Basic Salary Cost	
On Costs ?	
Holidays	

Sickness	
Training	
Team Meetings and Supervision	
Sleep-ins	
On Call	
National Insurance	
Total Salary Costs	
Expenses	
Expenses	
Travel costs	
Telephone	
Training	
Total Direct Cost	
Management Charge	
Total Cost	
Left over / Not enough	

6 How will the person **stay in control** of their support?

At the very beginning of the person's plan they thought about the people who could help them to make decisions. This was called a Decision-Making Agreement.

It is essential that the person:

- is treated with respect
- is involved in discussions and major decision making
- stays in control.

The Decision-Making Agreement may be the same as the one at the beginning of this plan so the same information can be used at this point.

However, you may by now have thought of people who will help with very specific things in managing the support overall. Help the person to include



them now.

Important decisions in my life	How I must be involved	Who makes the final decision



Important decisions in my life	How I must be involved	Who makes the final decision



Important decisions in my life	How I must be involved	Who makes the final decision

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