

Enterprise for All

Care or community support services
run by people who have experienced them



A Practical Guide for enterprising people

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communitycatalysts
unlocking potential **effecting change**

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1. Introduction

This guide has been produced by Community Catalysts. We are a social enterprise set up by NAAPS UK, a charity and membership organisation that supports providers of very small (micro) family and community based support and care services, helping them to get the advice, help and representation they need.

We believe that the Government's strategies to give people more control of their social care services have the potential to transform people's lives for the better. Our aim is to ensure that people have real choice of personalised local social care and health services. We do this by working in partnership with local authorities and others to help make the personalisation of adult social care services a practical local reality.

One of the ways we try to ensure choice is available is by supporting existing and emerging providers of very small (micro) social care and support services. We know that without some help and support these micro providers struggle to turn their ideas into services. As a result of our work, a local micro-enterprise support agency has been established in a number of local authority areas. Each agency employs a Co-ordinator to provide individual tailored support, information, and sign posting to local providers.

We have published two guides as a result of our work; the first in 2009 is called **Supporting Micro Market Development** and is a **Practical Guide for Local Authorities** about working with micro-providers. The second published in 2010 is a practical guide for micro-providers called **Setting up a Micro Care or Support Service** and is a useful reference for anyone thinking of setting up a micro-care or support service (*see section 9*)

In addition to our general work supporting micro-enterprise we have had a project in Oldham helping people who are customers or potential customers of care and support services to set up a micro care or support service for other people. This project has run for two years and during this time we worked with 18 established and potential micro providers all of whom have a learning or physical disability or mental illness.

We have learned that most micro providers need similar standard information and advice. Some providers who have an illness or disability may need additional or different information that reflects the specific barriers and challenges they face; this does not assume that their intention is to establish an organisation that makes money and is more accessible.

Our 2010 guide **Setting up a Micro Care or Support Service** provides standard information to all micro providers who are planning to set up a social care enterprise and offers detailed signposting to additional sources of help and advice. This 2011 guide **Enterprise for all - A Practical Guide for enterprising people** provides less detailed general information, is more accessible and tries to address some of the specific issues faced by people with an illness or disability thinking about establishing their own service.

Each micro-care and support service is different and we cannot provide here the tailored advice that a particular micro-service may need.

2. Changes in adult social care

The previous Government said it wanted to make changes in social care to try to give people more choice and control over their own lives, the support they need and the services they use.

They wrote a number of policy and strategy documents including the **Putting People First: a shared vision and commitment to the transformation of adult social 'concordat'** which was published in December 2007. In **Putting People First** the Government said that it wanted people to have control over the support and services that they receive. Personal Budgets are a key part of this and give people control over the government money that will fund their care so they can choose how it is spent.

The Coalition Government published **A Vision for Adult Social Care: Capable Communities and Active Citizens in November 2010**¹ and the new sector-wide partnership published **Think Local, Act Personal (TLAP)** in 2011². TLAP shows that both the sector and the Government back a personalised, community based approach for everyone by continuing the roll out of Personal Budgets, having a focus on self funders as well as people who get government funding and giving councils the job of helping new providers so that people who need support have more to choose from.

By themselves Personal Budgets will not make all these changes happen. We know that once people understand how much money is available; they use that money flexibly and with imagination, choosing services that they want and need. If social care is to really change there must be lots of different local services and supports that people will want to buy with their Personal Budget.

¹ http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/LocalAuthorityCirculars/DH_121768

² <http://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/>

3. What are micro-services?

Micro-services provide support or care to people in their community, who may be older, unwell, or have a learning or physical disability. Micro-services can be bought by people who fund their own care, or who have a Personal Budget, or they can be bought by a local council or health authority.

In some cases micro services are not run as a business or formal organisation and are offered on a voluntary basis.

Micro services can be called other things such as: small community care services, micro-social care enterprises, small care businesses; user led organisations (ULO's) or community services.

Community Catalysts' defines micro-services as having five or fewer workers, being independent of any larger organisation and delivering any kind of regulated or unregulated care or support service. We believe that micro services offered by local people to local people are likely to be able to deliver a more personal service.

There are many different types of micro service that support people with very different needs and they are all run by very different people. What all micro providers have in common is that they want to use their gifts to make a difference to the lives of the people they support. Micro services can be run by anyone including people with support needs, carers, families, professionals and people who are new to the world of care and support services.

4. Why deliver your own care or support service?

Older or disabled people are really well placed to deliver care or support services because they are more likely to understand the challenges that other people face, how people's needs can be met and their aspirations achieved. They are likely to have had both positive and negative experiences of receiving care and support and these experiences will inform the ideas they have and the plans they make. They are likely to be able to spot any gaps in services and supports within their community and could be well placed to fill these gaps.

You may be considering setting up a micro social care enterprise because you want to use the experience and knowledge you already have; want to help other people, have a passion for 'doing it right', know someone you would like to support or for a multitude of other reasons.

You may be attracted to running your own enterprise in order to work flexible or part time hours or because your health or circumstances dictate when, where and how often you can work.

5. Setting up your enterprise

Even if you don't need to make any money from your enterprise you still need to plan to make sure that your enterprise has the resources (people, money and premises) it needs to do a good job. You need to draw up a plan (Business Plan) when you start up your enterprise which sets out what you are going to do, how you know it is needed, how much money you need to run it, where you will get the money from and how you are going to make sure you do a good job.

You need to think about this again each year to make sure your enterprise continues to be good and has enough money to carry out its work well.

Start by being very clear about the amount of time you can give to your enterprise, whether you need to earn money or plan to run it on a purely voluntary basis. Think carefully about your skills and knowledge and the type of service you want to offer. The next step is to consider how you plan to set up and deliver your service and at this stage you may need to take advice from a relevant professional (*see Section 7*). The sections below cover some of the things you need to think about.

5.1

Plans and customers

When considering the type of service you want to offer you firstly need to think about your own knowledge, skills and interests and what you are good at. You also need to consider what services you think people in your area want and need in order to meet their care and support needs and how your new enterprise might be able to meet these needs.

Service ideas might include:

- Care and support at home
- Support during the day
- Friendship and good neighbour
- Meals supply and delivery
- Advice and representation
- Training and information sharing
- Social groups
- Employment support
- Leisure services
- Support to engage in specific hobbies or activities such as music, cookery or dance

You also need to think about who you could offer your service to. You could consider offering your service to people with sensory or physical disabilities, learning disabilities, older people, and people with mental health issues or people who have other kinds of support needs.

You may decide to focus your service on members of a particular community or group such as (BME) black and minority ethnic or (LGBT) lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender groups, who may struggle locally to get the specialist services that they are looking for.

An important early step is to try and find out if there is a need for the service you are planning to deliver, what competition there is and what other similar

services are charging, particularly if you intend to offer your service on a payment basis (market research).

You may be planning to offer your service to people who have a Personal Budget with a view that they will use some or all of their budget to purchase whatever service you offer. In some parts of the country the implementation of self directed support and personal budgets is still at a relatively early stage and because of this, not everyone has a personal budget yet and the sorts of support that people will want to purchase with their personal budgets is not yet fully understood.

Connecting with local people and organisations is a good way of finding out more about your potential customers and their needs and to get feedback on your plans. Local people and organisations might include some or all of the following:

- Local authority adult social care staff
- People with a support planning or brokerage role
- People who work with people who have direct payments
- People within the local authority who are reviewing existing services such as day centres
- Advocacy organisations
- Advice and information organisations that work with particular groups such as Age UK, MIND or DIAL (Disability Information Advice Line)
- Carer groups
- Centres for Independent Living (CILs)
- User led organisations (ULOs), and forums such as the Older People's Forum and Local Partnership Group

Your personal experience may help you to identify a gap in what is currently available in your area or you may be aware of a quirky or unusual service that might benefit other groups of people.

5.2

Where to deliver the service?

There are two things to think about when deciding where to deliver your service. The first is the area that it will cover and the second is the place where it will be delivered.

The area will probably be determined by where you live; how far you are willing and able to travel and where your customers are based.

The type of service you plan to offer and the needs of your customers will both be key in determining the place where it will be delivered and managed from.

Possible places include:

- Your customer's home
- A community centre or similar
- A rented property or room
- A public place in your area e.g. sports centre or park
- Your home

By 2012 every local authority should have a Centre for Independent Living (CIL) that may be willing to offer you a room or area from which to deliver your service. One of the benefits of delivering a service from a CIL is that it is more likely to be accessible to people with a disability or support needs.

If you decide to deliver your service from your home there will be additional things to consider. Home workers are usually defined as people who use their home as an office or place of work. Working from home is an alternative to having to go out to a place of work and may work well if you have an illness or disability as your home will be already be accessible, suited to your requirements and will contain the equipment you need. Starting your service from home can offer a way to test the waters and identify if your service will be used, before you progress further.

You may only need an office from which to manage your service e.g. a dog walking service and you may be able to find a space for your office within your home. When managing your service from home you will need to take professional advice; think about the laws for home workers and health and safety for you and others who may use your home.

You will need to take advice about insurance as a home worker as you may have to take out insurance specifically for this purpose. You may be able to claim tax relief against your income for gas, electric and water.

If you have a mortgage you will need to speak to your mortgage lender who may have to convert your mortgage to a commercial mortgage and this can be more expensive. When it comes to selling your property you may have to pay capital gains tax on the part of the home used as a business and it would be advisable to take professional advice on this.

If you are in a rented property you will need to seek advice and permissions from your landlord, or housing association/local authority.

More information about home working can be found at www.healthyworkinglives.com/advice/workplace-hazards/home-working.aspx

5.3

Who is delivering the service?

Before the service can be delivered you need to make some decisions about who will be delivering it. Will you be working alone or employing some staff or volunteers? Attracting the right people with the right skills, knowledge, experience and values will be important to the success of your enterprise.

Employing family members and voluntary staff - many businesses employ family members and take on volunteers and need to consider the employment status of these people, their tax and national insurance deductions, health and safety, training and development, succession and benefits. **Business Link** have produced a useful guide which gives advice on all these issues www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId=1074446453

Business Link also offer useful advice on **recruiting and managing staff** www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?lang=en&r.l1=1073858787&r.l2=1073858914&r.l3=1084822723&r.l4=1074446453&r.s=m&topicId=1073858914

The 2010 Community Catalysts publication **Setting up a micro care or support service** contains lots of useful links on employing, managing and training staff and workers.

5.4

How much will the service cost and where will the money come from?

You need to do some early work thinking carefully about how much it will cost to run your service and where you will get the money from to cover those costs. Your market research will have helped you think about the numbers of people who might buy your service and what they might pay.

You may find out that although people want your service they can't afford to pay for it – in which case you'll need to think about whether you could get money from somewhere else to cover your costs like the local authority, or a local charity.

If there is a charge for your service it is essential that you get the money in for the work that you do. You will need to ensure that you have systems both for invoicing and also for managing income.

6. Help and personal support

People need help and support for a variety of reasons and in a variety of different ways. If you want your enterprise to be a success you will need to be realistic and honest about your own help and support needs.

Your health or disability may determine how much or little work you can manage and may influence or even dictate your working hours. You need to consider how your health affects you on a daily basis and the amount of support you need to carry out day to day activities and to manage your service. It may be that your needs fluctuate and require you to put plans in place to ensure the consistency of service delivery.

6.1 Who might support me?

You need to think about who will provide the day to day support you need: for example a family member, paid or unpaid carer or friend. There may also be voluntary organisations within your area such as user led organisations, a Centre for Independent Living (CIL) or others you know who can help. You need people around you who you know will want you to succeed and can provide the individual help and advice that you need.

If you receive a Personal Budget or Direct Payment you may use this to employ a Personal Assistant (PA) to meet your day to day personal support needs. It may be possible for you to recruit a PA who has additional technical or business management skills that could also support you in the development and management of your enterprise. If you have a Personal Budget you will need to check with your local authority what you are able to spend your budget on and assess the limitations this could place on the development of your enterprise.

The **Department of Health** has published '**Working for personalised care**' the Personal Assistants (PAs) framework.

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_128733

You are likely to face a number of challenges while setting up your enterprise but need to keep focused and be willing to learn by any mistakes you make on the way. Having the right support can help to keep up your levels of motivation if the process appears a little harder than you expected.

Right to Control

The Right to Control aims to give disabled people more choice and control over the support they need to go about their daily lives. Disabled adults will be able to combine the support they receive from six different sources and decide how best to spend the funding to meet their needs.

Right to Control is currently being tested in seven local authority areas in England (Trailblazer sites), in partnership with Job Centre Plus and the Independent Living Fund. The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) will evaluate the Trailblazer sites and this evaluation will inform a decision about wider roll out across the country. The Trailblazers are:

- Essex County Council
- Leicester City Council
- London Borough of Barnet
- London Borough of Newham
- Surrey County Council (two parts only: Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and Reigate and Banstead Borough Council)
- Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council and Sheffield City Council
- Greater Manchester (including Manchester City Council, Oldham Council, Bury Council, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council and Trafford Council)

The 6 funding streams included in Right to Control are:

Work Choice

- Work Choice helps disabled people who need specialist support to find work or keep a job once they have started work
- It is administered by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) through Job Centre Plus

Access to Work

- Access to Work can help people whose health or disability affects the way they do their job. It gives an employee and an employer advice and support with extra costs which may arise because of a health condition or disability
- It is administered by the Department of Work and Pensions through Job Centre Plus

Independent Living Fund (ILF)

- The Independent Living Fund provides money for disabled people who need extra help to live independent lives in their community rather than in residential care

- It is administered by the Independent Living Fund with funding from Department of Works and Pensions

Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)

- A Disabled Facilities Grant is a local council grant to help towards the cost of adapting a home to enable a disabled person to continue living there
- It is administered by Local Authorities, with funding from Communities

Supporting People (Housing-Related Support)

- Supporting People provides housing-related support to groups of people who need extra support: one of these groups is disabled people. The service aims to help people to stay in their own home
- Housing-related support is administered by Local Authorities with funding from Communities and Local Government (CLG)

Adult Social Care

- Adult Social Care is sometimes known as Community Care Services. These services help disabled people and older people, usually in their own home
- It could help pay for help with washing and dressing, help with shopping, cooked meals brought to people's houses
- Adult Social Care is administered by Local Authorities with funding from Department of Health

If you live in one of the trailblazer areas you may be eligible for Right to Control money and may be able to use part of your budget to purchase support to start a micro support or care service. Further details can be found www.odi.gov.uk/odi-projects/right-to-control-trailblazers.php

7. Professional and technical advice

Everybody setting up their own enterprise will need some professional or technical advice. People who need some support themselves may need additional specialist advice and help on issues specific to their situation.

7.1

Access to Work

Access to Work is a government-funded scheme run by Job Centre Plus. It provides advice and information to disabled people and to employers, and can help employers by paying towards the extra costs of employing someone with a disability.

The aim of Access to Work is to help tackle the practical obstacles disabled people face at work. You may be able to get Access to Work if you are self employed and your disability or health condition stops you from being able to do parts of your job. Access to Work might pay towards the cost of:

- Travel costs if you are unable to use public transport
- Alterations to your working environment
- A support worker to assist with work related activities
- Specialist equipment

If you feel that the type of work you do is affected by your disability or health condition that is likely to last for 12 months or more, contact your regional Access to Work contact centre to check whether you can get help.

www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/Emplimentsupport/WorkSchemesAndProgrammes/DG_173083

Your local Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) may also be able to advise you on Access to Work.

7.2

Welfare Benefits

If you are in receipt of benefits it is important to have a discussion with a professional or qualified advisor about the possible impact on your benefits if you become self employed or start up your own enterprise. Possible sources of welfare benefits advice include:

Citizens Advice Bureau helps people resolve their money and benefits problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Job Centre Plus, if you are on a sickness related benefit such as incapacity benefit you will need to speak to a **Disability Employment Advisor (DEA)** at your local Job Centre Plus. They will work with you to complete a better off to work calculation (BOC). This will determine when, if and how you will withdraw from your benefits as you begin to earn money from your enterprise. Job Centre Plus will also be able to provide advice about other back to work options, i.e. if you can access any extra benefits if you become self employed www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/Emplimentsupport/LookingForWork/DG_4000324

Disability Information and Advice Line (DIAL) is a national voluntary organisation predominately run by disabled people. They offer independent advice about benefits and other disability issues. You will need to check if this is available in your area www.dialuk.info/

User Led Organisations (ULOs) every local authority should have a user led organisation; this is run predominately by disabled people for disabled people. They may have access to independent advisors or know about local services who deliver advice on benefits.

www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digital_asset/dh_078842.pdf

Many ULOs are run by a local **Centre for Independent Living (CIL)** which is also run by and for disabled people and which offer a range of local services which often include help and advice on benefits issues.

Local Council, you will need to check if benefit advice is available from your own local authority and this information can be found on their web site.

There may also be small independent services in your local area able to offer benefits advice and information about these can be found on the internet, in the local press, from community centres and groups and on local notice boards.

7.3

Employment support advice

Employment support service run by local councils offer different types of advice which can include: benefits and business advice for people considering self employment. They may also be able to support you to access the training you need to start your service. Contact your council or local employment support office to find out what they offer.

Other organisations that provide employment support include:

Shaw Trust is a national charity which supports disabled and disadvantaged people to prepare for work, find jobs and live more independently. www.shaw-trust.org.uk/home

TNG, specialises in assisting hard-to-reach groups such as the long term unemployed, lone parents, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities. www.tng.uk.com

Remploy is one of the UK's leading providers of employment services to people experiencing complex barriers to work www.rempoy.co.uk/about-us.ashx

Generic enterprise advice

There is a wide range of organisations offering enterprise advice some of which offer their services free of charge whilst others, such as private consultants and some membership organisations, will charge a fee. These generic organisations may not have specialist skills and knowledge of the issues facing disabled people so if you plan to contact them you may decide to get some extra support to help them better understand your plans, needs and aspirations. When you contact them explain your ideas and plans and tell them why you want to set up an enterprise and who your customers will be.

Organisations that may be able to offer this kind of advice include:

Princess Trust helps young people who are not in work, education or training. They run the enterprise programme which provides money and support to help young people start up in business www.princes-trust.org.uk

Prime initiative provides advice and support to people aged 50 plus who want to set up in business. PRIME's work with older entrepreneurs compliments the work of other charities, such as the Princess Trust www.primeinitiative.co.uk

The Federation of Small Business is a pressure group that promotes and protects the interests of the self employed and owners of small firms www.fsb.org.uk

Business Link is the government's resource for business and they offer advice on starting, managing and growing a business. Funding for Business Link has been cut in many local areas but on line resources and information are still available www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/home

A4E offers advice on starting up a business www.mya4e.com/people

Network of Enterprise Support Organisations, provide independent and impartial advice, training and mentoring to new and emerging businesses. Some enterprise support agencies may make a charge for their services. www.nfea.com

Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS's) are available in most parts of the country and offer voluntary, community groups and services start up and ongoing advice and guidance on a range of issues. The services of your local CVS may also be available if you are considering setting up as a social enterprise and this may include advice and/or support with funding applications. The services available from each CVS will vary from area to area. Your Local Authority should be able to provide you with information about the CVS in your area.

7.5

Tailored enterprise advice for disabled entrepreneurs

Rapid Enterprise Development (RED) is a new organisation set up to assist disabled people and those that support them to explore self employment and small business opportunities. They aim to make setting up an enterprise as easy as possible www.redcic.com

Disability Means Business is a website resource for disabled entrepreneurs who are self employed or wish to start up their own business www.disabilitymeansbusiness.com

Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities runs the In Business Programme which supports the development of self-employment and small business opportunities for people with learning disabilities. FPLD has various guides on their website to help people with learning disabilities move into self employment. www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/?view=Search+results&search=In+Business

Association of Disabled Professionals (ADP) runs the Disabled Entrepreneurs Network (DEN) which is a forum for disabled people to share their problems and experiences, as well as to help create conditions for other disabled people to realise their full potential www.adp.org.uk

MiEnterprise is a social enterprise that works with individuals with a learning disability who want to start their own business www.mienterprise.org.uk

InBiz has a focus on enterprise creation and neighbourhood regeneration. They offer one to one low level business advice to people on sickness related benefits www.inbiz.co.uk

7.6

Enterprise models

The business models used by micro providers are on a continuum from fully commercial at one end to fully voluntary at the other. From our work we know that 30-40% of micro enterprises are delivered on a voluntary/semi voluntary basis with only some of the providers running a formally constituted business. This shows that your service can be set up in a variety of ways. You will need to take advice to find out more about each option and decide which will work best for you.

If you do decide to formally constitute your enterprise there are a number of models you could consider:

Sole Trader

This is the simplest way to run a business. The benefits are complete independence, easy to set up and run and you keep all the profits. However you are liable for any money you owe.

<http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1073789606&r.l1=1073858805&r.l2=1085161962&r.l3=1073865730&r.s=sc&type=RESOURCES>
[CES](#)

Partnership

There are three types of partnership:

- 'Ordinary' partnerships
- Limited partnerships
- Limited liability partnerships (LLPs)

In all types of partnership two or more persons – i.e. the partners share the risks, costs and responsibilities of being in business.

<http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1073789609&r.i=1073789606&r.l1=1073858805&r.l2=1085161962&r.l3=1073865730&r.s=m&r.t=RESOURCES&type=RESOURCES>

Private Limited Company

There are broadly two types of private company:

- Private limited company
- Private unlimited company

A private limited company may be limited by shares or by guarantee.

<http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1087521544&r.i=1073789609&r.l1=1073858805&r.l2=1085161962&r.l3=1073865730&r.s=m&r.t=RESOURCES&type=RESOURCES>

Social Enterprises

Are businesses driven by social or environmental purposes. As with all businesses they compete to deliver goods and services, but the difference is that their social purpose is at the heart of everything that they do and all profits that they make are reinvested towards achieving that social purpose.

They are run under a range of legal forms. Some will be incorporated as companies and they may or may not also take charitable status. Other social enterprises will form as Industrial and Provident Societies. The Community Interest Company - a relatively new legal form - is a bespoke company form designed for social enterprises with some special features to ensure they are working for the benefit of the community.

<http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1087385462&type=RESOURCES>

Charity

A Charity is an organisation that benefits the public in a way the law agrees is charitable. Most charities with an annual income of over £5,000 have to register with the Charity Commission. Charities can have a number of different legal structures including a not-for-profit limited company. http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/About_us/About_charities/default.aspx

8. Other things to think about?

Section 5 describes the basic steps involved in setting up an enterprise. In addition to these there are other things that you will need to think about and put in place before your enterprise is ready to run. You may need an enterprise adviser to help you think through these details. The things you need to consider will vary depending on the enterprise model you decide to use and the service you plan to deliver but may include:

Laws and regulations

Depending on the type of enterprise you are running and the service you plan to provide there could be laws or regulations that you need to consider. Your enterprise adviser will help you to seek expert advice.

Criminal Records Bureau Checks

If you deliver a service to vulnerable people you will need a Criminal Records Bureau Check (CRB).

In the UK CRB checking is the established way to check the criminal history of people who work with children and vulnerable adults. www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk/about_crb.aspx

Insurance

Depending on the nature of your service and how and where it is delivered there may be a need for you to have insurance in place. You need to take professional advice on insurance issues as it is important that you are correctly insured for all the activities undertaken by you and your enterprise.

Tax

Once you have decided what type of service you want to deliver and what enterprise model you intend to use you may also need to think about the tax you will need to pay. You can speak to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) about this www.hmrc.gov.uk/businesses/tmastarting-up-in-business.shtml or ask your enterprise adviser.

Accountancy and payroll

If you are running a constituted enterprise whether it is a profit making business, social or voluntary service you will need to keep records of everything you earn and spend. Even if you are not running a constituted enterprise you will need to keep a record of the money you earn and what you spend so you can be sure that you are covering your costs. You will need to take professional advice on how best to do this and what to do with the records you keep.

Policies and procedures

It is good practice to develop basic policies and procedures that are relevant to your service and which cover all of the things that you do. The policies and procedures required will vary depending on the service you offer, who you offer it to, whether you employ staff, whether you are charging people to use it and venues you are using.

Marketing

You will want to tell potential customers that your service is available and what it can offer them and you can do this with a good launch of your service. Your marketing will also need to take into account the ways your potential customers communicate, what would be the most accessible for them and where they might see it. You also need to think carefully about the language that you use to describe and sell your service and make sure you are clear from the start about what your service offers and what it will cost.

Quality assurance

You need to know that you are doing a good job and to be able to show that to other people, especially people who might become new customers. The best way to do this is check regularly with your current customers about whether they are happy with what you are doing and whether they have an ideas for ways in which you could be better and to use their ideas and comments to do things even better.

9. Further Information

Community Catalysts works very closely with NAAPS to offer a range of information, resources and services that may be of interest or help to providers of micro care or support services.

Setting up a micro care or support services – A Practical Guide

Available from Jill Wighton at Community Catalysts phone 01423 790126 or e mail jill.wighton@communitycatalysts.co.uk

The Quality Mark

Community Catalysts have developed a way to enable micro providers to demonstrate the value and quality of the service they offer. For more information phone 01423 790126 or email:

jill.wighton@communitycatalysts.co.uk

Membership of NAAPS

Small Community Service (SCS) Membership of NAAPS offers micro providers of care or support services a range of benefits in addition to discounted rates for publications and policies and procedures. These benefits include discounted rates on the insurance cover arranged by Ellis Bates, regular newsletters and information bulletins, and an email advice line www.naaps.org.uk

Policies and Procedures

NAAPS have produced 55 template policies and procedures tailored for very small providers which are available as Word documents. They are available for £250 for the full set or £10 each to NAAPS members (plus P&P if sent by post rather than email). A list of the policies and procedures available can be obtained from NAAPS www.naaps.org.uk

Insurance

NAAPS have found that many very small providers have difficulty obtaining insurance that is proportionate to and tailored to their particular needs and they have worked with an insurance broker, Ellis Bates, to develop a range of insurance products specifically for very small support or care services. More information and contact details can be obtained from www.naaps.org.uk

IMPORTANT NOTE

This guide signposts readers to a range of organisations with specialist expertise and to other resources that may be of help and assistance. However what is available is continually changing and we cannot take responsibility for any of the information in this guide being wholly accurate or up to date. Also while the services and products that have been included are those that micro providers may find useful, their inclusion should not be read as an endorsement or recommendation by Community Catalysts.

It is hoped that micro providers and other people with an interest will alert Community Catalysts to aspects of this guide that may need reviewing or updating. Please contact us on info@communitycatalysts.co.uk if:

- There are any areas not covered that you think should be
- Your experiences of using any of the resources included in this guide are less than positive. For example, if they no longer exist, or bear little resemblance to the information provided about them

This feedback will be extremely valuable in informing our continued learning about things that are needed by very small providers and will help towards keeping this guide relevant and up to date.