



Transcript

Personal Budgets

(TC: 00:00:11)

Male Narrator:

With the number of people using personal budgets growing each year, many are moving away from traditional services and instead accessing micro-enterprises that aim to deliver a flexible and personalised service. In this film, we'll meet people running and using two micro-enterprises in Nottingham and we'll consider some of the benefits and challenges of the growing sector of small providers.

(00:00:36) TITLE: Personal Budgets MICRO-ENTERPRISES

(00:00:41) Sandrina Mapletoft:

A micro-enterprise is a small organisation. Usually, they employ, or they have less than five people within the organisation and they set up to provide support for people.

Narrator:

32 year old Samantha has cerebral palsy, she's cared for by her mum, Julie. Traditional services didn't work for Samantha, so in the last few months they've used her personal budget to buy a care service from a micro-enterprise called Break Barriers. It was set up by Andrene Lewis-Longwe to provide homecare, access to the community and short breaks. After working as a homecare manager, Andrene set up her own company when she became frustrated at what she saw as gaps in traditional homecare services.

Andrene Lewis-Longwe:

Break Barriers is about looking at individual customers' needs and to find ways and means of supporting them in the way that they'd like. So, we are talking about somebody with whatever they consider as a barrier, hence the name Break Barriers. We are looking to put things in place to minimise or break those barriers down to support the individual to access services or the wider community.

Narrator:

Andrene supports people like Samantha to take part in regular recreational activities and access the community.

(00:02:04) Andrene Lewis-Longwe:

Samantha is a physically disabled young lady, she's got CP, Cerebral Palsy. So, it affects her in a physical way and she's got a speech impediment. And in order for her to get out there, she needs a PA to support her.

Are any of these good for you?

Samantha: That one.

AL: You'll have this one? Okay. Is there anything else you want from the shop?

Samantha: No.

AL: Are you sure? Alright then.

(00:02:29) Narrator:

For mum, Julie, a personalised service from a small provider has delivered better outcomes for both her and Samantha.

Julie:

She's settled, she loves it, which is good, really, because if Samantha doesn't like something, she won't do it. She started going to a day centre and she didn't like it, it took us months to get in there, but then all of a sudden, that was it. She decided she didn't want to go, so she had to finish. And then she went four or five years without doing anything at all. Then Break Barriers come along. I think it's the best thing that's happened to her in a long time.

Samantha: We can go out and meet lots of people and make new friends. I would recommend it to anyone.

(00:03:17) Narrator:

The shift towards personalisation and personal budgets has enabled the number of micro providers to grow rapidly across the country.

Sandrina Mapletoft:

The key advantage of micro-enterprises is often that they can be quite innovative, they can be creative. They are small, so they can offer a very personalised service to the service user and carer. They're sometimes able and more willing to think outside of the box, the traditional box of social care services.

Narrator: For Andrene, setting up a micro-enterprise was a big step that she was happy to take.

(00:03:57)

Andrene Lewis-Longwe:

The challenges were there, the challenges will always be there. But it's about from where I'm coming from, in terms of what motivates me, what drives me, what causes me to get up every morning, and that's believing in the product that I'm selling.

Hi Christine.

Christine: How are you?

Narrator: Christine is another person who has been helped by the innovative support offered by Andrene.

Andrene Lewis-Longwe: So, Christine had a stroke a few years ago which left her physically disabled, she's got a speech impediment, she gets confused in terms of loud noises and in terms of getting her words out. So, she needs that security of a PA to support her.

Have you started looking at your packing?

Christine: Yes.

Andrene Lewis-Longwe: Yes, have you got your things out?

Christine: Yes.

Andrene Lewis-Longwe: Okay, perfect. So, today we'll do a little bit of that.

(00:04:45)Narrator:

Christine is using her personal budget to supplement the care she gets from traditional services. Today, they're making the final preparations for something that Christine thought would never happen, taking a holiday abroad.

Andrene Lewis-Longwe: When I got the call from Christine, she wanted to take a holiday around England, because she felt she could not travel because of her health, health reasons. Then I asked her how much money she wanted to spend, looking at the budget, when she told me what she wanted to spend, I said to her, 'Christine, I could get you so much more.' She needed a passport, she needed that one to one support of security and from start to finish, the packing, the suitcases. That's what we gave to her. Eleven days to go, we set sail.

Narrator:

Micro-enterprises are working successfully in partnership with local authorities in Nottinghamshire and across many areas of the country. The micro-enterprises are supported by a membership organisation for small scale care providers, Shared Lives Plus.

(00:05:44) Simon Taylor:

All micro-enterprises are very small. Somebody may be coming from a background which is care based or from a very different sector and setting up a business as a sole trader or as a very small organisation, very small company, is quite a challenge for a lot of people. And I think any organisation is often looking for those key questions to be addressed, 'What format should I start in? Is it a sole trader or a small company? How do I market my services? Who do I talk to and how do I get that message across? '

Sandrina Mapletoft:

I think that there can be questions about how viable they are in the long term, they're very dependent on the business that they get. So, if it takes time to build up that business as it invariably does because it's new, then it can be difficult for them to sustain that business in the meantime.

Narrator:

Safeguarding may also present another challenge for local authorities, as micro-enterprises continue to grow.

(00:06:42) Sandrina Mapletoft:

Ultimately, if there are issues, then they would be brought to our attention, and we would deal with them as we would with any safeguarding issue. I think quality monitoring can be more of a problem. But I think some of, you know, this is part and parcel of choice and control. There are some responsibilities that come with that.

Narrator:

Space Inclusive is a micro-enterprise aiming to provide transitional services for young adults with learning disabilities. It was set up by former special educational needs teachers, David Bingham and Richard Mynett.

(00:07:18) Richard Mynett:

Options after school seemed to be quite limited. A day centre typesetting or possibly a college course that certainly didn't fit everybody. The school I used to work at was in quite a small, close-knit community and you would always see relatives of people or the

people themselves who you used to teach, and it was always very, very disappointing that they were in their mid twenties and didn't do anything.

Narrator:

Space Inclusive tried to fill this gap, by offering a service to young adults with learning disabilities, helping them become more independent and move towards employment.

Richard Mynett:

People will come here for any one of three reasons or any combination of those, which are skills for employment, skills for more independent living, or skills to improve their social interaction.

Narrator: James, who has Asperger Syndrome, has been coming to Space Inclusive for just under a year.

(00:08:10) Richard Mynett:

Working with James is interesting because of his ability, and I would say that he's the person we would be moving on fairly quickly, and the way that he would move on would be to get paid employment. He's now in a lot more different social situations than he was accessing previously, so he's less isolated.

Hi James, what are you up to?

James: Hi, well I've just finished doing the blog entry for the horse riding that we did yesterday.

Narrator:

For James, a flexible and personal approach from the small provider has been key to getting the support that's right for him.

(00:08:45) James:

I want to feel like I'm a human being, for starters, and sometimes when you've got a large organisation, you can feel a little bit bewildered by it all. And you're just, like, going along with the flotsam and jetsam, you know. Whereas here, I feel like because I know the two directors of the company personally, even though I don't think of it like that, that they are amenable, they're friendly, they're flexible, they're centred on what I'm doing.

Narrator: For Richard, starting a business for the first time was a big risk with his own future.

Richard Mynett:

It was a huge gamble, personally and professionally. There were so many things from a business side that I had no knowledge of, that you had to, kind of, learn, sort of, on the run, really. At the same time, you have to try and make sure that you have enough people coming to make it a viable business to support yourselves and to ensure the continuity of the project.

Narrator:

In its early days, Space Inclusive got help from Community Catalysts, a national organisation that provides practical support to micro-enterprises. Its support helps to make small enterprises, like Richard's, sustainable.

(00:10:05) Rebecca Stanley:

As with a lot of the micro-providers I've worked with, it's been really hard to get, kind of, noticed. I would say that they've found quite a gap in the market, really, as they're quite inundated now with referrals, because actually they can offer people what they really want. People haven't got to fit in with what they offer. People are offering what people actually really want.

Narrator:

What do those who've taken the leap and set up a micro-enterprise say to the next generation of small scale providers?

Richard Mynett:

It's a really big gamble, and it is a really big leap, especially with the cuts that are happening in local authorities, but the situation of personalisation and personal budgets has to happen, it has to happen. Local authorities do need to follow that agenda. So, the market is there. It's about finding what you're good at, it's about finding what your special niche is and trying to canvass as much opinion to see if there is a market for that.

(00:11:01) Andrene Lewis-Longwe:

Go for it, because with that motivation and drive, you'll definitely get to where you want to be. It will take time, it will take perseverance, but it will be worth every single effort, every single sleepless night, every single anxiety that you face, it will be worth it in the end.

(TC: 00:11:18)