

Delegated healthcare activities - Case study



How delegated healthcare activities help me live my best life

Introduction

Charley-Louise Walker is an individual employer and a direct payment advisor. She shares her lived experience of implementing delegated healthcare activities in her care routine.


I've been an individual employer for 15 years now. Thanks to delegated healthcare activities, my life has transformed in ways I never thought possible. I am able to go to Reading Festival every year, enjoy the music, and fully experience life. Delegated healthcare has given me that freedom—it's allowed me to live, not just to survive.

Delegated healthcare activities involve tasks that are usually carried out by healthcare professionals - such as nurses or doctors - but can be safely delegated to personal assistants (PAs) once proper training and assessments are completed. For me, these activities can include things like managing my G-peg tube, colostomy and urostomy care, wound care, Bilevel Positive Airway Pressure (BiPAP) ventilation, and the management of my controlled medication. These aren't minor tasks. They're essential to my health and well-being, and thanks to delegated healthcare, my PAs are fully equipped to help me with these.

How my care needs have changed

When I first began using direct payments to employ personal assistants, my care needs were simpler. I worked closely with my medical team and funding body from the very beginning to make sure my PAs received the right training. I was deeply involved in the process, from developing easy-to-follow guides and instructional videos to setting up regular shadow shifts with senior PAs.

As my health became more complex, I quickly realised how essential it was for my PAs to take on more advanced healthcare responsibilities to support my care. As my care needs evolved, so did the training my PAs received. Before introducing more complex tasks, I was thoroughly assessed alongside my team leader and senior PAs to ensure we were prepared. I work closely with my medical team to ensure my PAs have access to the right training, ongoing support, and regular reviews, making sure they're confident and competent in their roles. My senior PAs play a crucial role in shadow-training new team members, while my medical team supervises and reviews all delegated healthcare activities to make sure everything is carried out safely and effectively.



When I had my stomas and G-peg tube fitted, my PAs received initial training while I was in the hospital, with support from my nurses and dietician. During this time, I developed detailed instruction manuals, policies, and training videos, all of which were shared on the team's Google Drive. I've always worked closely with my medical team, who are available 24/7, and we hold regular reviews. Additionally, my funding body conducts an annual review, and my PAs receive further training whenever a new treatment or medical device is introduced into my care routine. This system has been in place for over 10 years and has proven highly effective.

How I support my personal assistants

To ensure my PAs feel supported and confident, I hold regular supervision meetings led by my team leader to discuss their needs, with informal check-ins along the way. My medical team reviews these meetings and provides any additional support required. For specific tasks like wound management, my district nurses train and guide the PAs, while my GP and dietician monitor my medication and G-peg care.

We stagger training for new PAs to avoid overwhelming them, tailoring it to their individual needs. This approach ensures tasks are performed to the highest standards, with support from my medical team and funding body. As my care needs grow, this flexible training system helps my PAs develop their skills, empowering them to advance in their careers while providing me with the best possible care.

One thing I love about this system is how it empowers both me and my PAs. They have the opportunity to learn, grow, and become more skilled, and that's incredibly rewarding. It's not just a job for them. It's a chance to make a real difference, to feel pride in the care they provide. And for me? Well, it means I can be more independent, more involved in life.

Thankfully, I've been able to take full advantage of the Skills for Care Individual Employer fund, providing access to specialised training programmes. My PAs are now experts in tasks that once seemed overwhelming to me. They've learnt not just from medical professionals, but from me too. We work as a team and I'm proud of the role I play in their development.

There's always room for improvement, though. I wish my PAs could get official certificates and pay rises to recognise their expertise. It would be a great way to reward their hard work and ensure their skills are acknowledged in future roles. As an individual employer, I'd love to see more recognition for the work we do as care coordinators. We're not just recipients of care. We're leaders and trainers too.

I'm passionate about delegated healthcare and I encourage other individual employers to explore it. Talk to your PAs, involve them in your care, and work together to create a system that works for everyone. You'll be amazed at how much it can change your life.

Delegated healthcare has given me so much more than just good care. It's given me freedom, confidence, and the ability to truly live.

Find out more about delegated healthcare activities

Visit: www.skillsforcare.org.uk/DelegatedHealthcareActivities

