

# Top tips for decision makers, professionals and supporters

Taken from the 'So what, what next?' project, aimed at supporting people with a learning disability, autism or both who have moved out of specialist hospitals to use their skills and interests to play a part in their community.

Find out more at [www.local.gov.uk/so-what-what-next-project](http://www.local.gov.uk/so-what-what-next-project)

## 1. Start early

Don't wait for me to move into my new place. Start while I am in hospital.

## 2. Remember my history

Understand the impact the health and care system has had on my life. Don't forget you are playing a part in how my life looks in the future.

## 3. Work with all the people in my life

You can't do this on your own. Partnership is very important, and everyone must work together. My family and friends might be the people who know me best. If they are, bend over backwards to learn from their experience.

## 4. Focus on the positives

Start by thinking about my strengths, what I am good at and all the things I care about. Don't focus on the challenges I face.

## 5. Find out about my dreams

Use what I am good at and what I care about to learn about my dreams and aspirations.

## 6. Stretch further than person-centred

Think about the kind of creative and consistent support I will need to reach my dreams. Not just 'what shall we do today'.

## 7. Don't let the risks take over

Think about my ideas before considering the risk. Then explore how to make things happen in a positive way that takes account of the risk and manages it carefully, without allowing it to mask everything else.

## 8. Understand what my community can offer

Find out about local opportunities and resources. Discover who might be able to help me get involved.

## 9. Understand what I might offer my community

Discover what is needed locally. Help me think about ways I might be able to use my skills and strengths.

## 10. Help me meet new people and make new connections

We all need people in our lives – and not just people who are paid to spend time with us. Help me to make new connections and develop friendships and relationships. Having new people in my life could open up all sorts of opportunities for me.

## 11. Plan for my good days and bad days

Don't let the possibility of a bad day stop positive, creative planning. Don't let a good day go to waste.

## 12. Recognise and celebrate all achievements

I might have had a difficult life. I might face lots of things I find challenging right now. Success looks very different for different people. Make sure you spot and celebrate all my achievements – even if they look tiny to people who don't know me very well.

## 13. Hold my dreams through good times and bad

My circumstances might change for the worse but I am still good at things and still have my dreams. If I have to go back into hospital don't forget all that. Make sure your systems help me remember all the good stuff and reconnect with it once I am well enough.