

2b5

Existing Extra Support System

Do

Tap into the host community's system for offering extra support to anyone who needs it.

Story

Janet wants to get involved in the aerobics class at her local sports centre. The centre already has people who support new members, but Janet is concerned that they will not understand her communication. Together with someone from the day centre Janet meets with staff from the sports centre and they discuss how best to welcome her both to the sports centre and the class.

Hints & Hazards

Where the existing support system is insufficient for people with significant disabilities, then this can be strengthened via cross-agency mentoring (see 4a4). Other community organisations can be encouraged to provide extra support systems through meeting organisations that already offer them, perhaps at an opportunity providers network (4a2). The support system needs to be well advertised, and people who need its support should be encouraged to ask for what they need.

Sometimes the existing extra support system is for a supporter rather than the person themselves. For example, the Cinema Exhibitors Association offers a card that permits free

access to the cinema for a Personal Assistant accompanying a person with a disability. The disabled person pays for him or herself as we all do. Apply to: The Card Network, The Technology Centre, Rossmore Business Park, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire. CH65 3EN. The cost of the card is £5 and lasts for 3 years (2006 figures).

Where a personal budget is used to obtain extra support, it is still worthwhile considering whether this can be provided by the community organisation rather than a care agency, as this will help them to set arrangements in place that will help others.