

Living in my home with support – can I afford it?

Helpful tips for people with learning disabilities who would like to move into their own home.

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When you decide to move there is a lot to think about. For instance, what sort of house you want live in or where you would like to live. You also need to think about what you do in your daily life and who it is important to keep in touch with.

It helps to make a plan.

When you do this, one of the most important things to think about is the things you may need help with. You may be entitled to some money for social care support to help you with daily living tasks. For more information about this see our factsheets *FS1 – Assessment and Fair Access to Care and FS7 – Personal Budgets*.

Devon County Council has a duty to meet your “eligible” social care needs. Some ways of doing this will be affordable within your personal budget and some won’t. The way you really want to be supported might cost more. This could be a problem if you need quite a lot of help and would like to live on your own, or if you don’t have much other support from friends, family or neighbours.

Social care support will only be provided if there is no other way different needs can be met. So if you have ordinary unpaid community support, the money in your personal budget will go further and it's more likely you can make an affordable plan.

Things which might help include:

- **Building into your plan regular time spent with family and friends when you do not need paid support.**
- **Thinking about how you spend your time. If you are in paid work for some of the working week or volunteering in the community, you won't need as much paid support. Just doing this increases your circle of support.**
- **Linking into as much informal community support as possible. If you build a circle of support with people living around you they can help you to link into community groups and leisure activities that interest you. In some towns there are also volunteer "befrienders" who can support you and do things with you.**
- **Choosing to do activities with friends and sharing the support costs between you.**
- **Becoming as independent as possible before you move - training in daily living skills is available.**

The sort of housing you choose to live in is also important as this can affect the way your support is provided.

If you are not safe without someone around all or most of the time but would like to live in your own home, it will be difficult for your support to be provided with the money available.

On the other hand, if you share a house with other people or live in a “cluster flat” or extra care housing, you can share some support so it will cost you less. Living with a “shared lives” family (adult placement) is also a very good way of being supported to live independently and costs less.

Other ways ‘paid’ support costs can be reduced include:

- Using on call systems and technology or gadgets that help to keep you safe and check out how you are getting on.
- Employing your own staff as “personal assistants” rather than them being employed by a support organisation costs quite a lot less.
- ‘Shared lives’ carers can act as an extended family for people who don’t live with them and provide day breaks or include them in family activities.
- In some parts of Devon there are ‘Keyring’ community networks, in which 10 people living near each other are supported by a “volunteer” who lives in the same area. They also support each other.
- Some care agencies find ‘live-in’ carers who will stay in your home for a period of time. They will have six hours off in the day time when other support will need to be set up. When they go on a break another live-in carer takes their place. This can be quite a good option for people with higher needs.
- Some times a person with a disability may let a room to an ordinary member of the public. In return for low cost accommodation the person agrees to do certain tasks such as shopping or going to social activities with the disabled person. This is called ‘Homeshare’. Some providers will help people set these arrangements up.
- You can discuss the ideas which interest you with the care manager when putting together your support plan.

Finally, it's worth remembering that the money you get for support from Devon County Council is provided to keep you safe and independent. However you may also have benefits like DLA which are given by the government to help you to live independently. You can choose to spend some of this money on things your social care budget doesn't cover, such as some social activities or help with gardening or shopping.

Further information about housing and support options is available in the Devon Housing Guide for People with Learning Disability and in factsheets *FS21 - Supported Living*, *FS22 - Shared lives schemes* and *FS23 – Devon Home Choice – Social Rented Housing*. Ask your care manager about these or find them on line at www.devon.gov.uk/factsheets.

If you have any further questions please contact Care Direct 0845 1551 007

Further factsheets can be found online at www.devon.gov.uk/factsheets

If you would like it in a different format such as Braille or audio, or in a different language, please contact our Customer Service Centre on 0845 155 1015 or email customer@devon.gov.uk.

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