

# Easy Read

## TOP 10 TIPS

when choosing a  
support provider

VODG resources:  
supporting improvement  
in social care

V O D G



## Tips for choosing your support



This is a guide to choosing your support in simple words and pictures.



We are **VODG**, the Voluntary Organisations Disability Group. **VODG** is a group of organisations that supports disabled people.



**VODG** helps organisations work together to make disabled people's support better.



This guide can help you if you have a **personal budget**. A **personal budget** is money you get from the council to pay for the things you need, like support at home or support to get out and about.



[Here are some links](#) to easy read guides with some more information about personal budgets.



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# 1. Think about how you want to be supported

There are two ways you can spend your **personal budget**:



- you can pay someone to support you directly
- you can get an organisation to support you.



There are differences between paying someone directly and getting an organisation to support you. This guide can help you think about what is best for you.



## Paying someone directly



If you pay someone to support you directly, you will be their boss. There are lots of things to think about if you are someone's boss.



You might need support from a family member or a friend to help you work out how to pay someone directly.



There are organisations that can give you advice about paying someone directly to support you.



You can have more choice and control over who supports you.



It is more difficult to change who supports you if there is not a good reason for you to change your support worker.



For example, not liking your support worker is not a good reason to change.



You will need to find another support worker if they are on holiday or are sick.



## Getting an organisation to support you



If you get an organisation to support you, they will probably be the boss of your support worker.



You will have fewer things to think about.



Ask them how you will be involved in decisions about who supports you.



If you get an organisation to support you, it can be easier to change support worker if you do not get on with them.



The organisation will find you a new support worker if your regular support worker is on holiday or are sick.



## 2. The first time you speak to an organisation



The first time you speak to an organisation that might support you is important. It will probably show you the kind of ways that organisation will act in the future.



If you call an organisation and they say they will get back to you, make sure they keep their promise.



Check that the people from the organisation are interested in you. Check that they understand what you want.



Check that the people from the organisation know that you are the expert when it comes to talking about your support. You are the best person to talk about what your needs are.



Make sure they give you a chance to speak to other people they support or the families of people they support.



### 3. Find out how the organisation will plan your support



The organisation that supports you should spend time getting to know you to find out what your needs are and the things that are important to you.



Ask how they will get to know you.



Ask how they will involve your family if you want your family involved in your support.



They should make a **person centred plan** with you.



A **person centred plan** puts you at the centre of your support, making sure you have choice and control over your life.





You should receive a **contract** that says what support you will get and when you will get it.



A **contract** is when two people agree on something, and they must stick to it.



It should be clear who needs to be involved in decisions about your support.



Information about who is involved in making decisions should be written down in a way you can understand.



Ask what happens when your support worker goes on holiday.



You might want a different support worker when they go on holiday, or you might want someone from your family to support you.

## 4. Check the price of your support



Ask them to explain what you are paying for.



Check if you will be supported on your own or with a group of people that need support.



Find out if there is anything extra you might need to pay for.



Find out who pays for your support if you need to go to hospital and still need support.



Find out what happens if they need to ask you for more money in the future.

## 5. Find out about the staff that will be supporting you



Find out how the organisation will involve you in choosing your support workers. Find out if you can be involved in interviews if you want to be.



Find out about their staff training. You can ask how much training the staff get. Find out who pays for their training.



Find out who will support you when your support worker needs to go away for training.



Check that your support worker has regular meetings with their boss. In this meeting, they should talk about what training your support worker needs.



Ask if all the support workers in the organisation have **criminal records checks**. These are checks that make sure the support worker has not committed any crimes.



## 6. Check you will be safe and supported properly



Experts should be checking that the people that will support you are doing a good job and are keeping you safe.



There are different organisations that do this in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Island.



There will be a report by one of these organisations that says if the organisation that supports you is doing a good job. You can ask someone to show it to you and explain what it says.



Find out what happens if something goes wrong or if there is an accident or an emergency.



Find out if they ask the people they support what they think about the support they get. Check if you can see what people have said.

## 7. Find out what happens if you want to complain



The organisation that supports you should solve any problems quickly if things go wrong.



Ask for the guide to making a complaint. The organisation should write it in a way that you can understand.



Find out what happens when you make a complaint. Find out how quickly the organisation will solve problems.



Find out what happens after they solve the problem and what you can do if you are still not happy.



## 8. Find out what happens if you want to stop your support



One day you might want to stop being supported by the organisation. You need to know that you can do this easily.



Find out what happens if you want to stop being supported by the organisation.



Find out how much time you need to wait before you can stop your support.



Find out if they will charge you any money to stop your support.



If you would like to say something about this guide, you can contact VODG at: [info@vodg.co.uk](mailto:info@vodg.co.uk)