

Resources to give family carers information and ideas to support their relative with disabilities in shaping their future

Christine Towers, Director, Together Matters

<https://www.togethertomatters.org.uk>

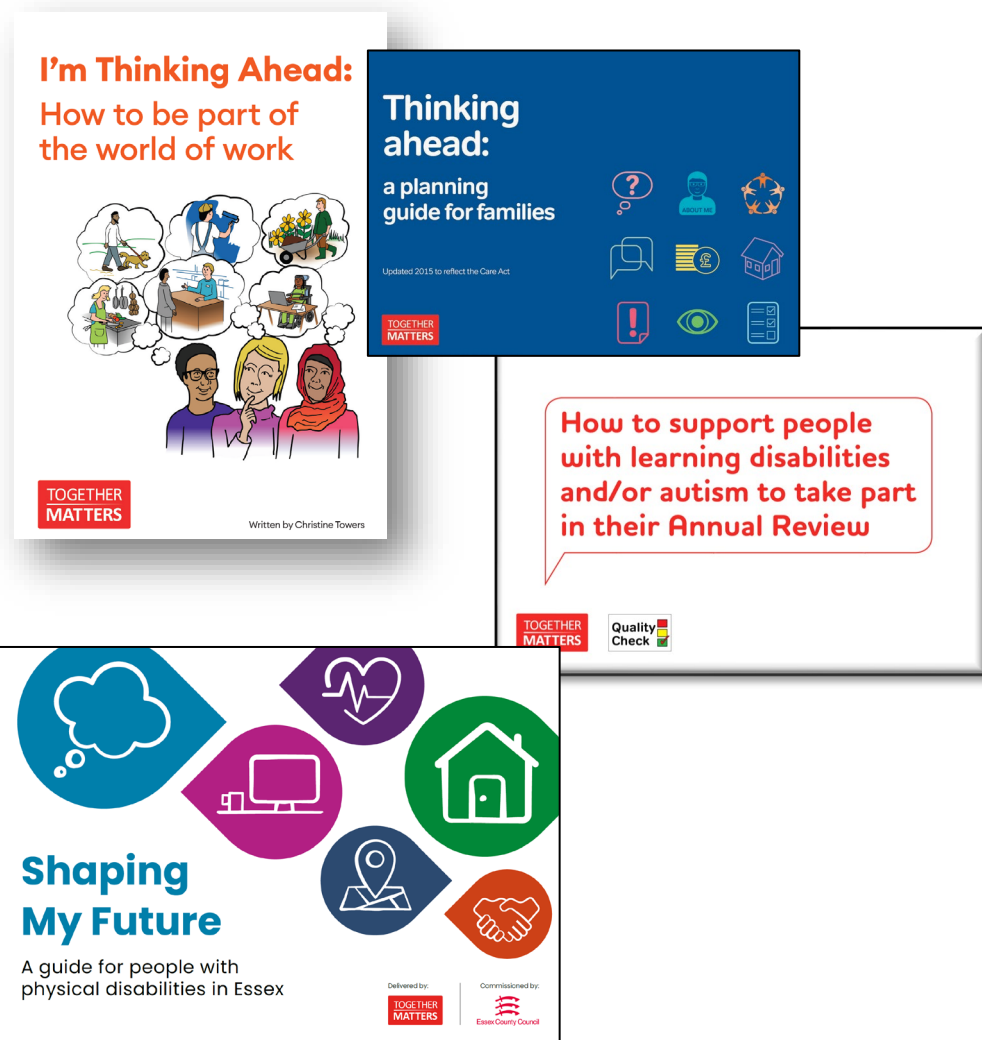
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Together Matters: what we do



- Small organisation with big ideas about the importance of talking, learning and working together to help create positive change in people's lives
- Focus on planning - to solve problems and create opportunities at all ages and stages of people's lives:
 - Young people
 - Adult life
 - Growing older
- Lots of free resources, created with disabled people and family carers, plus workshops and training available to get the most from these

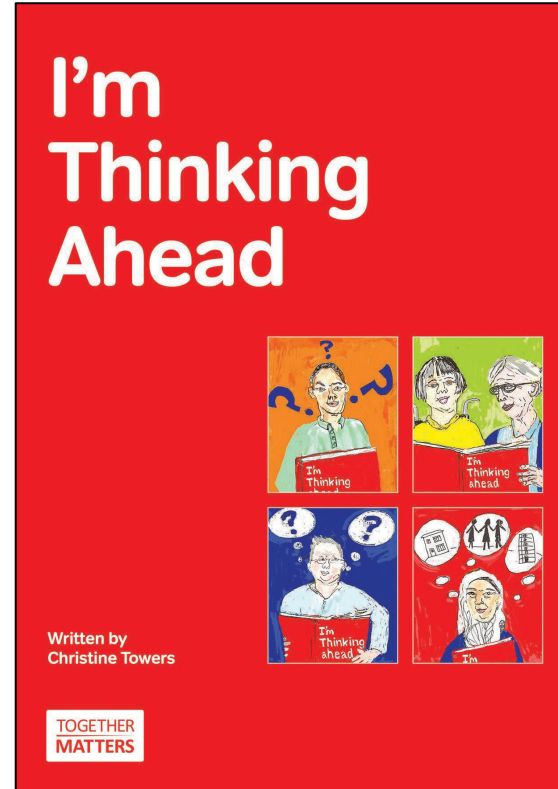
What I'll be talking about



1. Overview of our resources that help with conversations and planning
2. Advantages of having resources everyone can use: disabled people; their families and supporters; practitioners
3. Practical ideas about using the guides

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1. Resources to help with planning



What is planning?

Many layers, ongoing and part of everyday life:

Conversations

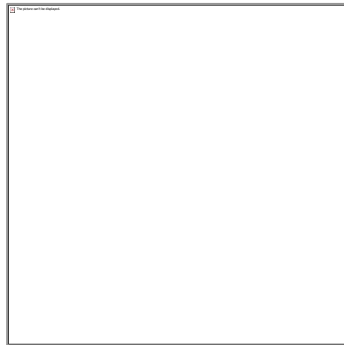
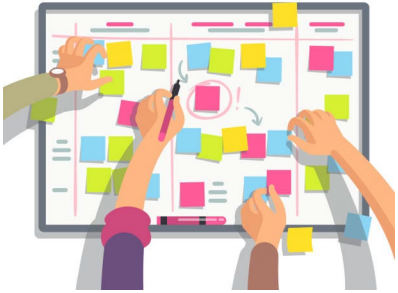
Involving people

Gathering info

Generating ideas

Trying things out

Reflecting and learning.....



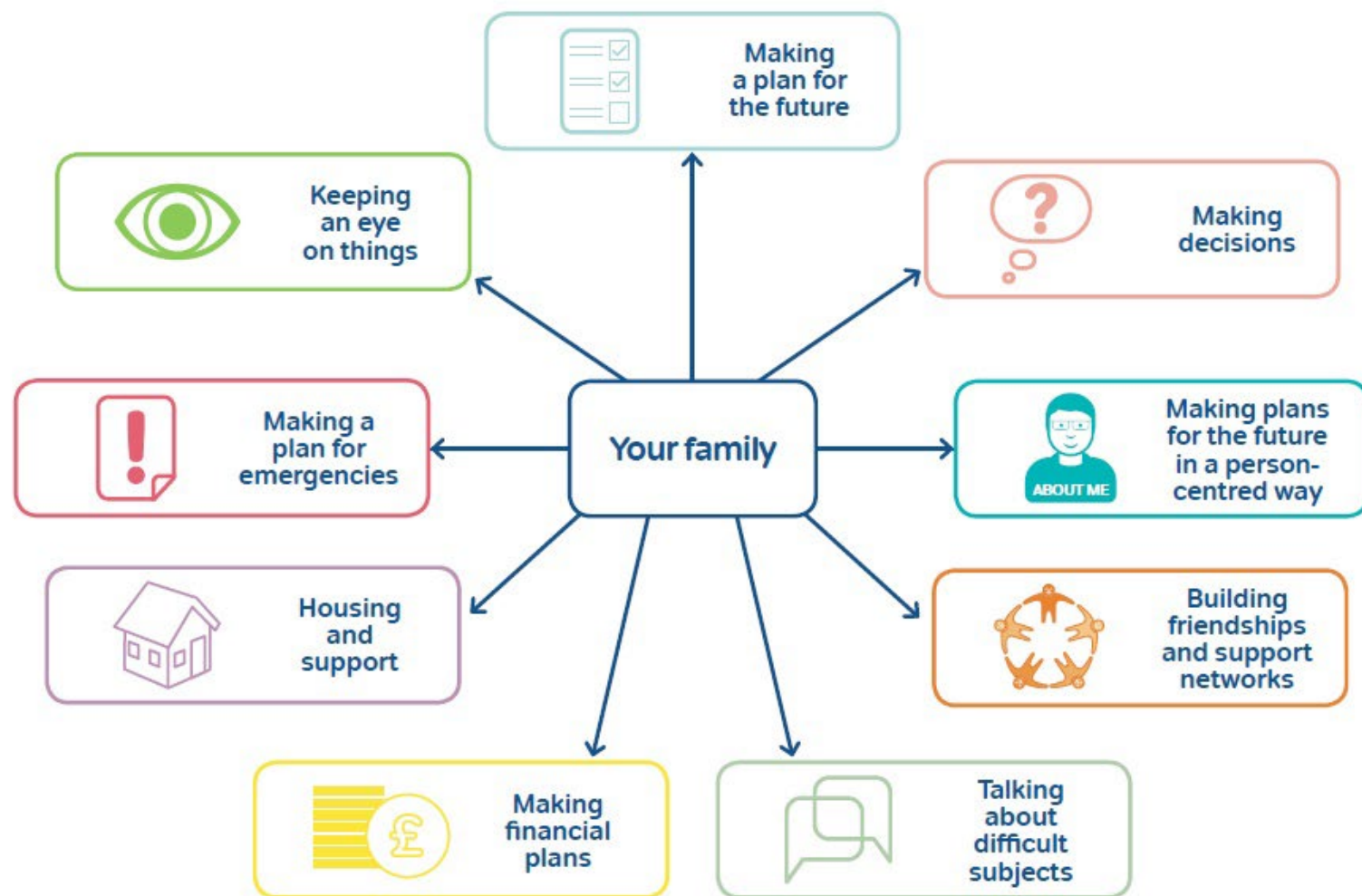
Thinking Ahead: a planning guide for families



- Directed to family carers
- Nine topics that make up bigger picture of planning for the future - information and templates
- Explains how things work e.g. Mental Capacity Act, housing and support options
- Acknowledges emotional and practical difficulties of planning- supportive language
- Supports practitioners when working with family carers- understand information families need / how to explain in family-friendly ways

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Thinking Ahead Planning Guide



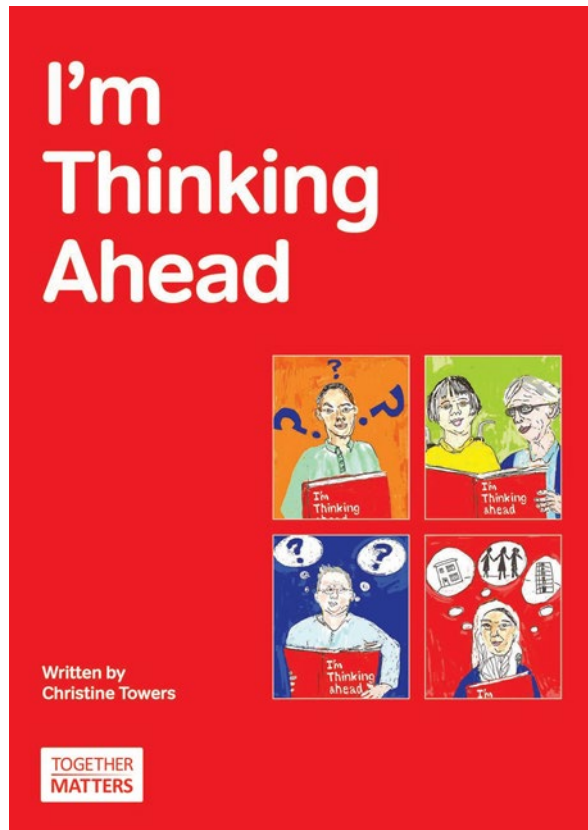
'What if...' plans for emergencies

7. Making a plan for emergencies



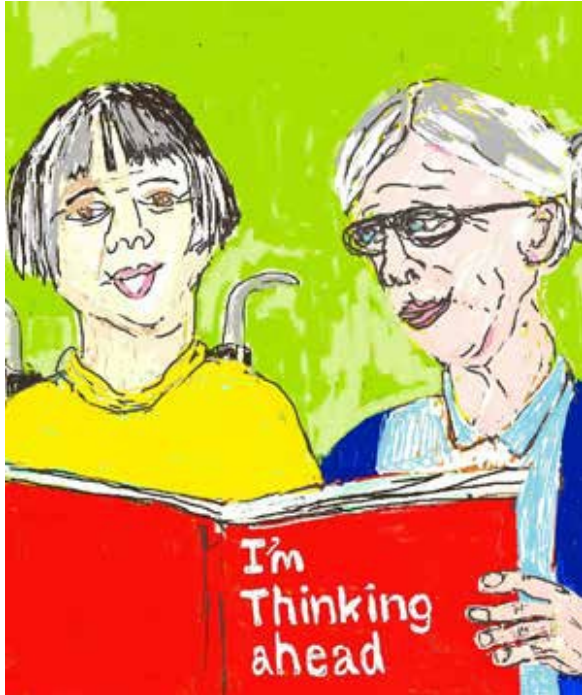
- Has guidance and a template to make an emergency plan in case you become ill (or can't care for other reasons)
- It gives a clear process including:
 - Thinking about possible emergencies
 - Putting 'cushions' in place beforehand
 - Sorting out who might help/ support options in an emergency
 - Writing key information to keep your relative safe and well
 - Getting the plan written down and shared with others

I'm Thinking Ahead



- Easy read information- uses Photosymbols and small amount of words
- Directed to a person with a learning disability and/or autism
- Explains an idea e.g. 'What is planning'
- Gives suggestions to talk about that idea e.g. What do you need to have a good life?
- Templates to fill in (by hand or online)
- Helps others to talk more meaningfully with a person they support- family, friends, paid supporters

I'm Thinking Ahead: content



Four easy read sections:

- How to Plan
- How to Make Choices
- How to get the right housing and support
- How to be part of the world of work

Includes ideas and tips at the back to guide conversations

Talking about choices

Why is it helpful to make our own choices?



Sometimes it can be hard to make choices.



Sometimes we make choices to please other people rather than say what we want.



So it's good to practise. You can practise with choices you find easier. This may help when you have to make more difficult choices.



If you don't think about what YOU want and make choices, other people may make these choices for you.



Choosing things that you want and make you happy should help you have a good life.



It can also help you make plans for the future.

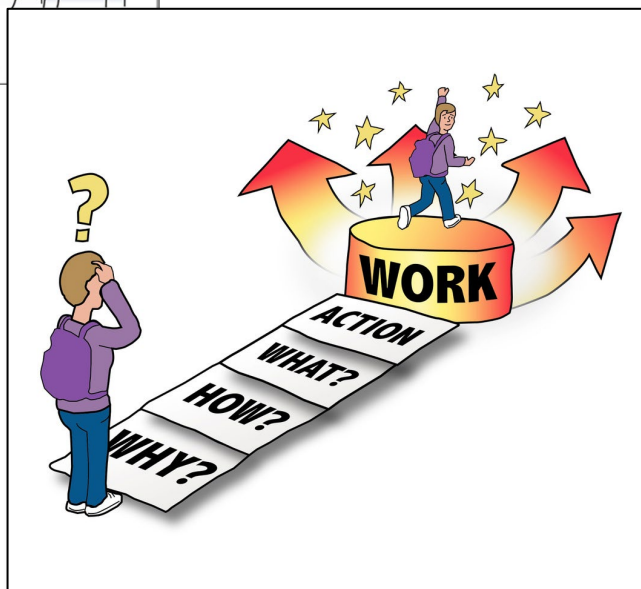
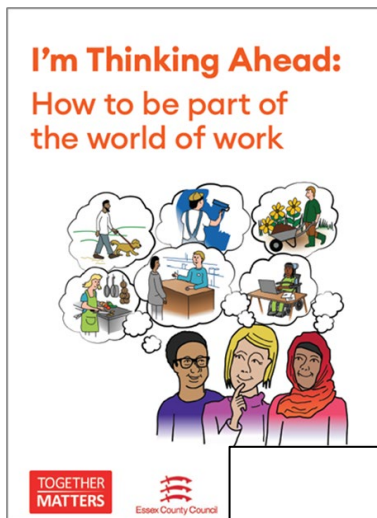
The choices I make

	Choices I make	Choices I would like to make	What stops me making these?
What I wear 			
What I eat 			
My shopping 			
My money 			
My health 			
My friends 			

People who help me make choices

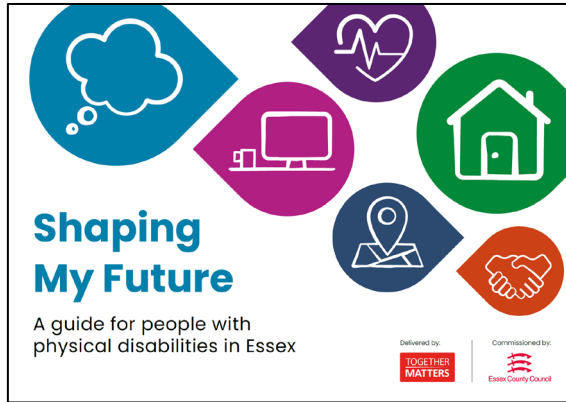
Name of person	What kind of choices do they help me with?	What's good about the way they help me make choices?	What's not good about the way they help me make choices?

Talking about work



Ideas to get to know local businesses		
	Ideas	I'd like to do this to get started
	Ask people to help you find out about local businesses and services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your school or college • your PA or support worker • your family and friends 	
	Use your map to note where they are.	
	Meet people who have a job. Talk to them about their work. Find out what they do in their work. Find out what they like about their work.	
	Meet employers (people who pay people to work for them). Meet people who run a business or organisation. Find out about the work they do and the jobs they have.	
	Talk to people who have a small business. Find out what they think about having a business. What is easy? What is hard?	
	Do you have other ideas?	

Shaping My Future: a guide for people with physical disabilities



Shaping My Future: Health and well-being

Shaping My Future

A guide for people with physical disabilities in Essex

Section 5: Health and wellbeing



This is the fifth section of a six-part guide. For details about accessing the full guide and the other sections go to the back page.

- 1. Planning for change: getting started
- 2. Family, friends and connections
- 3. Learning and working
- 4. My home
- 5. Health and wellbeing
- 6. Going out and about

Delivered by:



Commissioned by:



Information in this section

		Useful to me?
Getting the healthcare you need	99	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Access to healthcare	99	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Healthwatch Essex	100	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emotional wellbeing and mental health support	102	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Adult Mental Health and Wellbeing Team	103	<input type="checkbox"/>
• NHS psychological therapy	103	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Relationship support	104	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Student support	104	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Domestic abuse	104	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Self-help and self-care	105	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having a healthy lifestyle	106	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Physical activity	106	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Essex Wellbeing Service	108	<input type="checkbox"/>
Funding	109	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Personal health budgets	109	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Personal wheelchair budgets	110	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Continuing Healthcare	111	<input type="checkbox"/>
Page for notes	112	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why this section might be helpful

Getting the right support with health and wellbeing can make a huge difference with coping day to day and making other areas of life go well. This section provides information and ideas to get you thinking about what might be helpful to you. There are many reasons why people living with a disability may need additional support around health. You may find:

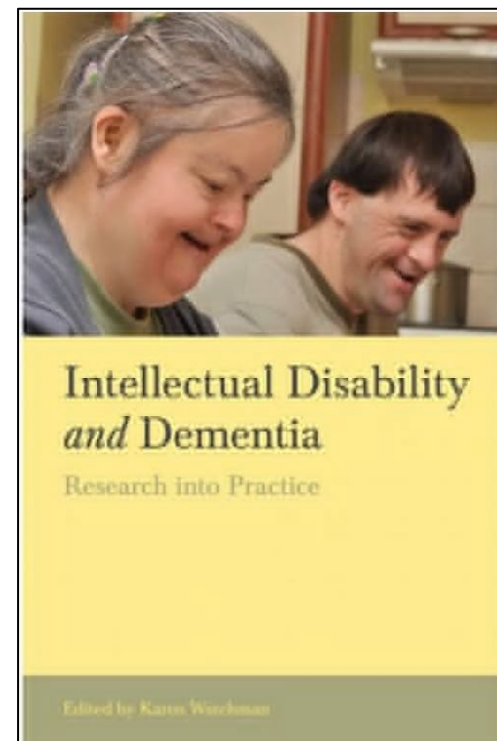
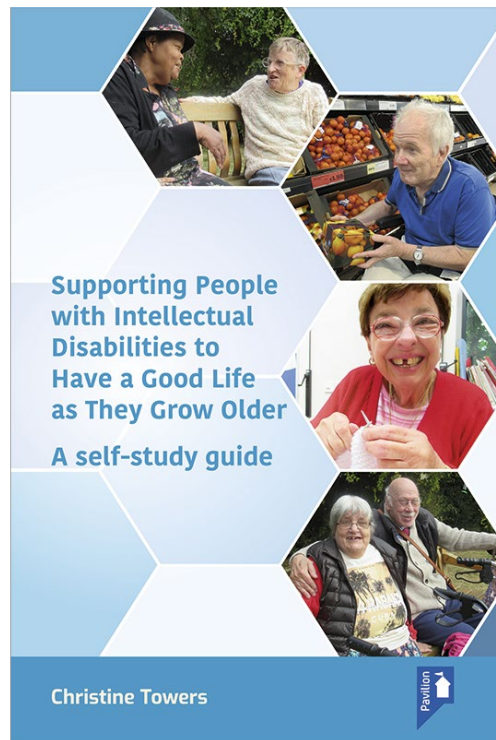
- you have additional health or wellbeing needs specific to your impairment
- your physical disability impacts on your general physical and emotional health, which may get overlooked
- it's hard to discuss any mental health difficulties you're experiencing
- there are barriers to accessing the health services you need.

Covid has caused an additional stress on people's health and wellbeing. Many are still living with the after-effects of the virus, while others have found that the support they had been relying on before the pandemic is no longer available. The principal aim of the Care Act (see Section 1: Planning for change: getting started, page 28) is to improve people's wellbeing, which includes supporting their physical, mental and emotional health. You may feel that the demands of day-to-day living with a disability mean that you are not managing to look after your health and wellbeing as well as you would like to. If so, make sure you talk about it if you have a social care assessment and when thinking about the support hours you need.

This section should also be useful to family and friends who have a caring role, who can often forget to look after their own health.

This is the fifth section of a guide called Shaping My Future. It has five other sections but you do not need to look at them all. Choose the ones that you think might be useful to you at this point in time.

Other planning resources : growing older



Other planning resources: getting the most from meetings

How to support people with learning disabilities and/or autism to take part in their Annual Review

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Template for your Annual Review: thinking about what's working well and what could be better

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Use this template to think about what's working well and what could be better under different topics that you are likely to want to cover in your review. People may have different views under each topic; this doesn't matter as different views help to make up the overall picture.

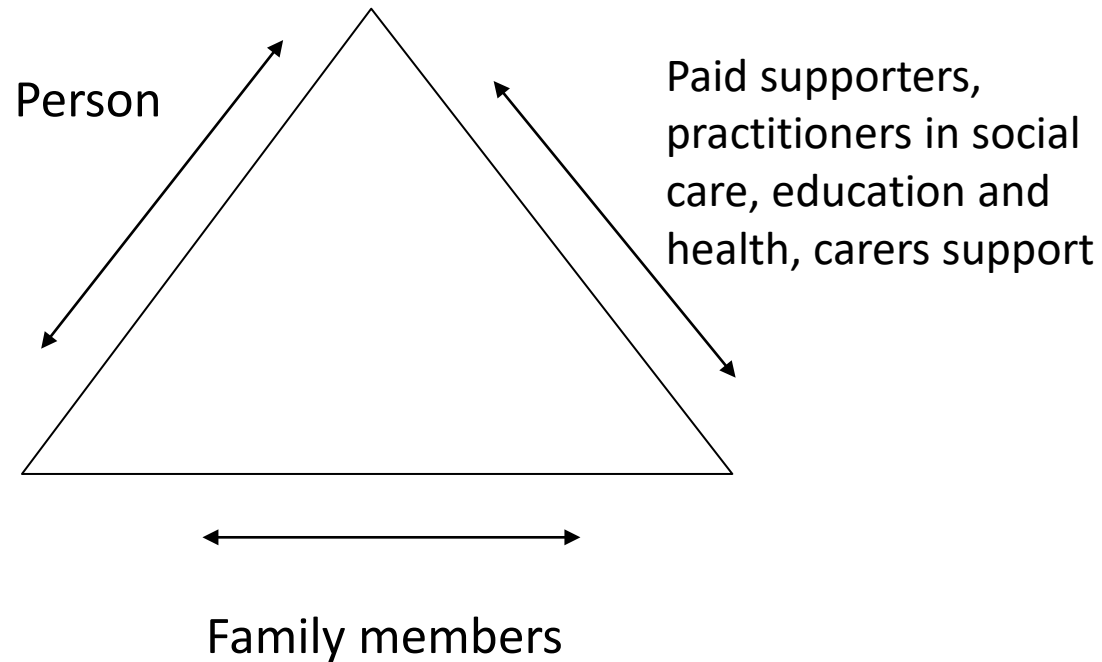
There may be sections that are not relevant or you may only have time before the review to fill in the sections that seem most relevant.

The support provider section can be filled in by anyone giving support, including the Community Health Team, day centre, support at home, respite and outreach services. You can add the views of more than one support provider but put in brackets whose view it is.

Name		Thoughts about what's working well	Thoughts about what could be better
What my week looks like 	Me		
	Family		
	Support provider		
Where I live 	Me		
	Family		
	Support provider		

1

2. Advantages of having resources everyone can use



- Shared tools and approach:
 - families feel empowered and valued
 - closer working
 - improved problem solving
 - resolves differences between viewpoints





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Advantages (continued)

- Information belongs with person to share how they wish- sense of ownership
- Can be built on- amend and add information and ideas over time
- Person and family members gain confidence and skills to talk about what's important to them, what's needed- helps in meetings such as reviews, assessments
- Decisions informed by more detailed information
- Complements processes of local authorities & others – e.g. mental capacity assessments, housing assessments

Fillable text boxes to record information and ideas

People who help me make choices

Name of person	What kind of choices do they help me with?	What's good about the way they help me make choices?	What's not good about the way they help me make choices?
			

 My notes

Use this page to make a note of anything you're interested in following up from this section.
Do this in whatever format works best for you to make sure your thoughts and ideas don't get lost.

To do list

-
-
-
-

People I'll talk to

Questions I have

What I'm thinking about

Ideas I like

96

What's been achieved in Essex

Essex County Council embraced Together Matters' approach to planning in many different areas of people's lives:

- Workshops for family carers in partnership with local groups and organisations- including programme that also built peer support (with Essex Carers Network)
- Training for:
 - social work teams across Children with Disabilities, 16-25 and adults
 - teams such as Preparing for Adulthood, accommodation hub, short-term community support, employment, behavioural support, short breaks
 - Support providers
- Introduced guides to schools, colleges for further and adult education
- Essex versions of some guides with addition of local information



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3. Tips from families

Getting started is often the most difficult. Start small by choosing a section or even a template that is most relevant to you and start with that (parent with 25 year old son, Thinking Ahead)

Write down all the ideas and information you gather. It helped me to get it out of my head, made me feel less stressed and more ready for thinking about what next after school (young disabled person, Shaping my Future)

I found it difficult to talk to my daughter about a time when I wasn't able to care for her. I left a copy of I'm Thinking Ahead on the table - she asked me what it was about. It felt she was leading things and wanted to talk (parent with 45 year old daughter)

Tips from practitioners

I share the section 'Making Decisions' with families to help them understand the MCA – I go through it, leave it with them and on my next visit ask if they have any questions (Social worker in 16-25 team)

I use the templates in 'How to get the right housing and support' to chat about what a move from home might be like. This has helped the person, with their family, look at the support they might need away from home - and what they could practice beforehand (Social worker in adults team).

How to download resources



Resources available to download free from:

<https://www.togethertomatters.org.uk/resources-and-information/>

or, for Essex versions of guides:

<https://www.togethertomatters.org.uk/resources-and-information-essex/>

All guides available as full versions and individual sections.

Thinking Ahead leaflet to share with family carers in local area:

<https://www.togethertomatters.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Thinking-Ahead-Information-leaflet-2024.pdf>

Keep in touch with Together Matters

- Website has ideas about how you can use the resources and help available
- If any queries or ideas:
christine@togetharmatters.org.uk
- Let us know how you get on –share your stories and learning with us 😊