

Facts for Families: Just enough support

How we determine what is 'just enough'

We want to make sure that all the people we support get the right amount of support with the things that really matter to them.

Everyone receives a different amount of support according to their needs. This amount is decided by their social worker when they do a 'core assessment' or use a 'resource allocation system' to decide how much their personal budget is, please see the Individual Service Funds factsheet for more information.

Just enough support is not about making savings and reducing support, it is about making sure that, however much support a person gets, it is put to the very best use.

Most of the people we support will choose to have their family and friends involved in planning and reviewing their support and, of course, if they have profound and multiple learning disabilities you will be part of the 'best interests' process.

As part of the planning process to determine 'just enough support' we will use person centred thinking to find out:

- What is 'important to' a person.
- What makes a 'perfect week'.
- What 'outcomes' they want to achieve in the next year.

We will then be able to work out the best way to use the hours available. In order to achieve as much as possible we will ask some extra questions:

- Is there any assistive technology that can help?
- Are there friends, family and neighbours who are willing and able to contribute their time?
- Can we change the schedule and type of support we provide?

All of this is done with much consideration of risk and safety.

Many of the people we support have some support hours they share with others. We are working to make sure that everyone is clear about how many support hours they have as an individual and how many are shared with other people; so they can use the time in a way that works well for them.

How can you help?

We encourage you to be involved and to let us know what's important to you too. Sometimes we need to know beliefs and values while other times it might be a matter of who else in their circle of support is available to help. It's important that we not only find the right support plan but also the right support worker, you can help us with this by monitoring their responses to different things and people and also filling out a one page profile for us.

How might things change?

- “Sarah might get herself up and ready each day. Although this will take her an extra half an hour the 3.5 support hours saved can pay for her to go swimming once a week with Lucy, who is always on rota for this because she enjoys swimming.”
- “Tom regularly attends the weekly service and social at church, which staff initially supported him to do. Now, after the relevant checks, some fellow church goers take him and he is able to bank those two support hours a week for a trip to visit his cousin who lives far away.”
- “Suzie goes to stay with her parents every other weekend. She has changed the way she uses her support allocation and has now joined a local Zumba class and meets up with an old friend every week.”
- “Sam had a block of 12 weeks support from an outreach worker to learn how to travel safely to his new college. Each week he met with staff and learned different elements of the route, from how to get to the bus-stop to what to do if things didn't go to plan. A small, hand-held computer device prompted him with instructions whilst his staff made a staged withdrawal to the background. He learned the route so quickly he was able to use those support hours to plan and take a trip to London to see Abbey Road. He doesn't need the mini computer anymore, but has a mobile phone in case he needs to phone for extra support.”
- “John likes to stay until closing time when he goes out to the pub, but his housemate, Jeff, likes an early night. With changes to the rota John is able to share support with Anna who lives around the corner and also enjoys a late night out at the pub once a week.”

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