

Appendix 1 Personalisation Case Studies

Taken from 2012/2013 Local Account¹

Isayas

My name is Isayas Solomon and I am a Southwark resident. I use a self-managed personal budget to directly employ two personal assistants (PAs). As a result of a spinal injury I use a wheelchair. I am unable to grip with either hand so need daily assistance with some personal care tasks and preparing meals.

Before I developed my support plan with the help of a support planner, I used carers from an agency. Some of the carers were nice but often they were replaced at short notice and I felt uncomfortable with people I didn't know coming into my home to assist me. It has meant a lot to me to be able to choose my PAs. I can feel in control of the support that I receive, and feel comfortable with the person and the way they assist me. We have mutual respect for each other. When interviewing the PAs I look for someone who is a good communicator with a positive attitude and an ability to work flexible hours. It helps if they live locally to me too.

The personal budget is paid into my bank account. I have help from a direct payment support service, which assists me with payroll, recruitment and fulfilling my responsibilities as an employer. One of the best things about controlling my personal budget is that I can use it flexibly. I arrange to have more support on days that I am not feeling so well and 'save up' some of it for an extra hour of support here or there. Occasionally my PA comes with me to the gym and helps me with the hoist so I can go swimming, or with my grip supports for doing weights to help keep me fit and healthy. It's my preference that the PA comes very early in the morning so I can feel ready to start the day when it suits me.

Making daily choices about how to use my personal budget and feeling comfortable with my PAs helps me to stay positive, and achieve the goals I have set myself. I am a very creative person; I write poetry, draw, paint and compose digital music. I also want to start running creative workshops for young people in the near future. I am a member of The Beam Arts group at Southwark Resource Centre. I am passionate about sport; I have done canoeing, snow skiing and skydiving with the help of the organisation The Back up Trust. I'm practicing my swimming and aim to swim competitively soon. I would recommend anyone receiving support from the council try a self-managed personal budget. With the right help to manage it, it really has improved my quality of life.

¹ <http://www.southwark.gov.uk/localaccount>

Derek

Derek is a 53 year old man who has a learning disability and epilepsy. His 82 year old mother is his main carer and they live together in Southwark. He is very close to his mother and also sees his brother regularly. He has been attending a local day centre for many years and enjoys spending time with his friends there.

Derek can be shy around people he doesn't know and becomes stressed and anxious in unfamiliar environments or with a change in routine. Apart from a few familiar journeys, Derek requires assistance to access the community safely. His father died a few years ago and as his mother is now quite elderly, he has not been able to get out and enjoy hobbies/activities as much as he did.

Derek's family, social worker and support planner helped him develop his own support plan. Part of the plan involves using Derek's personal budget to employ a key worker from the day centre as his personal assistant. Together they attend football matches, go swimming at the local leisure centre, see films at the cinema and take weekend breaks out of London. Derek still attends the day centre but now has other ways to be sociable and feel part of the community.

Taking the time to explore support options via an in depth, person centred planning process means Derek can now experience a greater variety of groups and activities in a way that is comfortable for him, while maintaining support from family, friends and key workers that has always worked well.