

Issue

S is a young man with Down's Syndrome and a learning disability; he has also been diagnosed with Dysfluency. This has affected his confidence and his independence skills.

S has had a high level of support from his mum, who has fully supported him to achieve his goals and to take part in a number of organised and community activities. S's long term aspiration is to be employed and to be able to drive to work; mum has supported him with achieving this although he has needed some additional support from the Preparation for Adulthood Team. S has been attending a local FE college and took part in a supported internship, with the end goal being paid employment which is very important to him.

S did not meet the criteria for Continuing Health Care and could not access recommended weekly speech and language therapy through the NHS. He found it difficult to speak to unfamiliar people and he felt this would prevent him from gaining employment. S found a private speech and language therapist who could provide the weekly intervention; this was based in the community and in different environments in order to increase his confidence when speaking. S was unable to pay this himself and he asked if social care could help him pay for weekly speech and language.

Approach Taken

S's support plan was based on gaining employment and the social worker, S and his family worked together to look at the support S felt he needed. This included learning to drive, in order to increase his independence and his chances of getting a job. S had a bad experience when learning to drive previously, where people had videoed him and mocked him as he has a visible disability. He stopped learning to drive as this incident had knocked his confidence. The social worker discussed with S how there would be more opportunities for him if he could drive; S agreed he would like to start learning to drive again for when he finds employment. S requested if social care could support him with this cost for 1 driving lesson per week.

S also asked if he could have a direct payment to employ a PA to support him to access community activities; S likes to go to the pub, play basketball and go to the gym. S went to the Preparation for Adulthood panel and requested the support package himself which was agreed. S now receives a direct payment each week; S uses half of this to cover the costs of the speech and language therapist. The other half of the direct payment employs a PA to enable S to participate in community activities and pays for his driving lesson each week.



Outcomes/Impact

Thanks to this package of support and S's determination to find a job, he now works 4 days per week – he loves his job but says it does makes him tired! He has stated that he requires no further support at work. He has asked if his care package could be reviewed as he felt he did not need it anymore now he is employed. The social worker and S looked at the package, but have agreed to keep it in place for the time being. However, S has said that he would like to pay for his own driving lessons out of his wages, which has been agreed.

We are now looking at more community support and S possibly linking up with other young people who also like going to the pub without the need of a PA. S is hopeful that he will pass his driving test and will no longer require this support in the future. He still requires the support from speech and language but his confidence has grown and his verbal communication is much clearer now.

S hopes in the future he will not require any support from social care and he will be able to live his life without the need for services.