



Complex Needs



WALSINGHAM
SUPPORT *Everyone is different*

It's not just support, it's happiness.

We are Walsingham Support, a charity that has been supporting people with learning disabilities, autism, brain injuries and complex needs for more than 30 years.

Whether it's a couple of hours a week or 24-hour, seven-day support, we provide bespoke solutions that enable individuals with disabilities to live fulfilling, happy lives.

At Walsingham Support, we do things differently. We really take time to get to know the people we support; to identify their needs, to learn about their abilities and aspirations, and to recognise what makes them unique.

By taking this approach, we jointly develop and deliver tailored, person-centred support to enable every individual to live life to the full.

Flexibility is key to achieving this, but while our work and the support we provide constantly evolves to meet the demands of an ever-changing social care landscape, our vision has remained the same:

We seek an equal and diverse society, in which people with disabilities are citizens in their own right who are supported to be happy and to reach their full potential.



Supporting people with complex needs

Walsingham Support has a heritage of successfully supporting individuals with complex needs, so we understand how important it is that they are involved in planning their care at every step.

A person with complex needs might have a combination of disabilities, including profound and multiple learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory impairments, and challenging behaviour.

We work hard to get to know each person thoroughly, to understand as much about them and their challenges as we can, and to identify their unique skills and goals.

We take a fully inclusive approach to matching those needs with the right support, empowering each person to flourish and make an active and positive contribution to their community.





Challenges associated with complex needs

Some people are born with characteristics that mean they have complex needs, while others can develop them as a result of an illness or accident.

The type and range of needs an individual has will always be unique to them. Their disability or condition might mean they need support with any number of things, like:

- washing and personal hygiene
- feeding or preparing meals
- communication
- exercise and physiotherapy
- medication and health needs
- shopping, laundry, and household chores
- accessing and taking part in social and leisure activities
- mobility and getting around.

Often, people with complex needs don't use spoken words, and instead communicate in a range of different ways, perhaps using body language, facial expressions or cries.

Our staff must be able to recognise and encourage those communication methods and to understand the importance of repeated daily routines to an individual's health and wellbeing.



Person-centred support

When we work with an individual and their family, we listen to what they want and what matters to them, so we ensure they are always at the centre of conversations and decisions.

This is particularly important when it comes to supporting individuals with complex needs, because each person's range of difficulties are so unique. The severity of their challenges and the degree to which they need support with different aspects of life is very individual to them.

Whether they need a helping hand for a few hours a day, or support for 24 hours a day, we create and deliver bespoke solutions to empower people with complex needs to live happy, fulfilled lives.

We know that only when support is properly tailored to each individual's needs can it have maximum effect.





Our staff

It's crucial that our staff have the right skills and knowledge to support people with complex needs in the best way possible.

So, when we recruit, we look for people with passion and patience, the aptitude to focus on the small things, and the determination to get it 'just right'. We seek the type of people who will be thrilled when an individual with complex needs makes eye contact or turns at the sound of their voice.

Our staff undertake recognised and accredited training in supporting people with complex needs, including positive behaviour, prevention strategies and intervention techniques. This comprehensive training is 'topped up' using bespoke training that delivers the very best in contemporary support methods for each person.

Our programme of continuous professional development (CPD) means that, as a team, we are always ready to meet the challenges of the evolving social care sector, whatever the individual's circumstances and needs.

Our heritage in complex needs support

Since we began in 1986, Walsingham Support has been successfully supporting people with complex needs.

We understand that being diagnosed with a disability or condition that manifests in having complex needs can be incredibly daunting. It can be especially difficult for a family to watch their loved one struggle with everyday activities.

But, when we work with people with complex needs, we don't just look at what restricts them; instead, we focus on what they want to achieve and develop ways we can help them to fulfil those goals.

Whether it's the smallest of tasks, like being able to eat with a knife and fork, or a more specific lifelong goal, like learning to cook, our staff will find ways to ensure that, however profound an individual's disabilities, they can safely and successfully learn new skills.





Dan's story

We are proud that our staff have a positive nature and a 'can-do' attitude – they were determined to support Dan to achieve his goal of surfing, no matter how long it might take.

Dan, 23, has profound learning and physical disabilities, including complex epilepsy and scoliosis, and is only able to communicate using eye contact and facial expressions.

At Walsingham Support, we respect choices, recognise capabilities, and work with individuals to boost their independence and meet their aspirations.

Staff worked with Dan and his parents to develop a person-centred plan that would challenge him and his support workers to push his boundaries and satisfy his sensory needs. His goals included being able to brush his teeth with support, going on holiday without his parents and of course going surfing.



It was important that all foreseeable challenges were considered, including what equipment Dan and his support workers would need to get him onto the waves, and how Dan would be supported on the surfboard.

After discussions between Dan's parents and his support workers, the arrangements were made for Dan's surfing trip, and plans were put in place to ensure would enjoy the day and get to fulfil his goal, all the while being kept safe.

Dan loved being out of his wheelchair and floating on the water, and he had a fantastic day out experiencing surfing for the first time. He's since bought some surf mitts and wants to get his own wetsuit.

"The smile on Dan's face spoke a thousand words – it was a massive achievement for him," says Nicola Jones, the locality manager at Dan's service. "This was truly an unforgettable moment for Dan and everyone involved."





Why we are different

Everybody is different. We don't just acknowledge that – we celebrate it.

So we make sure we're different, too.

That means offering more than a standard, one-size-fits-all service. It means delivering a tailored support package for every single person we work with, custom made to fit them.

We look beyond a person's disability. We work with individuals, their families and carers to really understand the challenges they face, and the support that will best meet their particular needs.

Then, together we develop creative yet practical solutions that match each person's abilities and goals, giving them the tools they need to thrive and enjoy a fulfilling, happy life.

We believe that our way of thinking sets us apart from other providers in our sector – and we're proud of that!



If you would like to find out more about Walsingham Support and how we can help people with complex needs, please get in touch.



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