



Your guide to making a Support Plan

This booklet explains:

- What a support plan is
- Why it is important to make a plan
- What help is available to you
- How to make a support plan

because we are all unique

Contents

	Page No
What is a Support Plan?	2
Why do I need to make a Support Plan?	2
Who can help me write my Support Plan?	3
What does my Support Plan need to look like?	3
What should be in my Support Plan?	4
How do I get my Support Plan agreed?	8
Helpful tips	8
What do all those words in BOLD mean?	Back cover

because we are all unique

What is a Support Plan?

Making a support plan can help you to think through the choices you have in your life.

Support plans enable you to say what you want your care and support to look like, and how this will help make things better for you (or achieve your goals and **Outcomes**).

This is particularly important if you are taking some or all of your support in the form of a **Direct Payment** (this means having your **Budget** paid directly to you in cash).

If you do not want your **Budget** in cash, your Care Manager can arrange your care and support services for you. You will still know the value of your **Budget**, have choice about what services you receive, and can change your mind and change the way you are supported if you want to.

You are in control - its all about you

Why do I need to make a Support Plan?

Once you know your **Budget** allocation you need to make a plan to say how you will spend it, and what your support will look like.

You can decide what you want to change and what needs to say the same. Planning is a way of making sure that people who support you know what you want, so they can do a good job.

Knowsley Council needs to be sure that the money for your support is spent in a responsible way. We need to see and agree your **Support Plan** before any money can be released to you.

The Law says we must have a written agreement about your support services.

Who can help me write my Support Plan?

You may want to write your **Support Plan** on your own.

If you would like some help, you might like to involve someone who knows and cares about you. This could be your:

- Family and friends
- Your care manager
- A support broker
- Organisations and people who support you
- People you trust

What does my Support Plan need to look like?

Make your **Support Plan** in the way you are comfortable with e.g. you may want to use pictures, drawings, writing or typing, or it could be on tape or a CD.

Although some people prefer to design their own **Support Plan**, your Care Manager can provide you with a standard **Support Plan** format if you would prefer to use this.

It is most important that you make your support plan how you want to.

What should be in my Support Plan?

First think about what is important to you.

Consider the needs you told us about in your assessment and what you would like to change to make things better for you.

It is important that the plan is really personal to you and is about what you want to achieve.

It should include enough information to answer the following seven questions:

1. What is important to you?

In this section you may wish to consider:

- Who is important to you either in the past or in the present e.g. friend's family, anyone else?
- How you like to like people to communicate with you?
- What are your hobbies and interests?
- What do you like and dislike?
- What do you think you are good at, what do others say you are good at?
- Any experiences or life events that you would like to share?
- What are your hopes for the future?

2. What do you want to change or achieve?

Your plan should say what you want to change about your life and what outcomes you want to achieve. You may want to consider what is not working well that you can change or have less of. As well as what is working well and you want to keep or have more of. Here are some examples for you:

- Changing where you live
- Keeping your job
- Attending further education
- Keeping fit
- Going on holiday
- Changing services you receive
- Changing how you spend your time
- Meeting new people

because we are all unique

3. What help do you need?

Your plan should say what support you need to achieve your

Outcomes. It is helpful to write in as much detail as possible. This can then be shared with people who will support you, or used as a job description which will help the person who supports you do a good job.

Here are some examples of what you may need help with:

- Personal Care
- Going to work
- Shopping
- Medication
- Paying bills
- Dealing with correspondence
- Swimming

You may wish to consider what kind of person you would like to help you, what skills should they have, and whether they will need any specific training? You may wish to include a timetable of your support.

4. How will you stay healthy and safe?

Your plan should also include any risk to you or others. Think about how you and others will keep safe and well:

- Are there people you do not feel safe around?
- Are you at risk of falls or accidents?
- Are you safe at home when cooking, bathing or taking medication?
- Are you safe out and about in the community?
- Do you do things that could do harm e.g. wander from your home, leave the tap or gas on, forget to eat or drink?
- What will happen in an emergency?

We will build lots of safeguards in as you go through this process: addressing risks with you; only agreeing safe support plans; giving good advice about safely employing people and using agencies.

Routines are important to all of us in one way or another. You may wish to include some that are important to you.

5. How will you stay in control of your life?

Your plan needs to say how you will make decisions about your life, and what support, if any you need. You may wish to consider:

- Can you make all your decisions about your life?
- Do you need someone to help you make some or all of the decisions about your life?
- Do you need somebody to make all decisions about your life?

You may want help from friends, relatives, carers, support workers or advocates to make some decisions. Your plan should say who will help you make these decisions and how they will involve you and most importantly who has the final say.

Making an advance decision

An advance decision is a decision that you make in advance of losing your ability or mental capacity to do so.

An advance decision can be done verbally but should really be written down as it is a record of your wishes. These can include decisions about your health, care, welfare, finances, and wishes around refusing a specific treatment.

If you are in an 'End of Life' situation due to illness you also may wish to consider "Priorities for Care" which is a special Advance Decision Care Plan obtained from your local surgery.

6. How will your support be managed?

Your plan needs to say who is going to manage your support and how you are going to arrange payments and other practical issues.

There are six different ways of managing your support

• **A Direct Payment**

Knowsley pays the money from your personal budget straight into your bank account (you need a separate account to stop this money getting mixed up with any other money you have). This usually happens in monthly instalments. You then purchase and manage your support from your bank account.

If you choose to receive your budget through a Direct Payment, the Direct Payment Team can offer you the following support:

- Home Visits
- Help to advertise for PA or Agency staff
- Help with interviews/recruitment
- Assistance in agreeing an hourly rate of pay for the PA
- Contracts for support with employees/employer rights and obligations
- Ongoing assistance with paperwork
- Provide information about opening a bank account
- Payroll service - supply pay slips and tax returns
- Ongoing telephone advice

- Free CRB check service
- Assistance in managing a budget
- Assistance to arrange Employers and Public Liability Insurance

You are not in this alone, there is plenty of help from experienced, friendly staff if you need it. In Knowsley over 500 people are in receipt of Direct Payments.

But you don't have to manage the money yourself. You can arrange for someone else to manage it for you:

- **Someone you trust**
e.g. a family member or friend. If a family member or friend manages the account this is called a "third party agreement" and works in much the same way as a Direct Payment.
- **A circle of support or trust fund** manages the money for you or an agency for example Knowsley Disability Concern; this is known as a Managed account or "Indirect Payment". This works in much the same way as a Direct Payment.
- **Someone you pay**
a broker, an independent social worker, or an advocate.
- **A Service Provider**
who manages the budget for you and provides support using an Individual Service Fund.
- **A Care Manager or Social Worker**

Further more detailed information is available about each of these options to help you make the best decision for you and your circumstances.

7. How will you spend your money (Budget)?

Your plan must clearly say how you intend to spend your **Budget**. You may wish to consider the following:

- What will your support cost week to week
- Volunteer expenses
- Insurance costs
- Equipment
- If you are keeping some of your **Budget** back state the reason why

Your plan must be within your **Budget** and show how it keeps you safe and well, and that your money is being spent legally.

If you are unhappy with your **Budget** allocation, or your support plan you should discuss it with your **Care Manager**.

How do I get my Support Plan agreed?

Your **Support Plan** will need to be agreed by Knowsley Council because we have a duty to ensure your **Support Plan**:

- Will meet your **Outcomes**
- Will keep you safe
- Is legal

All Support Plans must be reviewed at least once a year to make sure you still need a Budget, and your plan continues to meet your needs.

Helpful Tips

- Go through the plan/guide at your own speed.
- You can work through it in stages, bit by bit.
- Make sure you have plenty of paper.
- If you are unsure ask someone like your care manager or support broker who will be able to share an example plan with you.
- Your **Budget** will not be given to you until your completed **Support Plan** is agreed; because of this the **Budget** will not be back dated.
- It is a very good idea to read all of this guide before you start planning.

because we are all unique

What do all those words in **BOLD** mean?

Support plan

An agreement with you about how your budget will be spent and how your outcomes will be met.

Budget

The amount of money allocated to you for your care and support.

Outcomes

By outcomes, we mean the things that are important for you to achieve. These might be big changes such as moving house, or smaller but important things such as making sure that you get up in the morning at the time that suits you. An outcome might also be to keeping something the same such as being able to keep your house and garden well maintained.

Care Manager

This is another name for a social worker.

Direct Payment

This means having your **Budget** paid directly into your bank account.

A free interpreting service is available if you need help with this information.

Contact Knowsley Access Team on 0151 443 2600, fax 0151 443 4782 or email knowsleyaccesssteam@knowsley.gov.uk