

# Self-Directed Support

## Organising support

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

This fact sheet tells you about the various options.



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## The basic facts

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

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

### The options you can choose from are:

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

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



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# More information about organising support

There are two parts to organising your support:

- deciding the kind of support you want and figuring out who you want to offer that support – you'll have thought about this in making your support plan
- arranging and managing the support.

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

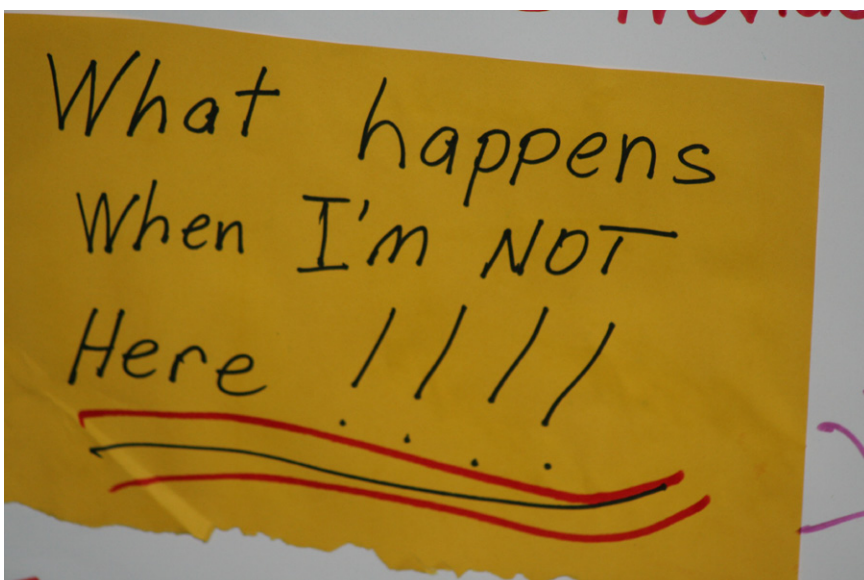
On the other hand, if you want to organise your support yourself – say employ your own Personal Assistants – you might still use the help of an accountancy firm to pay the wages.

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# More detail

## Four kinds of support

These are the kinds of support that are available:

1. Natural support – the support that happens naturally in communities. It's available to everyone. It's free but part of an unspoken contract: 'I help you, you help someone else, someone helps me'.
2. Family and friends – the support that is given out of love and care.
3. Individual support services – support that is set up especially for you. An increasing number of support providers are able to arrange individual services.
4. Specialist support – support providers have set up services to work, usually, with groups of people. These services are 'off the peg' rather than tailor-made.

There are pros and cons about each of these. Find out what works for you by:

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

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## Support services

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

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



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## Arranging your own support

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

### There are many kinds of roles. For example:

- Accountant – you may want an accountant to keep track of your budget or to pay your Personal Assistants.
- Benefits adviser – usually available free, provided by the local authority or voluntary organisations.
- Companion – you can arrange for someone to go to an event you both like
- Circle of support – people who come together to support you and take care of your interests.
- Come-in supporter – someone who helps you with tasks at home.
- Community connector – someone who helps you make connections in your neighbourhood.
- Good neighbour – someone who lives nearby, looks out for you and can help with some tasks.
- Job coach – someone who helps you to get a job and gives on-the-job support.
- Personal Assistant – someone recruited to support you in exactly the way you choose.
- Skills trainer – someone who helps you to learn a specific skill.
- Support broker – someone who helps you with planning and arranging your support.
- Support tenant – someone who provides help in your home in exchange for free or reduced-rent accommodation.

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

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# An example

## Keith Webster

**Keith describes his journey ‘from the extraordinary to the ordinary’:**

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

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

Now, I have my own Individual Budget and pay for my own support.

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

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

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

Keith comments ‘I’ve got my life back, This is the real Keith.’

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# There is a lot of information about Self-Directed Support on In Control's website: [www.in-control.org.uk](http://www.in-control.org.uk)

## Here is a selection of things that tell you more:

### 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](http://www.in-control.org.uk/shop)

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

**How to be in control** DVD

### Printed publications for sale at:

In Control Support Centre, Carillon House, Chapel Lane, Wythall, B47 6JX or [www.in-control.org.uk/shop](http://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.shop4support.com](http://www.shop4support.com)

### About the **in Control and me** project

A three-year project to produce accessible information for everyone who wants to direct their own support.

The project has worked with individuals and families to decide what information should be produced. This information will reach over 11,000 people a year through the national learning disability helpline. The In Control website will also have an online advice area.

More information: Lisa Dunne: 07984 111315.

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