

Self-directed support

Organising Support

There are different ways you can organise your support. You can organise it all yourself, or organise part of it and get someone else to do the rest. If you don't want to organise it at all, you can get someone else to do everything.

This fact sheet tells you about the various options.



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Just like a Rubik's Cube, there are many options to achieve your goals.

The basic facts

Everyone wants to have some level of control and everyone is different. So, in self-directed support, the way people organise their support can be as individual as they are.

You can take on the job of organising your support yourself or get someone else to organise it all or do something in between.

The options you can choose from are:

- Do it yourself.
- Use a support provider.
- Use a broker.
- Use an agency.
- Use the local authority.
- Use paid and unpaid support.

You can mix and match these options. For example, you might ask around to find someone to help you learn to use a computer and get a support provider to help you get ready to go out. There is no formula. It's a question of what suits you.



Mix and match your support.



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Refer to your support plan when deciding the kind of support you want.

More information about organising support

There are two parts to organising your support:

- Deciding the kind of support you want and figuring out who you want to offer that support. You'll have thought about this when making your support plan.
- Arranging and managing the support.



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Support broker
You can still have flexibility if you use a broker.

If you decide you want to get all your support from a specialist support provider, that takes care of both things. The support provider will arrange your support and provide it to you. But you can still tell the provider what kind of person you want to support you and exactly what you want them to do. You are still in charge.



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Employ your own support.

On the other hand, if you want to organise your support yourself – for example, employ your own personal assistants – you might still use the help of an accountancy firm to pay the wages.



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Use natural support.

More detail

Four kinds of support

These are the kinds of support that are available:



Use family and friends.

1. Natural support – the support that happens naturally in communities. It's available to everyone. It's free, but part of an unspoken contract: 'I help you, you help someone else, and someone helps me'.

2. Family and friends – the support that is given out of love and care.

3. Individual support services – support that is set up especially for you. An increasing number of support providers are able to arrange individual services.

4. Specialist support – support providers have set up services to work, usually, with groups of people. These services are 'off the peg' rather than tailor-made.



Use an individual support service.



Use a service with a group.



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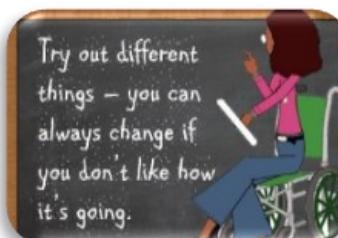
Self-directed support



What works for you?



Talk to advice services.



Try different things and change them if they're not working.



Don't put all your eggs in one basket.

There are pros and cons about each of these options.

Find out what works for you by:

- Talking to other people about what works for them.
- Talking to advice services, advocacy services or the local authority.
- Trying different things out – you can always change if you don't like a particular arrangement.
- Mixing and matching – not putting all your eggs in one basket.



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Support services



Home help.

There are many different kinds of support service that you can use 'off the peg'. For example:

- Domiciliary care – someone helps you with home help type things in your own home.
- Residential care – you move into a registered care or nursing home.
- Respite care – you move into a residential home for a short time to give your carers a break.
- Adult placements (for example, Shared Lives) – you live with a family who supports you.
- Supported living – you have your own place to live and get support from a provider, with a tenancy.
- Sheltered workshops and day centres – you spend your day in a special centre.
- Supported employment – on-the-job support to take up an ordinary job.
- Therapists and other specialists – psychiatrists, psychologists, counsellors, speech and language therapists, art, drama and music therapists, psychiatric and community nurses etc.
- Community networks – there are a few organisations that support people in their own homes to make connections in the neighbourhood.

Residential care.

Help at work.

Therapists.



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Arranging your own support



Made-to-measure support.



You can use an accountant – if you like.



Do things you enjoy with a companion.

You may want all or part of your support to be tailor-made for you (rather than buying a service 'off the peg').

There are many kinds of roles. For example:

- Accountant – you may want an accountant to keep track of your budget or to pay your personal assistants.
- Benefits adviser – usually available free, provided by the local authority or voluntary organisations.
- Companion – you can arrange for someone to go to an event you both like.
- **Circle of support (add link)** – people who come together to support you and take care of your interests.
- Come-in supporter – someone who helps you with tasks at home.
- **Community connector (add link)** – someone who helps you make connections in your neighbourhood.
- Good neighbour – someone who lives nearby, looks out for you and can help with some tasks.
- Job coach – someone who helps you to get a job and gives on-the-job support.



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A support broker can help you to put your plans into action.

- Personal assistant – someone recruited to support you in exactly the way you choose.
- Skills trainer – someone who helps you to learn a specific skill.
- Support broker – someone who helps you with planning and arranging your support.
- Support tenant – someone who provides help in your home in exchange for free or reduced-rent accommodation.



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Share your home with someone who is able to help.

Someone who plays one of these roles can be engaged in a variety of ways. You might pay them, but you might also do something for them in return. Gavin Croft says the price charged by a friend who looks after his accounts is 'one Thai Green Curry a month'.



See a benefits advisor.



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An example: Keith Webster

Keith describes his journey 'from the extraordinary to the ordinary':

'After ten years of care homes that were supposed to help me become independent, I became more dependent.

I became more disabled as the years went by. I was distressed and unhappy. I was frequently admitted to hospital. My family were distraught.

Now, I have my own individual budget and pay for my own support.

I have my own home. My mum paid for the services of My Safe Homes to guide us through the process of getting shared ownership.

I can use the money in imaginative ways to meet my support needs. The cost to Social Services is less than being in a care home. The social worker says it is a win/win situation.'

Keith's mother says he uses some of his budget for a personal trainer. In residential care, Keith's health had deteriorated and he'd become very overweight. He employs the trainer for an hour a week and they run and lift weights together. He also employs an IT specialist to teach him about computers.

Keith comments *'I've got my life back. This is the real Keith.'*



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