

SUPPORT PLAN -

An Introduction to me – a fiercely independent spirit!

My name is xxx, but I much prefer being called xxx. I would like to think of myself as a very thoughtful and insightful person; I have been through lots of really difficult situations in my life, and I would like to think that I've come out a stronger person as a result. Unfortunately, I was in a very negative relationship for a long while, and had an extremely difficult time, but now I live alone (with my cat and dog) and am happier in my private life; this relationship has had its impact on me – I have developed a number of strategies to ensure I feel safe at home, but these generally work well, and I am very happy living independently in my flat, which is very conveniently located near to the local supermarket. I have a wonderful family, and am very close to my 4 children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews etc – in fact, there are 23 children in my family who I see regularly and buy presents for at Christmas – my eldest son is very excited about the fact that he's going to be a new father soon, so that will make 24 children, and I'm really looking forward to that!

I care a great deal about other people, and I am passionate about ensuring that disabled people are not discriminated against, which I believe happens a lot with their services and with the general public at large. I have had a number of jobs in the past, including working as a Doctor's Receptionist, a Carer, on a telephone support line, and I believe in 'going the extra mile' – I know I have my own challenges to deal with, but I'm always much happier when I'm helping other people!

As I said, things haven't always been very easy for me, and I have had a great many challenges to my health. I now need to use a wheelchair to get around much of the time and when outdoors, but I am keen to maintain as much mobility as possible, and in the home I can stand to do jobs like washing up in the kitchen, etc. I realise that the day may come when I need to have more adaptations made to my home – the kitchen in particular will require changes made to it, but I will only consider that at a later stage when absolutely necessary. My bathroom has been adapted to meet my needs and I am as independent as possible when meeting my personal care

needs, but I recognise for safety's sake I need to have a carer around to help me if need be in the shower for instance and I will not compromise on the little support I do need .

As you can see, independence is a really big theme for me, and one of the most important things in my life is my car. In my car I'm 'normal', just like everyone else, my impairment is invisible, and I can drive around and get myself about, and that freedom is essential to me.

What's working well in my life?

As you will see from my individual budget figure, I don't receive a great deal of support at the moment. I am a very determined and independent person, and I don't want to ask for more help than I need. I have been receiving Direct Payments for quite a number of years now, and this has worked out very well for me. Since losing my leg, I have had 3 PAs, so I am experienced in managing my own employees and finances. I am interested in moving onto an Individual Budget as I will have a very small, but significant, amount of flexibility with my funding not possible with my direct payment. Stability and continuity of care is very important to me, and I work hard to ensure my PA is happy in her job, and we work well together; I am aware of how important it is to be flexible – both for my benefit, and for her's. I only have 1 hour support each day, and sometimes because of hospital appointments, I am able to 'save up' some of my time by having less support one day, to ensure I get the support I need for these other commitments. I'm very lucky in that my PA has a daughter who is also an experienced carer, and in the event that she is unwell or on holiday, cover can be provided to meet my basic needs.

What's not working so well?

I haven't been all that well lately, and am under the care of my GP who has recently changed my medication. I am arranging to go back to him soon to consult with him about this. Getting to the doctors has been difficult lately; refurbishments have been taking place, which has made it inaccessible, however, they should end soon. I'm generally pretty happy with my surgery, they understand me, and I always make sure my appointments are held early in the morning as I get quite anxious waiting.

What do I want to change?

Cooking is really important to me – I love to cook proper meals for myself, even though I do live alone. Unfortunately, the cooker I have at the moment is not very good and I'm concerned it may finally stop working very soon. It was about 3rd hand when it came to me, and the one thing I can think of with my individual budget that would make a big difference is for me to make small savings here and there to put towards the purchase of a new cooker. I have thought about the kind of appliance I would need; it must be electric, with a halogen hob, and it must have a top oven with a drop-down door so that I can sit in my wheelchair and use it as an additional work surface (the other worktops are too high for me to use sitting down). I think this will cost me around £400, and I hope that by being sensible with the care I need, I can make small savings of around £10 - £15 each month, and then maybe get a social fund award also to put towards it.

How will I be supported?

As the change I wish to make can only be a very slight one, I really don't envisage that I will require much support other than that I currently receive from the people I know and trust - family, friends and my PA. Having attended a Planning Live event with the Liberation Partnership, and receiving the support of other people who are on Individual Budgets during the day, I would like to explore the ways in which I could support others in my turn. I have a lot of experience to share with others, and I believe I am a good listener, so I would like to explore the opportunities that might arise there and maybe become a Mentor after my budget has been agreed – I would like to receive out of pocket expenses for doing this, or maybe barter my services to do this, and in return receive a bit of help around the house with odd jobs I can't manage, like changing light bulbs for instance.

How will my support be managed?

I would like to continue to receive monthly payments; as the amount of my individual budget is the same as my direct payment, I am happiest to continue with my existing arrangements. I have considered the option of receiving the money quarterly, but feel my current arrangements are working well, I know how much I will receive and don't want the worry of getting to the end of a quarterly period and not having enough funds to pay my PA.

How will I keep going and stay in control of my life?

The most important thing for me is to maintain my health and independence, and to be as good as I am now. I feel very much in control of my own life at present, and as there will only be a small change to my support under my proposed individual budget plan, I shall continue as I am. However, one of the things that I have been seriously considering following attending my Planning Live day is to set my personal affairs in order; it's very important for my peace of mind to know that my financial affairs as well as funeral wishes and expenses have been set aside and are known to my family so that they won't have that worry in the event of anything happening to me.

My action plan

I have already begun to put my plan into action; my PA is already employed, and since I attended my support planning day, I have tried very hard to make small savings here and there, without compromising my care, and have managed to save £30 from my direct payment account which I would like to carry forward into my individual budget.

How will I spend my Individual Budget

Resource allocation	£4,196.92
Less client contribution	£1,417.52
Plus amount I have saved in my DP account	£ 30.00
Total	£3,195.32 *this does not include 2% uplift or changes in client contribution
PA costs	£3,000
Money to be saved towards a new cooker	£ 225.32