

Getting it Right!

A guide for families of people with learning disabilities on choosing a support provider and improving the quality of support





Contents Page

Introduction	2
Frequently asked questions	4
1. Finding out about individual support	4
2. Finding support providers	5
3. Checking out support providers	7
4. Checking out staff policies and practices	9
5. Managing day-to-day	12
6. Keeping safe	15
Appendix 1: Useful contacts and resources	17
Appendix 2: Direct Payments and personal budgets	21
Appendix 3: Employing personal assistants	22
Appendix 4: Reach © Standards	23



Introduction

We are a group of families using Direct Payments and Personal Budgets to get support for someone in our family who has a learning disability. We have learnt the hard way and now want to share our experiences. You may not find all the answers here. But perhaps we can show you how people with learning disabilities and their families can have choice and control.

Who is the Guide for?

This is a guide for families whose adult son or daughter, or other relative, are getting support through a Direct Payment or personal budget. The person may be living in their family home or be living in their own home.



However, it may also be useful to families when they are thinking about services or support in other ways, for example a short breaks service. We call it 'support' rather than 'care' because people with learning disabilities need help to have the opportunities that other people have, such as making friends, learning new things, getting a job and being part of their local community.

Support should be planned individually to match what the person

wants for a good life, as set out in a person-centred plan. Direct Payments and Personal Budgets provide an opportunity for people with learning disabilities to get support that helps them to have a good life and can give people and their families a greater say in this (see Appendix 2 for an explanation of Direct Payments and Personal Budgets).

However, the system for achieving this can be confusing and families often have many questions about what they should be thinking about. Government and council policies change regularly; different parts of Kent appear to do things differently; services change from childhood to adulthood to old age and the funding may come from several different sources.

On top of this, the quality of support providers and personal assistants can vary. All of these things can lead to a support system breaking down. When this happens, it is often down to a person's family to pick up the pieces: so we need to choose the support carefully and with as much information as possible.



We also want organisations and individuals providing support to use this guide as a way of improving what they do. A good provider will be on the look-out to improve and extend what they do and who better than families to advise them?

What are the things that people with learning disabilities may need support for?

Each person will need different support for the things that are important to them in their life and central to this will be:

- leading an ordinary life
- having friends and a social life
- being independent
- spending time doing worthwhile things
- staying healthy and safe
- finding and keeping a job or volunteering
- keeping a home
- being supported with tenancy rights and responsibilities

Families' situations

Every family is different. You may have other people to support (e.g. elderly relatives); your extended family may live a long way or close by; they may be helpful or not so helpful. But you can adjust this Guide to your own situation: the idea of personalised support and personal budgets is that they fit around your circumstances.

As a family member, you are always trying to strike a balance between leading your own life and being there for your relative. The balance varies from each individual to the next – but you need to feel comfortable about the decisions you make.

Whoever provides paid support is replacing support formerly provided not only by care services (respite, residential, etc.), but also by family members. It is likely that you will remain an important part of your relative's support network even when they move into their own house or flat. This means you need support staff who share your values.





Frequently Asked Questions About How to Get The Right Support

We have looked at questions we would have liked answers to when we were first organising support with our sons and daughters.

These have been arranged under the following headings:

1. Finding out about individual support
2. Finding support providers
3. Checking out support providers
4. Checking out staff policies and practices
5. Managing day-to-day
6. Keeping safe



1. Finding out about individual support

How can we get a Direct Payment or a Personal Budget?

Everyone is entitled to an assessment to look at their needs for care and support. When someone is assessed as needing care and support they should be told whether they are 'eligible' for funding, how much is in their 'personal budget' (see Appendix 2 for an explanation of a personal budget) and be directed to local and universal services that will help them. They can ask to use their personal budget as a Direct Payment instead of having support provided through services.

If your relative has not yet been assessed or you would like more information about Direct Payments contact Kent County Council (details in Appendix 1).

What is a support plan?

A support plan sets out what your relative needs to have an independent and fulfilling life. You can write this with your relative or get help from other people. The support plan will say how the personal budget will be spent for your relative to get the support they need (see Appendix 1 for further information).



How can support be provided through a Direct Payment?

There are 3 choices:

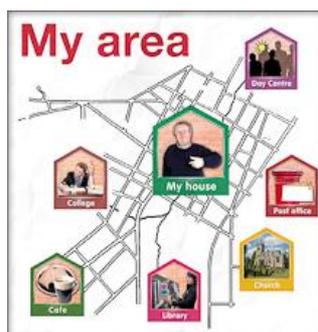
- Employ a Personal Assistant directly
- Use a Personal Assistant who is self employed
- Use an agency or organisation to supply a Personal Assistant

This guide focuses on the latter option. We have called agencies and organisations “support providers”. Personal Assistants are sometimes also known as care workers or support workers or paid supporters. Here we refer to them as “support workers”.

For further information about the first two options see Appendix 3.

2. Finding Support Providers

How do we find out about support providers in our area?



The Care Quality Commission (CQC), the independent regulator of health and social care, has a care directory on their website that lists some of the companies that provide care and support in England. Previous reports from inspections are also available on their website (see Appendix 1). Kent County Council also have a care directory which you can use to search for services; this is available on their website (see Appendix 1).

Carers’ organisations may have local information or be able to put you in touch with a family carers’ group who would be able to make suggestions. Details of local carers’ organisations can be found at:
http://www.kent.gov.uk/adult_social_services/your_social_services/services_and_support/carers/kent_organisations_for_carers.aspx.

You can also ask other families you know or find out if there is a local family network or group that you could contact. Your relative’s Care Manager should be able to let you know about some of the providers but may not know of the whole range of providers.

Are there different kinds of support providers?

Yes. They can be large or small, national or local, charitable or private. There are pros and cons to each type. But in the end it’s not the type that matters, it’s the values of the people running them, the management and the attitudes of support staff towards you and your family members.



Are support providers connected to housing providers?

When someone is in a 'supported living' situation, their housing and their support will often be provided by different organisations - one that specialises in the provision of housing and one in the provision of support. When arranging support it is a good idea to find out whether moving house would mean losing a support worker whom your relative likes.

You might want to ask the support and care provider how they will help your relative to keep their tenancy. They will need to know who the landlord is and understand both the rights and responsibilities that your relative has as a tenant. They should also explain how they will share information about the landlord, how they will support group decisions if it is a shared house and be clear about how decisions will be made with individual tenants.

Further information about housing and support arrangements is available on the Housing Options website (see Appendix 1). A leaflet about shared housing is available at:

http://housingoptions.org.uk/general_information/gi_publications_docs/valuing_people_now_leaflets/3.pdf

Can we choose which provider we want?

Contact at least three support providers and compare them with each other. Have a look at their websites. Are they up to date and full of useful information? Are they affordable? Don't just think, "This one looks OK" or get just one recommendation – what works for one person may not work for another. The information below can help you to make a decision.



3. Checking out support providers

What are the important things to look for in a support provider?

The most important thing is their values and attitudes. Look for providers who understand about person-centred support – this is where support fits around a person rather than a person fitting around the available support. Ask yourself whether they seem to realise that people with learning disabilities want the same out of life as everyone else. Does the support provider welcome the involvement of parents, siblings and other people in a person's circle of support? Does the organisation know about person-centred planning? For further details on person-centred planning see Appendix 1.



Choose providers who understand that your relative, with your help, needs to be in control of the support they are getting, is listened to and that the support can change as needed. Providers who are keen to talk about your relative and what kind of support would work for him/her are preferable to the ones who only want to talk about paperwork and routines.

Ask them what their policy is on some of the questions below. If they don't have one, use it as a way of testing out their reactions. If they say, "That's a good idea, let's see how we can do it," that's a good sign. If they say, "Oh no, we don't/can't do *that*," you might want to try someone else.

Does it make a difference whether the organisation only supports people with learning disabilities or supports all adults?

If they work mainly with older people, they may not have much experience supporting someone with a learning disability to lead an ordinary life; but that does not necessarily mean they won't have the right values or have a positive attitude towards adapting their services around a person. Even if they specialise in learning disability, this is not a guarantee that they have the right values or are good at supporting someone to lead an ordinary life.

Who can advise us about the quality of support providers?

Find out who the local family support groups or organisations are. Get their views on different providers. Contact Kent County Council to find your local groups (see Appendix 1 for contact details).



Are there people in authority who check what goes on?

- Find out how often the provider is monitored by Kent County Council
- Check whether the provider is registered and inspected by the national Care Quality Commission (CQC) – they should have inspection reports which you can look at
- Ask about their own management checks



Are there any national standards that we can look at?

An organisation called Paradigm developed a set of national standards, called REACH © for Supported Living. Many Local Authorities ask providers of Supported Living to sign up to delivering their services in line with these and use them for quality monitoring. Some local authorities have set up a quality checking service that involves people with learning disabilities and parents and family carers using the REACH © standards to talk to tenants, staff and managers to improve the quality of support. The Standards are set out in Appendix 4.

Will the organisation have things in place to check the quality?

A good organisation should have a quality assurance system in place to keep a check on how well they are doing. This will vary depending on the size of the organisation but you can ask them how they go about checking and improving the quality of their service. This may include annual surveys of people using their service and their family carers that are accessible and used to introduce improvements.



Can you ask the provider for references?

Yes. Get a reference from someone who has used their services – if they are a national organisation try to get a local reference from someone with a learning disability or their family. Try to talk to people who have learning disabilities themselves and their families who have received support through the provider and other carers.



Can we make complaints?

All support providers should have a complaints procedure - ask to see this when choosing a support provider. When you discuss their complaints procedure with them, check whether they see it as a way of improving their service. See that the procedure is written in an accessible way for people with learning disabilities and their families.

4. Checking out staff policies and practices

Are support workers directly employed by the provider, or does it recruit people on a casual basis from an agency?

If the provider employs its own specific staff, you may get more consistency. However, this alone does not guarantee that staff are committed to their job. It is worth asking for a clear description of this as some organisations look as though they employ people but they only introduce people to you.

You may find that agency staff are no less committed, but simply want to work more flexibly. What matters is whether staff relate to a person with a learning disability in an individual way and whether they provide continuity of support. You may also want to know what support will be given to staff to do their job.

Will we have a say over who is employed

A good support provider will involve you in recruitment. If you don't have time to be involved in selecting every support worker then ask if the provider can give you a brief background on each person or ask to contribute to the 'profile' of the person they are looking to recruit. The job description or person specification of the person they are looking to recruit should be based around what is said in someone's person-centred plan.

You could ask to be included in the worker's induction program. Also ask about their policy for changing a support worker if it is not working for your relative.



Does paying more mean the support will be better?

The standard of support may be higher if the hourly rate is more expensive, but not necessarily. Workers will be motivated by a number of factors, including the training and support they receive to carry out their work. You could ask the support provider how much they would pay the support person per hour.

Does the provider train its workers?

It is important to ask about the experience and qualifications of support workers and managers. Whilst support workers may not have formal qualifications they may have relevant work experience or have taken part in training whilst at work. You should ask about the training that workers have had or can access. The most important training is in values and attitudes to make sure that support workers work in a person-centred way, which values your relative as an individual requiring access to the same opportunities as any other person. You should ask whether staff get training in person-centred planning and disability equality. If your relative has needs that require specific skills to get good support, for example, communication skills, an understanding of autism or epilepsy, then you should find out whether staff have these or will receive appropriate training. It is worth asking whether people with learning disabilities and family carers are involved in delivering some of the training to workers or find out whether they are open to this idea.

Is the support provider able to provide different kinds of support workers for different kinds of support?

Your relative may need different kinds of support for different areas of their life, for example, for being involved in activities they enjoy compared with getting help around the house. If they are looking for work or need support in their education or employment then they may benefit from having someone with these specific skills.

Find out whether there will be different support workers who sleep overnight and if there are, then make sure that they will get a chance to know the person they are supporting during waking hours and day time activities

Can our relative use support to meet friends and go out with them?

An ordinary life means having friends and relationships and good support means being able to go out with friends or to visit them. Having a 1:1 worker does not mean only doing things on your own with a support worker. The worker's role should also involve developing the person's social networks and friends. Supply the supporter with the phone numbers of friends of the person being supported and a brief description of their shared interests and activities



What do support workers need to know about supporting people outside the house?

Ideally, workers should have local knowledge and involvement: they need to be connected to the community themselves. If they don't have local knowledge, ask the organisation/agency how it supports staff to get to know the local area. Check whether paid supporters have access to the internet through their organisation to find local information

Does the support provider ensure that all of its workers work consistently with each other?

Your relative may have a number of people supporting them and you may want to check how the support provider will ensure their work is co-ordinated. You could suggest that a member of the team acts as a co-coordinator/ team leader.

You could also ask that a manager meets with you all to discuss how a team works together and that you get involved in selecting a team of people who will work well together. You should also ask how often the team will meet together and receive management supervision as a team.

What if support workers are sick or prevented from coming in?

The provider you choose should have a reserve of regular workers who are known to you. It should have precise emergency procedures in place to cover this. Ask what they are.

Will we be informed which support workers are working on which days?

If the support is coming into your family home, you should be informed. Someone living independently should also be informed who will be supporting them on any specific day but family members may not always have this information. If your relative is having a particularly difficult time you may wish to be informed of who will be working with them and any changes to this schedule so that you can ensure your family member has consistent support. If you would like this involvement then discuss this with the support provider although it is their responsibility to make sure support is consistent.



5. Managing day-to-day

What should we be looking for in support workers in their day-to-day work?

These are some of the things you may want to be aware of:

- Are they respectful and aware that they are in someone else's home, for example, do they ask if they can have tea or coffee or do they just help themselves?
- Are they imaginative and adaptable, or do they just want to do things by the book?
- Do they know how to be friendly and warm without being patronising?
- If there are two supporters paid to support one person, will they create a genuine three-way relationship, or will they talk to each other over the head of the person they are supposed to be supporting?
- Do they expect to eat and drink with the person they are supporting?
- Do they spend the whole allotted time being engaged with the person they are supporting or, for example, are they watching TV or doing their own shopping whilst out and about?
- Do they only use their mobiles for essential personal matters whilst at work?



How do we keep supporters fully involved?

Support workers may get to know your relative in a different way to you and may have some new ideas about helping them to have the life they want. It is therefore helpful to provide opportunities for them to talk about their ideas – this should contribute to them feeling valued and motivated. Involve the supporter in developing a person-centred plan with your relative. If you have a circle of support, invite them to meetings. For further details on circles of support see Appendix 1.

Will we have problems with paperwork and invoices?

It will be a lot easier if you keep on top of paperwork and regularly check things. When dealing with the provider, keep an eye out for overcharging and undercharging. Ask for as detailed a breakdown of costs as you need so that you can keep your paperwork straight. When dealing with the Council, keep your own record of any invoices or other paperwork in case an issue arises. You should be able to discuss problems with administrative staff at Kent County Council.

Expenses forms can become an issue so make sure these are filled out correctly; most problems around money come from lack of attention to detail. Ensure that you check paperwork on a regular basis and this should highlight any issues straight away.



Is travel to and from work included in the budget?

With some providers it is, with others not. Leaving grey areas is not a good idea, so get cut-and-dried answers in advance as to whether travel is included or not.

How do we manage additional expenses?

Agree in advance how the support worker will be funded for transport on trips out and about - there should be no grey areas. It is also useful to agree about expenditure for things like meals out (e.g. by taking turns to pay, or by establishing an upper limit) and how decisions will be made about longer or more expensive trips according to budget. It is useful for the support worker to keep a record book of previous expenses, with receipts, that is shared with the person with learning disabilities and have an agreement who will be able to view the book.



Whose job is timekeeping?

Support workers should have specified hours and times that they will work during the week. It is their responsibility to ensure that they follow these and arrive on time. However, if you require these times to be changed for any reason then prior notice must be given to the support worker.

Will we have a personal relationship with a named manager, who we can meet face-to-face?

Yes, you should. Make sure you know where this person stands in the chain of command - who he or she reports to, and how support workers are supervised.

Will there be effective two-way communication?

- It may be useful to keep a contact book in the home for comments about anything that needs to be shared with other support workers or family members, for example, doctors, dentists and or hospital appointments.
- Establish how and when supporters or managers can contact you or vice-versa.
- Find out if you can contact a manager out-of-hours.
- Is there an emergency number you can call at any time?
- Agree a time-limit for returning phone calls or replying to e-mails and letters.
- Supporters should keep their own record book, keeping an account of what's working and what's not working.



- If there are several workers, the support provider is responsible for making sure there is communication between them so that they let each other know what they are doing and use the support hours in the best way.
- Find out how they would share confidential information with the landlord
- Find out how they would help with disputes with other tenants.

How do we agree about who does what?

If you find the support worker is doing things ‘for’ a person rather than supporting them to do things in their own time and their own way then you need to point this out. One family had posted up a sheet of paper with the headings; “What I can do for myself, what I need help with, what I’d like to be supported to learn” and their daughter filled in what she would like to happen. Their daughter used this to get the support she wanted.

How will supporters know what is important to us as a family?

You may want to have opportunities to have a few minutes’ worth of shared time between family members or friends and the support worker, e.g. when the worker is calling at the house. This gives the support worker a model of what ordinary life looks like for someone with a learning disability.

What if friendships develop between support staff and other family members?

Parents and others may sometimes find themselves developing a closer relationship with a particular support worker. Making friends is not necessarily bad, but if you feel it is happening, make sure that you still feel able to make comments or complaints about their work.





6. Keeping safe

What about safety and security in the house?

Make sure the house is safe to avoid accidents and insurance issues (the police or fire brigade will do an estimate for free). Always show support workers where the first-aid kit is located. Make sure your relative knows to ask for a support workers pass/id badge before letting anyone in their home. It may be useful to have a key safe outside the property.

Are there things we can do to help our relative to keep safe?

During an assessment you can make sure that any risks that exist or might exist in the future are identified. When you develop the support plan you need to look at what needs to be put in place for your relative to be safe and well.

One of the things that can help people to keep safe is to have family and friends involved in their lives: it might be a good idea to think about a circle of support (see Appendix 1). Family and friends are good at noticing when someone may have been hurt or abused or are not safe.

It is also important to get a balance between your relative being safe with also having choice and control in their life and looking at finding ways they can try new things and have new experiences. The Mental Capacity Act (see Appendix 1 for further information) recognises that people with learning disabilities are citizens with the same rights as everyone else, including being able to take risks, and that if they understand the consequences of their decision it is their decision to make.

Are there things we should look for in the support provider?

Ask the support provider how they help people to make decisions about their life on both a day-to-day basis and when making bigger decisions about making changes in their life. How a person will be supported to make choices and decisions should be set out in their support plan. Good support around making choices and decisions helps a person to keep safe as they will know they have a voice and can speak up when things do not feel right.

Make sure that the support provider has policies and practice in place that protect people from harm and help people if they have been abused. Open communication in an organisation usually helps for any problems to be picked up and discussed. A support provider should respond quickly to address poor staff attitudes and disrespectful behaviour towards the people they are supporting - raise your concerns if you see this going unchallenged.



The support provider should have good systems in place to ensure that workers' references are properly checked and that security checks have been carried out to make sure they are suitable to work with vulnerable people.

The support provider should also make sure that someone receiving their service knows that they have the right to make a complaint and any information about this should be accessible.

What should we do if we are worried about the safety of our son or daughter?

Kent have produced a leaflet for people with learning disabilities to help them to understand about the different kinds of abuse and what they should do if they are experiencing abuse:

<https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/adult-Social-Services/leaflets-and-brochures/adult-abuse-is-wrong-leaflet.pdf>

If you have any concerns about your relative's safety then you should contact Kent County Council and ask to speak to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Team who will be able to give you advice and support.



Appendix 1

Useful Contacts and Resources

Carers' Organisations in Kent

To find out about a carers' organisation in your area phone Kent County Council (see Page 18) or a full list of carers' organisations is available at:

http://www.kent.gov.uk/adult_social_services/your_social_services/services_and_support/carers/kent_organisations_for_carers.aspx

Care Quality Commission

The Care Quality Commission (often known as the CQC) is the organisation which is established by statute and which regulates registered providers of care services that involve personal care. Their website has information about the standards you can expect as well as an on-line care directory:

<http://www.cqc.org.uk/findcareservices.cfm>

Circles of Support

A *circle of support* is a group of people (selected friends, family members, neighbours, or service providers) who meet on a regular basis to support someone with a learning disability and/or the family itself, to help them take more control of their own lives and overcome obstacles. The circle can be chaired by a facilitator.

Employment

Few people with learning disabilities have a properly paid job, with the result that often no one even thinks it is possible. However, pilot schemes have shown how it can be done, regardless of the nature or severity of the person's disability. Personal Budgets and Direct Payments can be used to buy support for job coaching and for support in paid employment.

For the government's "How To" guide on this visit:

www.valuingpeoplenow.dh.gov.uk/content/employment-resources-hub

Kent County Council has a Jobs Action Group – For further information visit:

www.gettingalife.org.uk/areas/southeast_medway_kent

Kent Supported Employment is a scheme to support people with a disability to look for a job and retain a job:

http://www.kent.gov.uk/adult_social_services/your_social_services/advice_and_guidance/kent_supported_employment.aspx



Health

People with learning disabilities have the right to good quality healthcare that meets their needs. We know they do not always get this, particularly when they reach adulthood. For information on what people with learning disabilities can expect and how to obtain support for good health it may be helpful to look at the Improving Health and Lives: Learning Disabilities Observatory which aims to provide better, easier to understand, information on the health and wellbeing of people with learning disabilities:

<http://www.improvinghealthandlives.org.uk/about/ihal>

Their booklet on the 'reasonable adjustment' that services should make to provide good health care to people with learning disabilities, including a section on the involvement of family carers, is available at

http://www.improvinghealthandlives.org.uk/uploads/doc/vid_11332_Reasonable%20Adjustments%20for%20PWLD%20easy%20read%20final%20compressed.pdf

Housing Options

Housing Options is a national charity that leads in promoting better housing options for people with learning disabilities and works to influence policy that promotes greater choice and inclusion. Housing Options runs the national Housing Advice service for people with learning disabilities, their families and Housing Options members.

www.housingoptions.org.uk

Advice Line and family membership available on 0845 4561497

Kent County Council

Many of the contacts in this booklet are on-line but you can also contact Kent County Council by phone or email. Kent County Council is based in Maidstone and is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They should be able to answer your questions or put you in touch with someone who can.

Telephone 08458 247 100

There is also a textphone service available for deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired customers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Textphone 08458 247 905

Alternatively, you can email queries or questions about any of Kent's services at social.services@kent.gov.uk



Kent Card

The Kent Card is a chip and PIN Visa card. The direct payment is loaded onto your Kent Card. You manage this money and use it to purchase your support. You can use the card on the internet, the telephone or face to face. It is not a credit card so you cannot run up a debt on it. If you are paying a company they must be able to accept VISA card payments.

You will get a monthly statement showing all payments made using the card. If you have internet access, you can check your statement at the secure web site 'Cards Online'.

Further information is available at:

www.kent.gov.uk/adult_social_services/your_social_services/your_money/direct_payments/kent_card.aspx

Kent directory

Kent County Council has a directory of care providers: there are two ways to search for a care service, you can:

- Search the Kent online care services directory, or
- Request a copy of our latest Kent Care Directory be posted to you or someone you know by completing our online form

Further information is available at:

http://www.kent.gov.uk/adult_social_services/your_social_services/advice_and_guidance/care_services.aspx

Mental Capacity Act

'Mental capacity' means a person's ability to make decisions. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 says that a person's capacity to make a decision needs to be assessed in relation to each decision that is being made. BILD have produced a helpful explanation of the implications of the act for people with learning disabilities, available at:

<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/mca/files/bild-mca.pdf>

Person-centred planning

Person-centred planning is a way of choosing and providing services based on what people with learning disabilities want as long-term goals for their lives. The support plan for your personal budget or Direct Payment should be based on a person-centred plan which (a) puts learning-disabled people at the centre of the process, by helping them to set those goals, and (b) finds the specific support they need to achieve them.

Regular planning meetings are held, to check what is working and what is not working. Find out more from local organisations such as Topaz in Maidstone (www.topazcommunity.org) or Ashford District Partnership Group (www.ashfordweb.net).



Support Planning

A Support Plan describes what you want to change or improve about your life and how you will use your Personal Budget to make these changes happen. Your Support Plan must set out the support you want to have in place, how much it costs, and how it is managed. It will also explain why the decisions you make about your support will enable you to lead as independent and fulfilling a life as you can. You need a Support Plan to tell Kent County Council how you will use your Personal Budget to arrange your care and support. Your Support Plan will be used by Kent County Council to check that it meets your eligible support needs before they give you the money in your Personal Budget.

A Support Planning Information Pack is available which has a step-by-step guidance booklet which sets how to make a Support Plan. It gives a template for making a Support Plan but you can also do this in other ways, for example you can design a poster with pictures and/or words, prepare some slides on your computer or record it on tape, CD or DVD. You can put together your Support Plan on your own or with the help of family and friends or you can ask Kent County Council about people or organisations that can help.

Further information from Kent County Council is available at:

<https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/adult-Social-Services/leaflets-and-brochures/sds-factsheet-support-planning.pdf>

The In Control website also has information about making a Support Plan at:

<https://www.shop4support.com/S4S/UI/Content/MyLife/PlanMySupport.aspx>

<http://www.supportplanning.org/whati>



Appendix 2

Direct Payments and Personal Budgets

Direct Payments are cash payments given to service users in place of receiving community care services they have been assessed as needing. They are intended to give users greater choice in their care. The payment must be sufficient to enable the person to purchase services to meet their assessed needs, and must be spent on services that meet the person's needs. The person receiving the payment needs to either employ people to provide support or ask a service to organise this for them. Many councils have commissioned support organisations to help service users handle the responsibilities to do with employing people.

Personal budgets are an allocation of funding given to or identified for people after an assessment which should be sufficient to meet their assessed needs.

Users can either take their personal budget as a direct payment, or – while still choosing how their support needs are met and by whom – leave councils with the responsibility to commission the services. Or they can take have some combination of the two.

As a result, personal budgets can provide a potentially good option for people who do not want to take on the responsibilities of a direct payment.

Information on Direct Payments in Kent is available at:

<https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/adult-Social-Services/leaflets-and-brochures/direct-payments-leaflet.pdf>



Appendix 3

Employing Personal Assistants

For some people employing your own personal assistants or employing them on behalf of a family member may be the preferred option. These personal assistants can be self-employed or directly employed by the family or the person with a learning difficulty. This option has many advantages as the family member or person with a disability gets to have a direct say in who is hired and how they are managed. However this option has obvious complications in that families or individuals become employers and have to ensure they follow all of the required procedures and laws surrounding this.

For more information on what is involved in employing personal assistants including employees' handbooks, information on tax and NI and contracts for personal assistants, visit the Kent website at the link below:
http://www.kent.gov.uk/adult_social_services/your_social_services/your_money/direct_payments/guidance_and_documents.aspx



Appendix 4

REACH © Standards

There are 11 REACH © Standards, developed by Paradigm (<http://www.paradigm-uk.org/content/Home.aspx>), that aim to give people choice and control over how they are supported and how they live their lives.

Standard 1

I choose who I live with: I live with the people I want to live with or on my own.

Standard 2

I choose where I live: I live in a home that I want to be living in.

Standard 3

I have my own home: I have my own tenancy or I own my own home.

Standard 4

I choose how I am supported: I can choose the right type of support for me and the right amount.

Standard 5

I choose who supports me: I choose who comes into my home to support me.

Standard 6

I get good support: the people who support me are good at their job.

Standard 7

I choose my friends and relationships: I get the support I need to make and keep friends and relationships that I choose.

Standard 8

I choose how to be healthy and safe: I get the support I need to keep healthy and safe in the things I do.

Standard 9

I choose how to take part in my community: I get the support I need to make choices about getting a job, going to college, volunteering, activities, hobbies and interests.

Standard 10

I have the same rights and responsibilities as other citizens: I am supported to understand my rights as a tenant, as a citizen and as someone who receives support.

Standard 11

I get help to make changes in my life: I am often asked if I want to make changes in my life and get the support I need to make any changes



This booklet was written and produced by families in the Maidstone area of Kent with support from the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities. The booklet was part of the Valuing Families in Kent programme, funded by Kent County Council and delivered by the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities, which aims to give families a greater voice in the development and delivery of services for people with learning disabilities and their families. Families originally discussed issues about support providers in a workshop with Housing Options in 2010.

Key contributors to the booklet:

Jane and Bryan Tapp – parent

Bev Golding - parent

Linda McCulloch - parent

Chris Goodey - Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities

Christine Towers - Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities

Additional contributions from:

Steve Golding - parent

Teresa Bovis - parent

Amanda Johnson - Housing Options

Dee Watson - Kent County Council

Jenny Meehan – Topaz Community Limited

For further information about Valuing Families in Kent, contact valuingfamiliesinkent@yahoo.co.uk or telephone 01622 200 474

For further information about the booklet, contact Christine Towers on ctowers@fpld.org.uk or telephone on 020 7803 1100

For further information about the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities visit www.learningdisabilities.org.uk

August 2011