Active Support

Information Pack

active
SUPPORT

ARC England

Part one

Introduction to Active Support

active
SUPPORT

INTRODUCTION TO ACTIVE SUPPORT

For people with complex needs, behaviours that challenge and people with autism, services need to be organised in a way which means people can exercise choice and control. We know from research that people with learning disabilities are engaged in activity for much less time in any one day than non-disabled people. The average level of engagement is 40%, compared to a typical 90% experienced by non-disabled people.

Active Support is a way of supporting someone that is person-centred. It is a service model that provides structure and routines that increase opportunities for people with learning disabilities to engage in age appropriate, meaningful activities that make up an 'ordinary' life.

THE PRINCIPLES OF ACTIVE SUPPORT

People with learning disabilities are entitled to lives that are as full as anyone else's. Although every one of us differs, there are some core things we all have in common. It is important for most people to:

- be part of a community
- have good relationships with friends and family
- have relationships that last
- have opportunities to develop experience and learn new skills
- have choices and control over life
- be afforded status and respect ... and ...
- be treated as an individual.

So important are these core elements of life that they have come to define what we mean by leading a socially valued lifestyle.

Engagement in a full range of typical activities is part and parcel of such a lifestyle. Basic requirements for a full life are the opportunities to:

- participate in the full range of activities that everybody else does
- be involved and share interests with other people and;
- develop relationships, skills, and experience.

When a person is not able enough to undertake typical activities independently, he or she will need support to do them.

Active Support is designed to make sure that people who need support have the chance to be fully involved in their lives and receive the right range and level of support to be successful.

WHY ACTIVE SUPPORT?

Dating back to the days of institutions, people weren't given the option to participate in typical daily activities. Traditional provision of care was often based around the 'hotel model', which was evident in many hospitals and institutions. Over recent years, we have seen a greater shift towards person-centred support in adult social care in relation to people with a learning disability and/or autism.

The 'hotel model' is focused on the smooth running of the organisation and staffing, which led to set routines and decisions taken by managers rather than those people who access services, who were often passive recipients. In this model, staff tend to do most things for the individuals they are supporting rather than look for opportunities to include the people they support in everyday tasks and activities.

There are many consequences for people who access support, staff and organisations when Active Support is and isn't implemented.

The consequences for people who access support, staff and organisations of implementing Active Support (adapted from Cragg and Lacy 1995)

Benefits of implementing Active Support	Not implementing Active Support
Consequences for people who access support	
✓ Feeling competent, useful and good about themselves	- Feeling incompetent, useless and bad about themselves
✓ Belonging, being included and respected	- Disrespected, being isolated and rejected
✓ Having better relationships with staff, and other people	- Being frustrated, angry, not interacting appropriately with staff and others, having no friends
✓ Developing more appropriate behaviours. More skills and independence	- Displaying behaviours of concern as an effective means of controlling the environment
✓ Exercising basic human rights and learning about responsibilities	- Being tired all the time and demonstrating learned helplessness
✓ Having a 'typical' quality of life	- Having a poor quality of life
Consequences for staff	
✓ Sense of purpose, fun, pride	- Boring, frustrating, repetitive work
✓ High degree of job satisfaction	- Unrewarding, unsatisfying work
✓ Greater staff consistency and enhanced team work	- Unskilled 'domestic role'
✓ Developing appropriate skills to undertake a challenging role	- Inconsistency, different approaches, conflict and stress
✓ Positive feedback from management	- Being criticised and blamed but not helped to improve
Consequences for organisations	
✓ Achieves stated aims	- Aims and practice inconsistent
✓ Positive outcomes for the people they support	- People who access support do not progress
✓ Good reputation, positive evaluations	- Bad reputation
✓ Attracts good staff, lower staff turnover	- Higher staff turnover

HOW TO SUPPORT ENGAGEMENT

The goal of active engagement

It is easy to tell when someone is engaged in doing something. Typically, they will be actively participating in an everyday pursuit, such as communicating with another person, concentrating on something of interest or using their hands to complete a task or produce something. Everyday life is full of opportunities to be actively engaged. The goal of full engagement is equivalent to leading a full life. By supporting individuals, you can help them to be engaged in running their own lives and in pursuing their interests and hobbies.

Matching support to need

The level of support provided is matched directly to the person's need for support in each activity, always making it person-centered in practice. While the support provided has to be enough, the aim is always to promote the person's independence by giving only as much support as is needed. Assistance is gradually faded out as practice makes the person more skilled.

Ways of giving support

Different types of support give more or less help. For example, telling somebody how to use a toaster provides a lower level of assistance than guiding their hands through each step of the task. We can think of different levels of support in the following order:

ASK - INSTRUCT - PROMPT - SHOW - GUIDE

ASK (or SUGGEST or TELL) is a verbal prompt which lets someone know that it's time to do something or that something needs to be done.

Examples:

"Would you like to start peeling the potatoes for dinner now?"
"How about peeling the potatoes for dinner now."
"It's time to peel the potatoes for dinner now; OK?"

ASK may be all the support a person needs if they can basically do the activity.

INSTRUCT is a series of verbal prompts that tells the person what to do one step at a time. It helps to guide a person through the activity.

> ### Examples:
>
> **"Put the bread in the toaster." … "Push down the lever." … "Wait." …**
> **"Watch the toaster." …** (the toast pops up) **… "Take out the toast."**

INSTRUCT works well when a person can physically do the task but needs to be reminded of the sequence of steps. It does also depend on the person's ability to understand the instruction. Using simple clear directions is the most helpful.

PROMPT is a clear gesture or sign to tell the person what to do next. It is like an instruction but works better when the person does not easily understand words. Briefly miming an act can provide a lot of information for the person to follow. PROMPT can be combined with INSTRUCT.

> ### Examples:
>
> **Pointing to the potato peeler and then miming peeling a potato.**
> **Pointing at a cup that needs to be put away and then to the place in the**
> **cupboard where it needs to go and saying "Put it here".**
> **Gently nudging the person's arm behind the elbow so as to indicate the need**
> **to move the arm forward to pick up a spoon.**

PROMPT works well when a person does not know what to do but is able to interpret and follow gestures or respond to signs of what to do next.

SHOW is demonstrating what needs to be done. A demonstration is more definite and provides more information than a prompt. It therefore provides a higher level of support. You give a demonstration and then the person does the same thing immediately afterwards. SHOW can be combined with PROMPT or INSTRUCT.

Putting one of six forks away in a drawer, handing the next fork to the person and pointing to the right compartment in the drawer to put it in.
With the individual also holding a potato and potato peeler, putting the potato in a bowl of water, pulling it out and saying "Do that". Then showing how to position the peeler to start and waiting until the individual has copied. Then pulling the peeler to take off a strip of peel, saying, "Like this".

SHOW works well when a person does not know what to do but is able to imitate.

GUIDE is giving the person direct physical assistance to do something. The type of physical support and how long you do it for can vary according to the person's need for support. Placing your hand over the person's hand and guiding it gives more support than guidance at the wrist or forearm. Guidance may be given only at the beginning of a step to get the person going (like a prompt), or it may be given throughout the step. GUIDE can be combined with PROMPT or INSTRUCT and can follow SHOW.

Examples:

Guiding a person's hand at the wrist to align the bread over the slot of the toaster saying, "Put in the bread."
Putting one of six forks away in a drawer, handing the next fork to the person and guiding his or her hand so that the fork is over the right compartment in the drawer, letting go so that the person finishes the step unaided.

GUIDE works well when a person needs a lot of support.

Using ASK-INSTRUCT-PROMPT-SHOW-GUIDE in practice

Depending on people's precise skills, different steps in an activity will require different support levels. You will be familiar with the level of support a person may need to do something. Start at where you think is the right place (e.g., prompt the person). If the person does not do the activity, give more support (e.g., show and then prompt, or

guide). If they seem to do it easily, make a mental note to give less support next time so that the person will be more independent. In other words, use the levels of support flexibly according to a person's need for support in each particular situation.

THINKING IN STEPS

Most activities are a sequence of steps. We are often most conscious of this when we are learning a new activity. Guidance for activities is often set out in a series of steps as in a recipe book or DIY manual. Being aware of the sequence of steps within an activity is useful when supporting people with learning disabilities to participate or learn new skills.

Thinking in small steps is particularly helpful for people with more severe learning disabilities. Each step can then be supported at an appropriate level using **ASK-INSTRUCT-PROMPT-SHOW-GUIDE.**

The process of breaking an activity into steps is sometimes called 'task analysis'. It is quite straightforward to do by watching someone do an activity and making notes of the order in which they do different parts of it. You can also do this by going over how to do an activity in your 'mind's eye'.

The degree to which you break a task down can vary, from a few larger steps to many more smaller steps.

Example: Two versions of the steps involved in making toast	
Fewer, larger steps	**More, smaller steps**
1. Get bread out	1. Open bread bin
	2. Pick up packet of bread
	3. Put bread on table
	4. Open packet and take out 1 slice
2. Put bread in toaster	5. Put bread into toaster
3. Switch toaster on and set dial	6. Switch toaster on and set dial
4. Start toaster	7. Press lever down on toaster

5. Get Plate	**8. Open cupboard**
	9. Pick up plate out of cupboard
	10. Close cupboard door
	11. Put plate on table
6. Get butter and jam	**12. Open fridge**
	13. Pick up butter and put on table
	14. Pick up jam and put on table
	15. Close fridge
7. Get knife and spoon	**16. Open drawer**
	17. Pick up knife and put on table
	18. Pick up spoon and put on table
	19. Close drawer

TOAST IS READY AND POPS UP

8. Put toast on plate	**20. Take toast out**
	21. Put on plate on table
9. Spread butter on toast	**22. Open butter dish**
	23. Pick up knife
	24. Scrape up a lump of butter
	25. Spread butter on toast
	26. Put knife down
10. Spread jam on toast	**27. Open lid of jam jar**
	28. Pick up spoon and put in jam
	29. Take a spoonful of jam
	30. Put jam on toast
	31. Put spoon down
	32. Pick up knife
	33. Spread jam with knife
	34. Put knife down

People need different combinations of steps and support depending on their skills. It is important that steps are not initially too large, and that they are broken down further if the person has continuing difficulties. Support can lessen and the numbers of steps reduce, as people get better at the activity.

LETTING THE PERSON KNOW THEY ARE DOING FINE

It is important to help people recognise that they are doing the right thing, particularly when they are doing something well and are achieving something positive. Making sure that people connect their participation in activity with what it achieves is sometimes called 'positive reinforcement'. Positive reinforcement is about providing appropriate recognition and reward. Some reinforcers occur naturally as part of the activity. Making a cup of tea leads to drinking it, switching on the television leads to being able to watch it. The person will be rewarded for their activity if they want a cup of tea or want to watch television.

However, the value of activities is something everybody has to learn. People need recognition for what they achieve and they need encouragement along the way. Here, praise is important. Praise helps people to recognise that they are doing something useful and doing it well.

How frequently you praise or reinforce people will depend on their abilities and will change over time. Someone who is used to doing something and can do it fairly well may just need the occasional encouraging remark. Someone who has very few skills and does not participate easily may need almost constant praise. Here, you will want to praise the person immediately and often: as soon as they begin to participate and repeatedly throughout the activity.

Some people find praise less reinforcing than others. Sometimes you will need to look very carefully at what a person likes to have or do in order to identify reinforcers individual to him or her.

DEALING WITH PROBLEMS

Most people are happy to do activities as long as they have:

- balance and variety in what they do (e.g., a mix of chores and leisure activities, of social and private time etc.)
- some control over precisely when they do things ... and ....
- the skills to do the activity or, alternatively, enough support to do it.

If someone refuses to do an activity

Check whether it is a good time to do it. If the person is normally willing to participate in activities and has done that activity before, his or her reluctance may be because he or she wants to do something else at that moment. Choice is important. In general, avoid interrupting people when they are engaged in other activities or arranging things when they have something better to do. The planning of activities with people in a way that reflects their personal preferences should help with this. Revise the activity plan as necessary.

Give more support. Most people feel that activities are more demanding and less enjoyable when they are not very good at them. People with learning disabilities may have a considerable experience of failure, which will need consistent and persistent encouragement to reverse. Refusing to join in or simply not responding to your request, instruction, prompt or guidance may be a way by which the person shows you that the activity is too hard or insufficiently rewarding. It is important in these circumstances to reduce what the person is being asked to do (add extra steps, reduce the scope of the activity or task, do more of the activity yourself with the person), and to give much more support (a higher level of support), be more encouraging (speak enthusiastically and praise participation in the activity more readily) and make the activity more enjoyable (vary how it is done, point out what it leads to).

A person doesn't seem to want to do anything

This is probably a case of the person not getting the support and encouragement to achieve things frequently enough in the past. It will take time to change but the key is to keep it simple (small steps) and give a high level of support (prompts combined with guidance). Avoid nagging the person, even in an encouraging way. Continuing only to ask and verbally encourage the person is not enough. Increase the support being offered. The person probably sees all requests (however polite) as demands that cannot be met. Asking a person whether they want to do something is not really giving him or her a choice if he or she does not have sufficient experience of doing any part of it successfully. Set up the activity so it is ready to do. Prompt and guide simple ways to participate ("stand up" – "come with me" – "switch on the kettle" – "put a tea-bag in the mug" etc.). Praise the person immediately they begin to participate in any way.

Getting a person to concentrate

Minimise distractions before supporting someone participate in an activity. Give short

clear instructions, prompts or demonstrations. Once the person is participating, give them praise. But don't fill the silences with chit-chat as this breaks the person's attention span. Instruct, prompt or guide the next step so that the person remains engaged in the task. Plan breaks carefully (a short time for a rest, for conversation, or to do something else) rather than allowing the activity to go on for too long. If you have indicated when a break will occur (e.g., "do 3 more and then we will have a cup of coffee"), stick to it. Don't be tempted to carry on because everything is going so well. Avoid setting the person up so that he or she has to be disruptive in order to stop participating.

A person starts to behave disruptively

Challenging behaviour is often a way of exerting control. Refusal to join in, an attempt to leave the situation, agitation, getting cross, shouting, hitting out, or other similar disruptions are all ways to indicate that the person does not want to start the activity or to carry on with it. Staff have to be sensitive and learn how to gauge the difficulty of tasks and the amount and type of support provided so that the person begins to experience success and enjoy the activity instead. This will mean being firm but fair.

If challenging behaviour occurs, follow this approach:

IGNORE - REDIRECT - REWARD

IGNORE: Do not overreact or focus attention on the person's behaviour. Ignore the behaviour to show that you are not thrown off course.

REDIRECT: Give more support. Prompt the person to become engaged in the activity. Give assistance calmly - enough to be successful.

REWARD: Praise the person immediately for engaging in the activity. Continue to praise frequently.

Don't try to keep the activity going too long. After the challenging behaviour has subsided and the person has engaged in the activity for a while, judge when to suggest a short break (a few minutes only). Then start again (using the same approach) so that the person begins to get used to short successful bursts of activity.

A person continues to behave disruptively

There is probably a more general problem if any of the above strategies are not successful relatively quickly. Review everything that is discussed in this section: the level at which activities are pitched in relation to the person's skills, the level of support given, the person's perception of support (whether it is seen as support or as a further demand), the style of interaction (is it calm and positive or wary or confrontational?), the reinforcement available for participating (is it something the person genuinely wants?).

Explore whether different staff have different experience and develop a common approach based on the most successful ways of involving and supporting the person. Finally, consult any professional advisors who might have something to offer.

ACTIVITY SUPPORT PLANS

Planning is part of ordinary life

Most adults lead busy lives and therefore plan how they are going to fit the things they want or need to do into the day. Some activities are part of our personal routine: when we get up, when we have meals, when we wash morning and evening and so on. Other activities reflect our roles and responsibilities: cooking, washing up, tidying, doing the washing, ironing, gardening, shopping, taking the dogs out etc. We know that these activities have to be done but there is often some flexibility as to who in the household will do them, and when. So, we will discuss practicalities with the people we live with a day or so ahead and negotiate how tasks can be slotted in with other things which we want to do, such as regular commitments (e.g. to a hobby or favourite TV programme) or one-off social engagements (e.g. going to the cinema, pub or out to dinner). When we share our lives with other people, being clear about our plans helps things to run smoothly.

It is rare for people to plan everything on paper. Mostly, we keep our plans in our heads, with the aid of diaries and the occasional list to help us remember what to do or what's on. However, this degree of self-reliance may not be possible for many adults with learning disabilities. Planning activities and planning the support they require will be necessary for most people in supported housing. This part of the information pack suggests a way that staff can support adults with a learning disability living and running a house together get the most from life.

Plans should be flexible

Having a plan is not the same as having an unchanging routine. Nor does it interfere with being person-centred. Part of the purpose of planning is to make sure that individuals do get the opportunity to do what is important to them.

There are basic routines in most people's lives, such as getting ready for work in the morning. None of us have much choice here and what we do usually follows a set pattern unless the unexpected happens. Adults with learning disabilities similarly have commitments which will shape their routine.

In other cases, we might have a regular time for doing something, such as usually doing the household shopping on a Saturday morning. It is not set in stone: we can still be flexible: a friend asks you out for the day, so you do the shopping the previous evening. The purpose of planning is to enhance life, not to make spontaneous activities more difficult.

Recognising this is a good starting point to drawing up a plan. Plans can help individuals be more independent. They do not have to be rigidly followed. Part of being independent is being able to change your plans.

Planning support arrangements

People with severe learning disabilities living in staffed housing often have many people involved in providing them with support. Co-ordination, communication and decision making need to be clear. All staff teams need to develop systems to record and pass on information. Activity plans do need to be written down, because more than one person has to know about them. Plans also need to set out the support arrangements: which staff or other person (relative, friend, neighbour, volunteer) is to support each individual to do what at what time. Planning needs to take account of staff shifts and shift times.

Plans should be person-centred

Good plans take account of personal preferences and build on personal strengths. This does not usually mean that people can always opt out of necessary activities, such as washing or doing their fair share of household activities. But it does mean working out with people when it is convenient to do things and negotiating compromises among members of the group. It also means taking account of what individuals want to do in their leisure and social pastimes. The goal is to work out a full life with and for each person which reflects his or her personal likes and dislikes and his or her responsibilities to a collective household.

THE ACTIVITY AND SUPPORT PLAN: HOW IT WORKS

Every so often, work out a basic weekly timetable which covers all regular activities:

- all of the domestic, gardening and DIY activities which need to be done to maintain household standards
- each individual's personal and self-care activities
- each individual's leisure, vocational and social activities and appointments.

Write down the days and times when these activities normally occur.

Map these onto a big piece of paper covering the week so you can see whether everything fits together and whether there is a good balance across the week in what is being done.

Then transfer the details to a series of Activity Support Plans - probably two or possibly three per day - to cover the week. You can use similar Activity Support Plans over subsequent weeks until you think you need to review the routine again.

Each day, the staff on duty meet briefly several times - first thing, after breakfast, around lunch and around the evening meal. They review the plan, add any particular activities that need to be done, and plan how to deploy themselves to support the range of activities set out.

At the end of each shift/day, staff complete the Participation Record for each person to show the range and extent of opportunities he or she was given.

The remainder of this section goes over the above stages in greater detail.

DECIDING THE BASIC TIMETABLE

Involving everyone as much as possible, discuss and agree all of the personal (self-care), household, leisure, social and other activities which go on in the course of a week. (It is sometimes useful for staff to go over what they have done in their own lives in the last week to check that everything has been considered.)

Self-care	Household	Leisure/Social
Getting up	Preparing breakfast	**Jill (Tenant 1):**
Washing	Setting the table	Out to pub
Bathing	Clearing away	Country walks
Showering	Washing up	Church
Dressing	Preparing lunch	'Eastenders' on TV
Breakfast	Setting the table.... etc.	... etc.
Coffee	Preparing dinner/tea... etc.	**Carol (Tenant 2):**
Lunch	Weekly shopping	Contact with family
Dinner/tea	Daily shopping	Time with Alan (friend)
...etc.	Laundry	Gardening
	Ironing	...etc.
	Cleaning kitchen	**Bill (Tenant 3):**
	Cleaning toilets/bathroom	Visiting Beryl (neighbour)

Cleaning downstairs	Photography
Cleaning bedrooms	'Neighbours' on TV
Daily tidying	Fitness class
… etc.	… etc.

Note how frequently each occurs in a week. This may require being clear about personal or household standards (e.g., how regularly does a person bath, how frequently are rooms cleaned etc.)

Use this list to map the basic routine for an average week. Set a time frame for each day based on typical times for getting up, going to bed and mealtimes (times may vary at the weekend or even between weekdays). Regular activities act as anchors around which related activities occur. They also divide the day up into time periods into which other activities need to fit. Allocate the other activities to these periods. Some activities may not have a routine time (e.g. gardening, going for a good walk). They may be things which are kept as 'Options' (see the example on page 18).

Remember that you are planning to provide and support opportunities for activity for a number of people, so that more than one activity will normally be occurring at the same time. Mark activities with people's initials where it is clear that a particular person will be involved. Decide how much you think it makes sense to distribute some of the household activities among individuals at this stage. Mark those for which there is a good reason to do so with individuals' initials.

Check the overall impression of the timetable. Is everything included? Does the balance of activity from day to day look about right? Is the time given to things realistic (neither too much nor too little)?

Transfer the information from the weekly timetable onto a series of daily Activity Support Plans each covering part of the day (such as that shown on the next page). The planning sheet has a column for each person headed by their names. Activities which are clearly allocated to a person are entered into these. There is another column for listing general household activities which need to be done on a particular day at a particular time but it is left open who will do them. This will be decided nearer the time or on the day. Finally, there is a column where 'Options' (i.e. optional activities) are listed, things which would be good to do if they can be fitted in.

Example : 114 Glamorgan Street

ACTIVITY & SUPPORT PLAN   Monday Morning

Staff names and shift times

1 .... from .... to .... **2** .... from .... to ....

3 .... from .... to .... **4** .... from .... to ....

5 .... from .... to .... **6** .... from .... to ....

Time	Jill	S	Carol	S	Bill	S	John	S	Household	Options
6.30	Get up Shower+hair						Get up Cup of tea		Put bins out NB. All prepare own breakfast	
7.00	Dress		Get up Cup of tea		Get up breakfast		Bath			Sort Mail
7.30	Breakfast **Medication**		Back to bed		Cup of tea Shower		Shave Dress		Clear up	
8.00	Cup of tea		Get up Cup of tea		Shave		Breakfast **Medication**		Load dishwasher Wipe surfaces	
8.30			Shower						Change linen on beds	Go for a walk
			Dress							
9.00			Hair		Physio				Clean bathroom	Water plants
9.30			Breakfast				Clean Car Check Oil and water		Make coffee/tea	Ironing
10.00	Art Class at FE College				Clean bedroom				Mop floor	Swim and Sauna
10.30			Exercise Video		Hoover, dust & polish				Local Shop Bread & milk	
11.00									Do Laundry	Mow the lawn Gardening
11.30									Prepare lunch	Hang out washing
12.00										Golf range
12.30	Lunch in Café		Lunch		Lunch		Lunch		Load & start dishwasher	Lunch out

Checking the routine with individuals

Ideally, you will have involved people as best you can throughout the process of drawing up the basic timetable. If this was not possible to do for everyone, now is the time to check what you propose with each individual. Discussion with families and advocates is important when people have so little language that they are unable to represent their own views effectively. This helps to safeguard that particular activity preferences are not overlooked.

USING ACTIVITY AND SUPPORT PLANS EVERY DAY

The staff on duty get together, normally with the individuals in the house, for several very short discussions at intervals throughout the day. First thing in the morning, you decide what arrangements to make until breakfast. At or after breakfast, you decide the plan until lunch; over lunch, you decide the afternoon plan, and at the evening meal, the plan for the evening.

Three things are decided at each discussion:

- Who will do the general household activities which need to be done. Activities can either be written in under people's names or linked to a person by an arrow (see the following example).
- Which staff will support whom (there will often not be a 1:1 support ratio so support workers may be assigned to support more than one person, needing to go between them to give intermittent support to each).
  Note: The support arrangements do not need to stay constant across an entire period. The Plans can be used to work out how staff responsibilities for working with individuals change during the course of the shift. The initials of the staff member supporting each person in each activity are entered in the narrow column next to the activity (see the following example). Initials of family members, volunteers or other people may be entered if they are providing the support for the activity.
- Whether each person has sufficient activity opportunities to keep busy during the period concerned. Use activities from the Options list to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to do something constructive.

Example : 114 Glamorgan Street

ACTIVITY & SUPPORT PLAN   Monday Morning

Staff names and shift times

1   Alice   from 6.30 to 11.00   2   John   from 7.00 to 1.00

3   Colin   from 7.00 to 12.00   4   Diana   from 11.00 to 4.00

5   Eric   from 12.00 to 8.00   6   from   to

Time	Jill	S	Carol	S	Bill	S	John	S	Household	Options
6.30	Get up Shower+hair	A					Get up Cup of tea	A		
7.00	Dress Put bins out	A	Get up Cup of tea	A	Get up breakfast	C	Bath	J	Put bins out NB. All prepare own breakfast	Sort Mail
7.30	Breakfast **Medication**	A	Back to bed	A	Cup of tea Shower	C	Shave Dress	J	Clear up	
8.00	Cup of tea	C	Get up Cup of tea	A	Shave	C	Breakfast **Medication**	J	Load dishwasher Wipe surfaces	
8.30	Change linen on beds		Shower Dress	A	Load dishwasher Wipe surfaces	J	Clear up	J	Change linen on beds	Go for a walk
9.00	Water plants	C	Hair	A	Physio	J	Clean bathroom	A	Clean bathroom	Water plants
9.30			Breakfast	J			Clean Car Check Oil and water		Make coffee/tea	Ironing
10.00	Art Class at FE College	J	Clear up	J	Clean bedroom	A	Make coffee/tea	C	Mop floor	Swim and Sauna
10.30		J	Exercise Video	A	Hoover, dust & polish	A	Mop floor	C	Local Shop Bread & milk	
11.00		J	Do Laundry	D			Local Shop Bread & milk	C	Do Laundry	Mow the lawn
11.30		J		D	Gardening	D		C	Prepare lunch	Gardening Hang out washing
12.00		J	Prepare lunch	E		D	Prepare lunch	E		Golf range
12.30	Lunch in Café	J	Lunch	E	Lunch	D	Lunch	E	Load & start dishwasher	Lunch out

Communicating effectively

Activity Support Plans are a tool for staff to help them provide the best level of opportunity and support for individuals that they can. Therefore, any useful notes or other additions are fine provided that they are clear, legible and relevant. One way of retaining flexibility while maintaining organisation is through efficient communication. Notes and messages can be written on the back of Plans for subsequent days (see the example below). Plans are kept in a ring binder, one week, (or a fortnight) ahead so that you can write notes on the organisation of days to come. The Plans themselves are not used as a record and need not be kept after the day in question.

Types of message can be as shown in the example below:

1. Something planned earlier (e.g. in the morning) is incomplete or not done and is left for completion later (in the afternoon or the next day)
2. Some change or unexpected event has happened
3. Some request is made of staff to do preparatory work for something that will happen later.

Notes and Messages

1. No time for Olive to do her laundry this morning. She needs her keep-fit clothes tomorrow. Please can you make sure they are done.

2. Roger's father would like him to go out for dinner with him this evening. He will not want dinner here and could he please bath and change after gardening.

3. David, please buy braising steak with Ann and a jar of korma cook-in sauce. She wants to cook curry for tomorrow's evening meal.

KEEPING TRACK

Each individual has his or her own personalised record of activity - the Participation Record - kept in a personal file. At the end of each shift, staff tick the activities that the person has been given the opportunity to do. Categories of activity include: preparing meals or snacks and laying the table, clearing up after meals and washing up/using the dishwasher, tidying and cleaning, laundry and ironing, shopping and putting shopping away, gardening and DIY, leisure and hobbies at home, social life, leisure and hobbies in the community, other use of community amenities. This range of activities reflects a typical lifestyle, so don't be tempted to cut it down. Activities within each of these categories can be recorded throughout the week and a summary of weekly totals calculated. Totals are transferred onto a Participation Summary which gives an overview of the opportunities a person has had over 3-6 months.

Adapt the **Participation Record** to reflect the activity opportunities being supported: Add rows for additional activities.

Participation record

Name   Bill Robinson   Date   25/10/09

SELF CARE	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
Showered self	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Shampooed hair			✓					
Dried self	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Put toothpaste on brush	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	12
Dried hair						✓	✓	2
Combed hair		✓		✓		✓	✓	4
							Total	32

MEALS	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
Prepared breakfast	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Prepared lunch	✓		✓			✓		3
Prepared dinner	✓			✓	✓			3
Laid table		✓			✓	✓	✓	4
Made cup of tea/ coffee	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	22
Cleared table	✓		✓✓				✓	4
							Total	43

CLEARING UP AFTER MEALS	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
Put dishes/cutlery away	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Loaded dishwasher	✓		✓	✓✓	✓			5
Emptied dishwasher		✓				✓✓	✓✓	5
Wiped kitchen surfaces		✓				✓	✓	3
Wiped kitchen table			✓		✓			2
							Total	23

TIDYING & CLEANING	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
Dusted bedroom				✓		✓	✓	3
Mopped kitchen floor	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	5
Vacuumed lounge		✓			✓		✓	3
Cleaned bath			✓	✓			✓	3
Made bed		✓		✓				2
							Total	16

LAUNDRY	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
Used washing machine								
Hung out clothes		✓						
Used tumble drier								
Ironed clothes								
Put clothes away								
							Total	1

SHOPPING	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
Made shopping list	✓			✓				2
Small local shopping			✓			✓		2
Big supermarket shop	✓			✓				2
Put shopping away	✓		✓	✓	✓			4
							Total	10

GARDENING & DIY	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
Watered plants			✓					1
Cleaned car mats								
Checked oil and water								
Painted fence						✓		1
Mowed lawn			✓					1
							Total	3

HOME LEISURE	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
Watching TV	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	15
Listening to radio station		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
Played CD								
Rented a video						✓	✓	2
							Total	23

FAMILY & FRIENDS	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
Visit from family								
Visit from friend								
Visiting other people								
Out with family or friends								
							Total	0

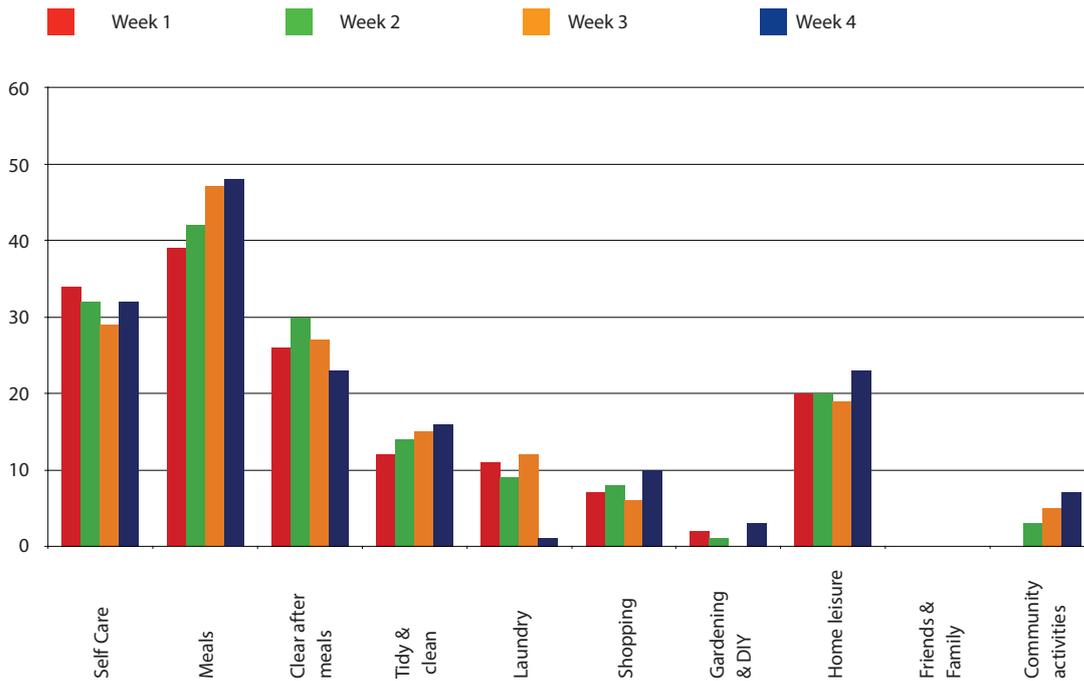| COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
Pub						✓		1
Cafe				✓				1
Restaurant								
Cinema/theatre								
Bank/Post office					✓			1
Library/museum/gallery								
Going for a walk	✓			✓				2
Bowling							✓	1
Golf								
Spectator at event								
Church	✓							1
Photography class								
							Total	7

Participation summary

DATE	SELF CARE	MEALS	CLEAR AFTER MEALS	TIDY & CLEAN	LAUNDRY	SHOPPING	GARDENING & DIY	HOME LEISURE	FAMILY & FRIENDS	COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES	TOTAL
04/10/09	34	39	26	12	11	7	2	20	0	0	151
11/10/09	32	42	30	14	9	8	1	20	0	3	159
18/10/09	29	47	27	15	12	6	0	19	0	5	160
25/10/09	32	48	23	16	1	10	3	23	0	7	163
											etc.

NAME: Bill Robinson

Report from Key worker: ....

....

Participation summary graph: Bill Robinson

Part two

Strategic Considerations to Implementation

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STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS TO IMPLEMENTATION

- **Mission and Vision**
- **Brand**
- **Organisational Policies**
- **Recruitment and Selection Processes**
- **Job Descriptions**
- **Supervisions/Appraisals – Process and Recording**
- **Skills Sets Needed – Managers**
- **The Importance of the Role of the Manager**
- **What is Practice Leadership?**
- **Cost v Benefits**

Now you have a flavour of what Active Support is and how to support engagement, it is important to be aware of a number of factors that organisations need to consider in order to successfully introduce and implement Active Support as a service model.

Active Support forms a whole way of working, and forms part of the culture of an organisation. It cannot be simply taught in a classroom environment. It has touch points in many areas, not just in terms of staff training.

Below, you will see some areas for consideration at a strategic level, to ensure your organisation is ready!

MISSION STATEMENT AND VISION

A mission statement is a short statement outlining why an organisation exists, what its overall goal is, and identifying its purpose. It should focus on what an organisation does for its 'customers' and should ensure employees focus on the objectives of that organisation.

With that in mind, organisations have to ask themselves whether their mission statement reflects the ethos of Active Support. It needs focus on the empowerment of the people they support and providing opportunities for people to live their lives to their fullest.

BRAND

Your brand is how customers and/or the public see your organisation and what it offers in comparison to others. It differentiates you from those who do something similar.

Adopting Active Support as the service model of choice will contribute to the make up of the brand of your organisation and how families/carers and people who access support perceive you. It is clear that more than ever Commissioners are seeking evidence of organisations working with the ethos of Active Support.

ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES

When seeking to adopt Active Support, it presents an ideal opportunity to review the policies and procedures covering the whole of the organisation, from recruitment to reviewing the planning and monitoring paperwork that goes with supporting people with learning disabilities, autism and other complex needs.

Active Support links in to all organisational policies and is a pre-cursor to Positive Behavioural Support and should be considered as part of the PBS strategy.

It fits in to:
- Person Centred Plans
- PBS Plans
- Opportunity or Learning Plans
- Communication Plans

It is important to appreciate what effective and tailored, person-centred paperwork shows:
- Progression for customers
- Evidence for inspections
- Outcomes to show to Commissioners – it is what they want from services!
- Indicates the culture and values of an organisation

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESSES

Having staff with the right values, skills and approach to work as enablers rather than carers, is key in the successful implementation of Active Support – and this starts at the recruitment stage.

Many organisations have found it beneficial to review and revise their job descriptions to ensure roles are aligned to the Active Support ethos, as well as ensuring any job vacancies are advertised in the most appropriate way to attract the 'right' applicants to start with.

In terms of recruitment, values based recruitment is considered the best way to attract and select candidates that will have the right behaviours and fit best with the organisation and its objectives.

Skills for Care have produced some useful resources to refer to:
www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Recruitment-retention/Values-based-recruitment-and-retention/Values-based-recruitment-and-retention.aspx

The probationary period for new staff:

The probationary period needs to be well structured so that performance and progress can be monitored against objectives in line with components of Active Support. For example, are staff looking for opportunities to involve the people they support in meaningful, day to day activities? This will need to be captured in the appraisal/review paperwork.

Also during this period, in terms of Active Support, it is critical that the Service Leader or Manager provides coaching and observes new support workers, both informally and formally, to embed the way of working and support people who access support.

Supporting Established staff:

When Active Support is adopted, it is important to ensure that existing staff also have the correct values and behaviours to ensure it is implemented consistently.

Therefore, appraisal and review paperwork needs to be amended to help monitor the change in the way staff work.

In some cases, it can be challenging for long standing staff to change the way they support people. Some support workers work in a mind-set of 'doing' for the individual rather than enabling them to do parts of tasks for themselves, and organisations need systems in place to address this.

Once again it is vital that Managers practice lead their staff and conduct regular observations – both informally, by simply seeing what is going on and offering comment and feedback verbally, as well as formally in a structured, written observation in line with a set activity.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

The information contained in a job description obviously sets out the duties and responsibilities of the role as well as the requirements of the job. The way this is written gives potential applicants, candidates and employees an insight to their role and what is expected. Therefore it makes sense that they are written in a way to incorporate the principles of Active Support, giving an indication of the aspirations of the role from the outset and how they will be supported to achieve this, for example, by regular coaching and observations both formally and informally by a competent person.

SUPERVISIONS/APPRAISALS – PROCESS AND RECORDING

There are many variations on supervision/review/appraisal systems and recording across all business and sectors.

When it comes to using this system to support staff with Active Support, ideally there should be a separate section on the document that focuses on recording activities in relation to Active Support specifically. Other Active Support paperwork can then feed in to this. There should be an opportunity for the staff member and Line Manager to review how well active engagement is working.

As mentioned earlier, during the review period and prior to the meeting , the Line Manager should have conducted a number of observations of the support worker to assess:

- the planning and preparation of the task being observed
- the provision of support and how that was communicated
- how participation in the task was recognised and rewarded
- the level of positive interaction of the staff member

It is fundamental that staff know what they will be measured against from the outset. Here is an example of what should be captured in an interactive coaching session with staff. This identifies for both the staff members and the Managers what is being measured.

Interactive coaching guide for staff observations

	Suggestions:	Contra Indication:
Preparation and presentation of the activity	Activity materials set out well Good environment – lighting sound, heat etc Considered functions/ triggers re CB and prepared Good time for the activity to take place All resources available Meaningful activity	No prior set up of the activity No thought given to setting up the environment Activity not meaningful to service user Too difficult for service user to take part Too rushed
Level of support and interaction	Care plan followed Task breakdown used and followed Different level of support used throughout AIPSG* Positive and motivating Appropriate and correct use of communication	Not following care plan Not working together you took over too much Incorrect use of communication too much language not using persons preferred communication Not motivating
Making the activity rewarding	Support when things did not go to plan (if applicable) Good use of backward chaining (if applicable) Good interaction Good outcome Correct level of positive reinforcement	Activity was too long Not much engagement by service user Too many distractions in the service No beginning and end No 'reward' outcome
Your style	Good interaction Good positioning during activity Good tone of voice and language Good body language and positioning Good rapport Good active listening Appropriate feedback Risk assessed	Poor interactions too much communication Poor positioning and listening Not positive or motivating You seemed demotivated Not very reinforcing No risk management

*Ask - Instruct - Prompt - Show - Guide

SKILLS SETS NEEDED – MANAGERS

The role of the Manager is absolutely key in implementing Active Support effectively. Regardless of training completed by support staff, it will need to be practice led by Service Leaders and Managers back in services to have full impact. The Manager needs to be able to interpret knowledge of Active Support in to real life situations and offer guidance to staff. So what skills do the Managers need?

- Sound knowledge of Active Support
- Good coaching skills
- Observation skills
- Effective feedback skills

It is important to not simply presume a good support worker will automatically make a proficient manager and organisations need to consider the skills of their managers prior to Active Support.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ROLE OF THE MANAGER

If organisations rely on staff training alone to implement Active Support, and simply expect staff to embed it in their working practice themselves, it is highly likely to fail.

For Active Support to be successfully embedded, as mentioned above, it needs to be practice led – Line Managers need to ensure they are involved in the service they manage and support their teams to understand it and look for opportunities to involve the people they support consistently.

To underpin this, it is key to have systems in place for staff to follow including clear recording systems and communication plans to evidence the participation of individuals who access support in their daily lives.

'One cannot, however well qualified, lead from an office'

WHAT IS PRACTICE LEADERSHIP?

Practice Leadership is a way of supporting staff by modelling the desired behaviours and using practical examples to demonstrate. This way of working will help develop the staff team and impact on the culture within the service.

There are many required competencies within Practice Leadership and it is important that organisations consider how they will support managers and service leaders to be competent to implement Active Support using this leadership style.

For example, a good Practice Leader, in relation to Active Support:

- ✓ Is a positive role model – visible and approachable
- ✓ Ensures communication systems, Person Centred Plans and routines are being implemented by the team
- ✓ Makes sure all Active Support monitoring is kept up to date e.g. opportunity plans, goal planning, participation plans etc.
- ✓ Makes sure staff adhere to Active Support routines and community participation goals
- ✓ Monitors the impact of Active Support
- ✓ Observes and coaches staff team to maintain consistency of support and offers feedback on performance to staff
- ✓ Role models best practice and supports development of the staff member
- ✓ Matches/develops staff skills to participation needs
- ✓ Promotes individuality and choice
- ✓ Provides effective and honest feedback to staff, which recognises and develops good practice
- ✓ Promotes a culture of continuous improvement and learning, uses reflective practice
- ✓ Demonstrates culture and vision to motivate team towards goals
- ✓ Supports staff team to have a clear identity of role

(Taken from Practice Leader competencies in PBS, published by All Wales Community of Practice and LDAG Subgroup Transforming Care in Wales for People with Learning Disabilities and Challenging Behaviour June 2017)

Ultimately, the manager or service leader needs to take responsibility for the implementation of Active Support in the service and the performance of the team.

COST vs BENEFITS ANALYSIS OF USING ACTIVE SUPPORT

Implementing Active Support requires planning and investment both in time and resources as well as patience and perseverance. There are so many benefits to an organisation of using it as a service model that have been observed over many years.

These include:

- Improved skill development of both the people who access support and staff teams
- Increased progression for people who access support
- Significant links to improvements in health and wellbeing for people who are supported
- Links to Positive Behavioural Support strategies – Active Support is a pro-active strategy that reduces need for PBS to start with, as mentioned previously
- Reduction in staff turnover
- Commissioners specifically seeking for service providers who centre their approach on Active Support
- Potentially during inspection, as this model of support is grounded in personalisation, promoting independance and enablement of people with learning disabilities, autism and complex needs.

And Finally...

The Association for Real Change hopes you have found this information pack useful and that it will encourage you to consider using Active Support as the way your organisation supports people who access your services. When implemented effectively, the benefits 'speak' for themselves!

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