

Self-directed support

How to make a support plan

You are ready to write your support plan when your local authority has given you an idea of how much your personal budget is.

This fact sheet tells you how to make a support plan and what you need to put in it.



To get more help
contact In Control.
Tel: 01564 821 650
Email In Control
help@in-control.org.uk



Find more fact sheets at:
www.in-control.org.uk/factsheets



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The basic facts

Making a support plan helps you work out what's important to you and how you can use your budget in the best way.

A support plan shows the local authority:

- how you will get the things you need and the life you want
- how you will spend your personal budget.

They need to know this before they can agree the final amount of your personal budget.

More information about support planning

A lot of people have made support plans. So there is plenty of information and help available. The back page of this fact sheet has links to examples and help to create a plan.

Your support plan should answer these questions:

- What is important to you?
- What do you want to change or achieve?
- How will you arrange your support?
- How will you spend your money?
- How will you manage your support?
- How will you stay in control of your life?
- What will you do to make this plan happen?

You can make a plan by yourself or get someone to help you.

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More detail

There are different ways to make a support plan:

- The plan can be as short or as long as you want it. It's your plan and it's personal to you.
- You can use words but you don't have to.
- You can use pictures and photographs.
- Make it yourself or ask someone to make it for you.
- Use ideas from your person-centred plan if you have one.
- Use a template or a workbook to help you. These can be found on the In Control website: www.in-control.org.uk
- Use a computer to make a presentation.
- Video your ideas and thoughts.
- Record it on a tape or podcast.

Getting help

You may already know exactly what you want to put in a plan. Or you may want help.

You can ask:

- someone in your family, a friend or neighbour
- a circle of support – a group of people who are part of your life and help you to reach your goals
- people at work or school
- a care manager or social worker
- someone who works for a support provider or community organisation
- a paid, professional support broker – your local authority can help you find one
- advice and information organisations, such as Centres for Independent Living.

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What needs to be in your support plan?

Your local authority needs your plan to answer these seven questions:

1. What is important to you?
2. What do you want to change or achieve?
3. How will you arrange your support?
4. How will you spend your money?
5. How will you manage your support?
6. How will you stay in control of your life?
7. What will you do to make this plan happen?

1. What is important to you?

If someone reads your plan they should be able to get a good understanding of:

- who you are
- your interests
- your lifestyle
- the important people in your life
- your likes and dislikes
- your hopes for the future.

Start by writing a list of things about yourself, such as:

- your age
- what you like doing
- things you are good at
- things you would like to do
- how you communicate.

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2. What do you want to change or achieve?

What you want to change about your life, for example:

- where you live
- what services you have
- how you spend your time.

Things you would like to do in the future, for example:

- a course
- plans to live independently
- get a job.

Only put down things that have a real chance of happening and that will make your life better, not worse. People who help you will need to agree with what you put. However, don't put things down just because other people think you should. They must be things that are important to you.

3. How will you arrange your support?

Put in your plan the help and support you need to make the changes you want in your life.

There are different ways to organise your support.

You can:

- organise it all yourself – perhaps with the help of family and friends
- ask the local authority to organise it all for you
- ask an organisation to help – for example, a Centre for Independent Living
- ask a service provider to organise your support
- organise some parts yourself and let others do the rest.

4. How will you spend your budget?

You need to say:

- how you want the money to be paid, for example as a direct payment or to an agent
- what your support will cost for the year
- what money you will need for the following two years.

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You can manage the money yourself or have someone else manage it:

- someone you trust – a family member or friend
- a Trust (a legal group set up to act for you)
- someone you pay – a broker, an independent social worker or an advocate
- a service provider who manages the budget for you and provides support using an Individual Service Fund
- a care manager or social worker.

Often local authorities like the budget to be paid into a separate bank account.

You need to say what you'll spend the money on. Some people use their money for:

- personal assistants – people who work just for you (although you don't need to employ them yourself)
- expenses, equipment or transport
- housing, adaptations or supported living services
- sharing costs with people who have the same needs or interests
- supported employment or setting up a business
- therapists and specialists like speech therapists or counsellors
- social services such as: respite services, day centres, adult placement services, home helps.

Using local people and resources can be cheaper than just buying services 'off the peg' from a provider.

The support in your plan must not cost more than the agreed budget. Your plan must not include anything illegal!

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5. How will you manage your support?

Your plan must be clear about how you will organise and pay for support. You can do it all yourself or get help.

If you are going to employ people you need to do everything legally.

Your plan must show:

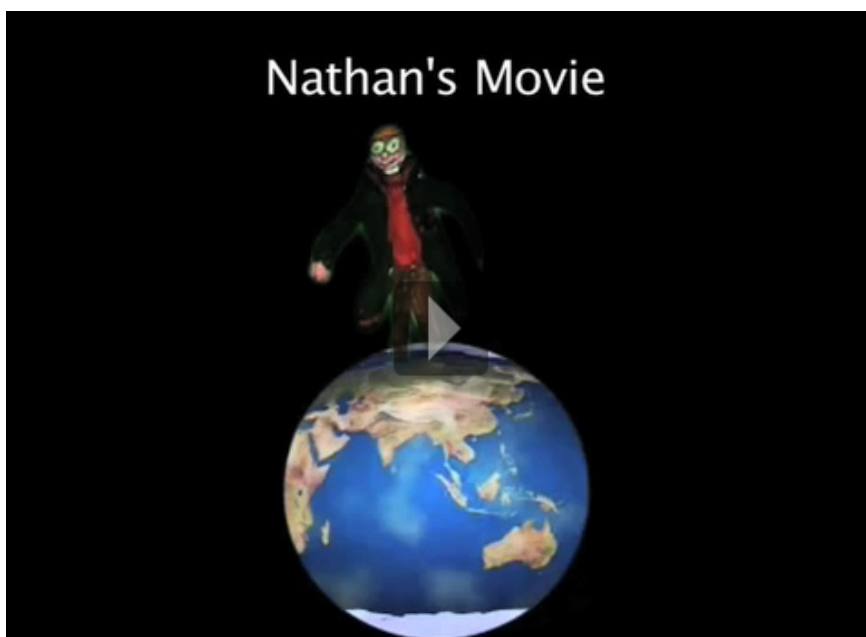
- how you will pay salaries. For example, are you going to use an accountant?
- who is responsible for what
- that you will comply with employment law and with the race and sex discrimination laws
- what agreement you have with any support provider you will use.

6. How will you stay in control of your life?

Your plan must say what decisions you will make and what decisions other people will make.

If your plan relies on other people making decisions, it must say how they will help you make as many decisions as you can and how they will know whether you agree.

If someone else will manage your money for you, how will you review your support with them?



Nathan has used video to create his support plan:
www.in-control.org.uk/nathanssupportplan

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Decision-making agreement

If other people are making decisions on your behalf, your local authority may want you to have a decision-making agreement.

In a decision-making agreement you put down:

- important decisions that you or other people need to make about your life
- which decisions you will make and which you need help with
- who will make the final decisions.

You and the person helping you must sign and date the agreement. If you can't sign, you can ask someone to be a witness or make a mark that people will know is yours.

You may need someone to agree this for you. This person is called your 'lead representative' or 'agent'. They will say if the agreement is ok and take on the legal responsibility of the contract for your self-directed support.

An agent can be:

- a member of your family or a friend
- someone you trust – someone who always wants the best for you
- someone who will not be moving on in the near future
- a paid professional such as an independent support broker.

For some people making big decisions like choosing where you live may be difficult to make. The **Mental Capacity Act** is there to help with this. Deputyship and Lasting Power of Attorney may be something that people acting on your behalf may need to consider.

For more information about the Mental Capacity Act, see the Office of the Public Guardian website:

www.publicguardian.gov.uk

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7. What are you going to do to make this plan happen?

A clear action plan will help you make sure your plan happens.

An action plan should say:

- who is responsible for each action
- when each action will be done
- how these actions will help you make the changes you want
- how you will keep a check on what has been done
- how you will deal with any problems.



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An example

A poem may not be what you expect to find in a support plan. After all, support plans are supposed to be practical.

But Gavin Croft's plan includes this poem. It really shows who Gavin is and it's followed by lots of practical planning. Gavin has made his plan using the computer programme, PowerPoint. You can see it at:

www.sds4me.org.uk/Support%20Plans.htm

Who do you see people? Who do you see?
 Do you see the same person as in 2003?
 I sit in this chair now, stand tall at 6'3"
 I am the same person as in 2003
 My vision is blurred now, my legs they are weak
 My swallow where are you?
 It's difficult to speak
 My food through a peg now
 Each day of the week
 I think it might be curry I say tongue in cheek
 Tongue in cheek, if only my tongue moved...how sleek
 Let's just get on says Karen my wife
 You're still just the same, we've still got a life
 Rose tinted glasses, they say love is blind
 Cataracts and madness, they both spring to mind
 Myelin sheath, nerve endings, muscles collapsing
 My body my life it needs some adapting
 Care manager, dietician, physiotherapist, OT
 All part of my life now but yes I'm still me
 Assessment, re-assessment, review and respite
 Respite from what? This is my life
 I'm not a condition, a problem or issue
 Just a person with rights so sit up and listen
 The right to live and laugh and cry
 The right to eat and choke and die
 Some of these rights have got lost on my way
 But it's my right to live
 And I shall do so each day
 Who do you see people? Who do you see?
 Just the same Gavin Croft as 2003?

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There is a lot of information about self-directed support on In Control's website: www.in-control.org.uk

Here is a selection of things that tell you more:

Free to download from: www.supportplanning.org

What makes a good plan?
Making Your Support Plan

Free to download from: www.supportplanning.org

Support Planning and Review

Free to download or you can buy a copy from:

In Control Support Centre, Carillon House, Chapel Lane, Wythall, B47 6JX or www.in-control.org.uk/shop

Top Tips and In the Driving Seat Helen Sanderson, Suzanne McStravick and Carl Poll

Printed publications for sale at:

In Control Support Centre, Carillon House, Chapel Lane, Wythall, B47 6JX or www.in-control.org.uk/shop

The Essential Family Guide: how to help your family member be in control Caroline Tomlinson

Keys to Citizenship: a guide to getting good support for people with learning disabilities Simon Duffy

Useful website: www.supportplanning.org

About the In Control and Me project

A three-year project to produce accessible information for everyone who wants to direct their own support, funded by the National Lottery through the BIG Lottery Fund. You can find out more at www.mencap.org.uk/incontrol or www.in-control.org.uk/icandme

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