

Specialist Services

There's a host of specialist services available for people with disabilities.

You might be looking for support because of a learning disability, a physical disability or a sensory impairment. Whatever your needs, there are specialist services that can help you.

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What are specialist services?

If you are over 18 and have:

- a learning disability;
- a mental health condition;
- a physical disability and/or visual or hearing loss (or both);
- a long-term condition such as motor-neurone disease; or
- an acquired brain injury following a stroke or accident,

Contact your local Adult Social Care department to see if you are eligible to receive support. If so, there are a variety of choices available. As with all support from Adult Social Care, your care needs must firstly be assessed to determine the best ways to support you; your carer can also have an assessment. You may wish to discuss your needs with your family doctor in the first instance.

Learning disability

Community Learning Disability Teams (CLDTs) work with adults aged 18 and over who have a learning disability and are not able to manage without the right kind of support.

You can get help and advice on problems you may be experiencing with being listened to or understood; your education; keeping well; money and work; somewhere to live; things to do and helping others to care for you.

Support can come from arts therapists; community nurses; dieticians; occupational therapists; physiotherapists; psychiatrists and psychologists; speech and language therapists and your doctor.

Teams also help people with learning disabilities to get advice and support on advocacy, benefits, housing and from the police, if necessary.

Mental health

Your GP should be your first point of contact if you need help with a mental health condition or you are concerned about your mental health. They may refer you to your local Community Mental Health Team (CMHT). These teams are made up of different professionals who will, with your permission, assess your mental health needs. They will then work with you to plan any support you may be assessed as needing.

Physical disability

If you have a physical disability or a long-term condition, Adult Social Care and other organisations in the independent and not-for-profit sectors may be able to signpost you to, or provide you with, a range of services to support you to live independently. There are also services available to support someone who may be your carer.

As with all support from Adult Social Care, your needs must firstly be assessed to determine whether you are eligible for assistance and identify the best ways to support you regardless of eligibility. You may wish to discuss your needs with your family doctor in the first instance. Alternatively, you can contact local support organisations yourself.

If Adult Social Care arranges a care home placement for you, there are a few things you should check. What choice of home do you have and is this restricted by the amount of care you need? Is the provision in accordance with Care Quality Commissions standards? Does the staff team in the home have good links with Adult Social Care?

Sensory services

Sensory services teams, which include rehabilitation workers and social workers, can provide information packs, advice and access to services as well as support from a network of national and local agencies.

The teams provide services to all adults and children who are:

- blind or partially-sighted or have a degree of sight loss;
- deaf or hard of hearing or have a degree of hearing loss; or
- deafblind or have a degree of dual sensory loss.

If you care for someone with a sensory impairment, the Sensory Services teams can carry out an assessment of your needs as a carer to help you to continue to support them.

Residential care for younger adults

If you are a younger adult receiving specialist services and residential care, a care home or care home with nursing is the best option for you, check the following things:

- How does the home meet national essential standards of quality and safety, set out by the Care Quality Commission?
- Does the home have close links with Adult Social Care services?
- Does the home offer personalized, person-centred care and support to enable you to become as independent as possible?
- Do you have choice and control over your care and support?

