



Rodrigo's Support Plan

Hello, my name is: Rodrigo José Álvarez

Please call me: Rodrigo or Roddy

Overview:

I am 36 years old. I live in Thundersley in Essex, in my own home with my girlfriend Jane. I am half Brazilian and half English, and my heritage matters greatly to me. I also live with a physical disability that was caused by an injury to my spinal cord when I was 13 years old.

This support plan was put together with my Independent Support Broker, Sarah. In this plan I will share who I am, what matters to me, what my goals and outcomes are and describe how I need support to live my life, as well as laying out how I wish to manage that support.

Last updated: Tuesday 8th December 2020

My Key Information:

My Date of Birth: 7th May 1984

Current age: 36

My Address:

My contact details:

My mobile number: -----

My home telephone number: -----

My email: -----@webmail.co.uk

My Ethnicity:

Mixed – half Brazilian, half English

My religion, faith, belief or none:

Christian

My Next of Kin:

Mary Fiona Álvarez (née Walker)

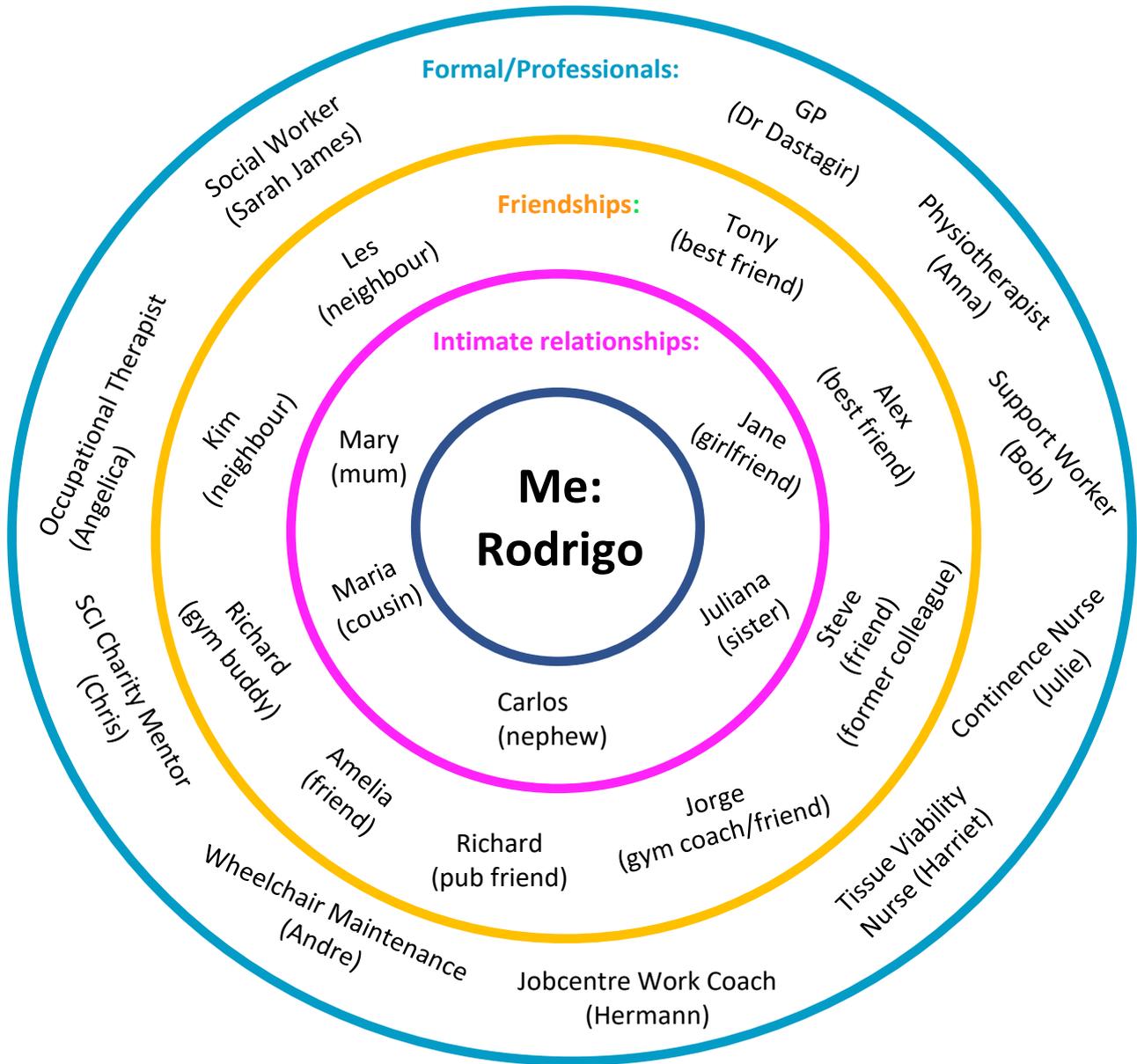
Mother

Telephone number: -----

Lives locally

My Circle of Support

Here is my circle of support: some of the most important people involved in my life today.



Professionals Involved – My Team

The following professionals play a key role in my life:

Name	Role	Organisation	Contact
Sarah James	Social Worker – Disabilities Team	Essex County Council	01245 786673 s.james@essex.gov.uk
Sarah Richards	Independent Support Broker	Sarah Richards Ltd	07591 592097 Sarah@Sarah- richards.co.uk
Dr Dastagir	Lead GP	Hart Road Surgery	01268 792500 r.dastagir@nhs.net
Angelica Treeman	Occupational Therapist	Essex Partnership University Trust	01268 792203 a.treeman@EPUT.nhs.uk
Anna Wessley	Physiotherapist (SCI specialist)	RNOH, Stanmore	020 3947 0100 a.wessley.physio@nhs.net
Julie Grey	Continence Nurse	Essex Partnership University Trust	01268 792204 j.grey4@EPUT.nhs.uk
Harriet Barker	Tissue Viability Nurse	Essex Partnership University Trust	01268 792206 h.barker2@EPUT.nhs.uk

The following organisations are important in my life:

Bluebird Care Castle Point & Thurrock – current care agency – High Road, Benfleet

Hart Road Surgery – GP Practice – Hart Road, Thundersley

Rishi Pharmacy – local pharmacy – Hart Road, Thundersley

Essex County Council – Social Work Team – Kiln Road, Benfleet

Southend Hospital – local hospital – Prittlewell, Southend-on-Sea

Spinal Injuries Unit, Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital – Stanmore, Middlesex, London

Benfleet Clinic – complementary therapies including massage – Hart Road, Thundersley

Virgin Active Thundersley – Gym I attend – Rayleigh Road, Thundersley

Charities: Spinal Injuries Association, Backup Trust, Aspire, Castle Point Association of Voluntary Services

How Did I Get Here?

Where I call home:

I was born and have lived in Essex all my life, aside from when I was at university. We originally lived in Southend-on-Sea but after my accident we moved to a bungalow in Rayleigh that we purchased and adapted using my compensation pay-out. Once I moved out of home when I went to university, my mother sold that property and moved to a chalet bungalow in Thundersley, and when I returned from university I used the remainder of my compensation to buy and adapt a ground floor flat in Thundersley a few streets from my mum, where I live today with my girlfriend Jane.



Me, my dad, my mum and my sister

Me and my family:

I am half Brazilian; my father was Brazilian, and my mother is English. My parents met whilst my mum was on holiday in Brazil, and my father subsequently moved to England to marry my mother. I am their oldest child, I have a younger sister called Juliana and she has a son, my nephew, called Carlos, who is now 5. Juliana and Carlos live in Cambridge due to Juliana's work. My father died when I was 18, and since then my mum, sister and I have not been speaking any Portuguese (I have no living immediate family on my father's side) and I would like to reconnect with my heritage and learn to speak Portuguese fluently again.

My childhood:

I went to Barons Court Primary School in Southend, then to Southend High School for Boys for senior school, albeit I had 1 year out after my spinal cord injury when I was tutored by the hospital school and then by Integrated Support Services at home until I was well enough to return. I found school quite hard due to bullying around my heritage as well as some minor bullying around my disability after my accident. However, I enjoyed learning and didn't find the schoolwork difficult. I've always had an interest in technology, attending a computer club at school and playing around with friends after school and on weekends building our own toys, robots and basic machines.

I've always been sporty, and I used to go to an athletics club and to Rugby before my accident. Rugby was my main passion. Here's a picture of me playing Rugby when I was younger.



My accident and injury:

I used to play Rugby in Essex Division 3 (under 15s) for Billericay RFC, and on our way to a match one day we were in a car accident. A reckless driver hit the side of the car I was sitting in and my back was fractured in the process, causing a spinal cord injury. I am paralysed from the waist down, a complete injury meaning I have no movement or sensation below my injury, and it also affects my bowel and bladder function. I have used a wheelchair ever since.

I spent time in the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, Stanmore, receiving intensive physiotherapy and other care and support, where I spent 6 months inpatient in the unit as I learned to cope with my injury, learn independence skills and rehabilitate as much as I could. I continue to be supported by RNOH Stanmore, especially with regards to physiotherapy and a general overview if I need it. My spinal cord injury (SCI) specialist physio, Anna Wessley is based at the RNOH.

University and Work:

I went to University at the University of Glasgow to study software engineering and graduated with a first. I worked for a few different companies after university and then went and worked for iFlexion, a top 10 software company based in London. For 9 years I commuted into London 3 days per week and worked 2 days from home. Sadly, a year ago I was made redundant as my particular department transferred to an office in Manchester and I couldn't afford to move away from my adapted home and my medical professionals, but I also didn't want to move away from my mother, my girlfriend and my community.

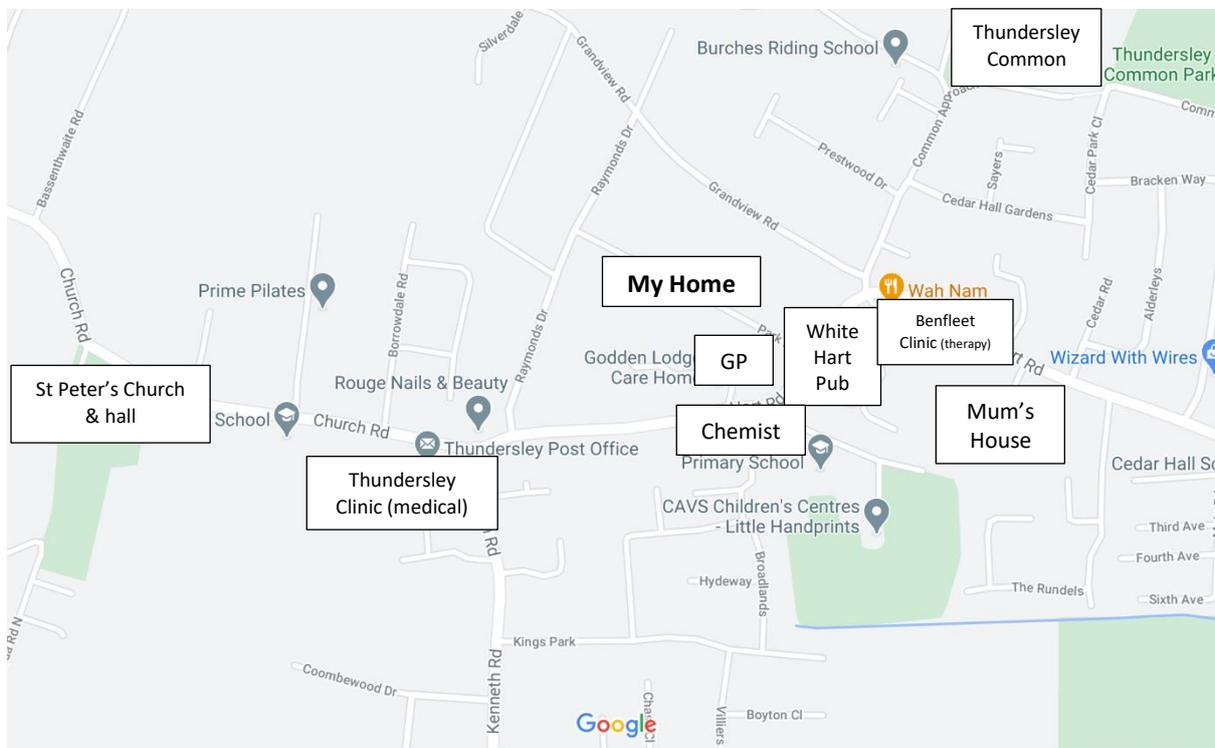
Care:

I've had various care agencies support me over the years. I currently receive support from Bluebird Care, a care agency, but I wish to manage my support myself moving forwards. I want the flexibility to manage my package and my staff myself, I want more freedom.

My Community:

I enjoy living in Thundersley, I have friends I see at the pub called the White Hart in the village and I do attend one of the services at Christmas time and one at Easter in our local church (St Peter's) but I am not overly religious. The village is fairly accessible for wheelchair users, so I don't struggle too much getting around the local area. I also go to St Peter's Church Hall where they often have activities on in the evening, including a befriending club for older people, at which I volunteer when I can. I also have applied to Rayleigh Library to volunteer at their computer classes, which has been accepted, so I can use my skills in IT to teach people who aren't good with computers how to operate them. I found out about this through my own mum who started taking classes there. I also enjoy going for walks with my girlfriend Jane on Thundersley Great Common.

My local area:



Further afield:

My gym (Virgin Active Thundersley) is a 3-minute drive from my home and is East of this map.

The USP college (SEEVIC campus) is just South of this map and I have attended some evening classes there. One course I did recently was a First Aid for Mental Health course, and about 8 months ago I did an Introduction to Counselling Skills course. I want to become a peer mentor for the Spinal Injuries Association or the Backup Trust, and so I started doing courses I think will help with that. I've even been in to talk to the IT/computing students about software engineering and they've asked me to give a speech to students in an assembly about overcoming adversity.

My local hospital is in Southend and is about a 20 to 30-minute drive, depending on traffic.

The Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, Stanmore is about an hour-and-a-half away.

I have applied to volunteer at the local library in Rayleigh, a 5-minute drive from my home.

My sister lives in Milton, Cambridge and I like to visit her, however her home is not wheelchair accessible, so we meet up at the local park or restaurants or cafes nearby.

We enjoy going to nature reserves, country parks and nature spots including:

Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park (Eastwood)

Hylands House (Chelmsford)

Thorndon Country Park (Brentwood)

Weald Country Park (South Weald)

Hockley Woods (Hockley)

We also enjoy going to Southend Seafront and especially into Old Leigh – the cobbles in Old Leigh are not the greatest for a wheelchair user, but we still enjoy going there.

Jane enjoys going shopping in Southend, in Chelmsford or to Lakeside in Thurrock so we often go there. Shopping isn't my idea of fun, but I try to be a good partner to Jane, and I recognise she does a lot of things and makes adjustments for me to live my life, so I also support her in the things she enjoys doing. I do admit sometimes I will wander off to the Apple shop whilst she goes in some stores!

We also enjoy going into Festival Leisure Park, Basildon, to go to the IMAX cinema, to the Bowling Alley and/or to go to restaurants there.

We also enjoy days out in London. Where we are, we're exactly halfway between Rayleigh Station and Benfleet Station. Rayleigh Station takes you directly into Liverpool Street and Benfleet Station takes you directly into Fenchurch Street. Jane and I often go on our own, but we'll sometimes go out with mum, Juliana and Carlos for a big family day out.

A few times we've gone on holiday to Norfolk and stayed at the Lin Berwick Trust property (Berwick Cottage) and we've taken mum with us, and then Juliana and Carlos joined us for the weekend. We'd like to try and make that an annual holiday rather than a sporadic arrangement. It's not too far from Thetford Forest which is somewhere else I enjoy going – they have recently (2019) opened a dedicated path for people with mobility difficulties which is a smooth path all the way around, although the other footpaths aren't difficult to navigate if the weather isn't too bad, but this new path I can use all year round. I enjoy going there to take Carlos to the activities they do, and Jane and I often go so I can take lots of nature photos and photos of Jane of course. I'm able to go because the Lin Berwick Trust can match you up with local care companies/providers to support you whilst you're there, which is what we've done in the past as Bluebird Care haven't been able to provide carers in that particular area, and the Local Authority has commissioned that agency to support me whilst at Berwick Cottage.

My Interests and Hobbies

My Interests:

Computers, software and technology – I am a total computer geek and I don't even mind owning up to that! I enjoy learning about new software and apps, finding out about them, how they're built and how they work. I love building my own apps and code, and this is also what I have always done for a living, working in computers and software. My home computer I built entirely myself from scratch, but I have applied for funding for a MacBook Pro laptop from access to work to use whilst I am working as it has great accessibility features for when my hands and arms get fatigued, it is also a laptop rather than a desktop so it is portable when I am working away from home (I can take it to clients with me and work away from home then) and I do like Apple computers.

Sport – I have always liked sport and enjoy watching it on TV or where I can, watching things live. I watched wheelchair basketball at the 2012 Paralympic Games in London and also watched the archery and I have now decided I want to try both and hopefully become a regular wheelchair basketball player.

Fitness – I enjoy learning about fitness and healthy lifestyles, I follow a lot of personal trainers and fitness channels on YouTube and enjoy watching those for inspiration.

Brazilian culture – since my dad died, I haven't been very well connected with my heritage and roots, so I have taken an interest in learning more about Brazilian culture and the language.

My family tree – I love finding out about my family. My father was an only child and my grandparents on that side have died, so I don't really have relatives on dad's side of the family that I know, and I'd love to do my own family tree one day.

Hobbies:



Photography – I enjoy taking photographs, especially of buildings, nature spots, animals and also people (but not posed photos – natural ones). I try to go out once a week and take photos and I am going to try and go on a photography course to improve my skills and to make best use of my DSLR camera and submit them to photography competitions and groups to get feedback.



Cooking – I quite enjoy cooking and baking and we (my girlfriend Jane and I) challenge ourselves to try a new recipe every week. We especially enjoy making healthy versions of some of our favourite meals and foods.



Fitness – I enjoy going to the gym, but I haven't been as committed as I could be. Since I lost my job, I lost a bit motivation, but now I am challenging myself to go at least 3 days per week and to continue to do at least two 5k wheelchair "runs" per week.

I knew of Parkruns but didn't realise there were any locally. My broker, Sarah and I looked into Parkruns in Essex and I found out there's one at Hockley Woods that I could go to. There are others in Essex including in Basildon, Brentwood, Southend and Chelmsford. I have decided I am going to do a Parkrun as often as I can, they're held weekly so I could go weekly. This will help me keep my fitness up and Jane if she wants to join me, but I'll also form new friendships and maybe I'll even volunteer to help them run the Parkruns one day?



Reading – I enjoy reading nonfiction books and learning new things. This includes books on entrepreneurship, self-help, fitness and culture, as well as autobiographies and biographies. I like learning new things about new people, broadening my horizons and being the best person, I can be.



Nature – I enjoy going for walks and exploring country parks, local beauty spots and nature reserves. I often cannot go to places in the winter due to the mud, so we make the most of it during the summer.

My Future Goals:

Personal:

Goal:	Information:	Timescale / Priority:
<p>To get even fitter and healthier than I am now</p>	<p>I am going to get back going to the gym at least 3 days per week rather than just once as I have the last few months. I will also try and have a one-to-one personal training session at the gym as often as I can afford it</p> <p>Continue to do at least two 5k "runs" in my wheelchair per week</p> <p>To ensure I always eat a balanced diet – getting the balance right between different elements, getting my 5-a-day, eating protein-rich food</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>To do Parkruns as often as I can</p>	<p>There are Parkrun events within a 20-minute drive from us and I want to start doing them regularly</p>	<p>Immediately</p>
<p>To get into disability sports</p>	<p>To start playing wheelchair basketball – I know there is the Essex Outlaws Wheelchair Basketball Club that my broker helped me find more information about and I am going to go for a try-out one day soon</p>	<p>As soon as possible – within the next 3 months</p>
	<p>I'd also like to try archery</p>	<p>Within the next 6 months</p>

Reconnect with my heritage	There is a Portuguese heritage social group I am going to join which meets in East London 1 Wednesday per month	Now
Improve my Portuguese	Buy a language learning package so I can improve my Portuguese and then communicate with the social group in Portuguese	Now
Improve my photography	Do a photography course Submit my photos to competitions for feedback	Within the next 6 months
To apply for an Assistance Dog to support me	I would like an Assistance Dog to support me to reduce my dependence on other people in some aspects of my life	To apply within the next 2 months
To go on a family holiday to Norfolk once per year	We can stay at the fully accessible Lin Berwick Trust property and source local care agency support whilst there	Annually
To take a holiday to Brazil to reconnect with my heritage	I would need to take a Personal Assistant with me to support me and to find an accessible property to stay in.	Within the next 2 years

Employment:

Goal:	Information:	Timescale / Priority:
To start my own business	<p>I have been accepted for New Enterprise Allowance and have been granted Access to Work funding</p> <p>I need to get my website and social media prepared and live</p> <p>I need to make contact with local businesses, charities and others to sell my services and create my promotional items</p>	Ongoing
<p>You can see more about this goal on the “Return to Employment: My Action Plan” section of this plan</p>		

Education:

Goal:	Information:	Timescale / Priority:
To undertake a Postgraduate Diploma in Computer Science	<p>I would like to do a Postgraduate Diploma (PG Dip) in Computer Science via distance learning from the University of Essex, with a specialist interest in accessibility and assistive technologies.</p>	<p>Course starts next September if I get accepted</p>

Volunteering:

Goal:	Information:	Timescale / Priority:
To become a peer mentor for Backup Trust or Spinal Injuries Association	To do this I will need to complete some training	Within 3 months
To volunteer to support computer classes at my local library	I have applied to the Hadleigh Library to volunteer for their computer classes. My application has been accepted but I have not started yet.	Within 3 months
To continue volunteering at the St Peter's Church Hall befriending group	I volunteer once per fortnight or once per month, depending on my availability	Ongoing

Relationships:

Goal:	Information:	Timescale / Priority:
To propose to Jane	I would like to marry Jane one day. We've talked about not being in a rush to get married, but I'd like to show my commitment to her by getting engaged – if she accepts – and show her that I want to spend the rest of my life with her. I need to get Juliana to help me pick a ring!	Within 9 months

<p>To provide more support to my mum as she gets older</p>	<p>I would like to provide more support to my mum as she gets older. Right now, she's managing with us taking her shopping, cooking her Sunday lunch and having lunch together twice a week but if she struggles with other things, I want to be able to support her. Especially as Juliana isn't local.</p> <p>For example, I could drive her to her bingo if she started to struggle to drive, or I could offer to take her to appointments or run errands for her.</p>	<p>Whenever it is necessary</p>
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My Desired Life, Care and Other Outcomes:

What I Want to Achieve with My Package:

My Care:

- I want to be in charge of my care.
- I want to have the freedom to make my care work for me, not fit my life around my care.
- I don't want my girlfriend Jane to become my carer. I don't mind her supporting me with some things, but I don't want her to do any personal or continence care.
- I want to be able to up-skill care staff to help me to avoid acute health issues where possible, by ensuring I don't develop pressure sores, reducing my chances of urine infections, and to keep additional medical interventions to a minimum.

My Health:

- I want to maintain peak fitness and health.
- I want to minimise the risk of my health getting worse by being proactive.
- I want to strengthen my core and arm muscles to help them take the strain of daily life as a result of my injury, as my upper core muscles and arms and shoulders take a lot of stress and strain and get overused as a compensation for the paralysis below my injury.
- I want to look into massage and complementary therapies as a way of managing symptoms and the strain on my body, including aches and pains, as I recognise that escalating doses of painkillers is often not the answer and I have talked to my medical team about this.
- I want to look at alternative options around my continence.
 - Currently I use bowel washouts to try and keep me going regularly and to try and stop me being incontinent of faeces – keeping my bowel in a routine is very important.
 - I also intermittently catheterise to empty my bladder. However, I have discovered condom catheters that I could use overnight, to try and reduce urinary incontinence during the night. The other alternative that has been mentioned in the past is a suprapubic catheter, a surgically placed catheter through my lower abdomen and into my bladder, but I know a lot of SCI friends with SPCs who struggle even more with infections and some have even had sepsis from it. I also know others who find the SPCs can sometimes cause attacks of autonomic dysreflexia, especially with site or bladder infections as it's too much stimulation below our injury and we lack the sensation to catch things early. I also know that the changing of the suprapubic catheter is often not delegated to carers so I would need to have the district nurses to come in and change it, which could restrict my life more – I would have to plan my life around regular catheter changes every 5-8 weeks and the district nurses can't provide a timeslot so I'd have to stay in bed all day waiting for the nurse to turn up and change it – that for me is not something I want to have to do if I can avoid it.

My Mental and Physical Wellbeing:

- I sometimes struggle with motivation and occasionally low mood, and I have scoped out how I could access psychological therapies in future if I was struggling and needed them. I realise I need to keep my mind as healthy as my body. Due to long waiting lists for NHS referrals for counselling, I am trying to put by money every so often as an emergency fund so I can access things urgently, such as counselling, if I needed to.
- I want to feel like I have a purpose and I contribute so getting back into work (starting my own business) and volunteering are really important to me. These will give me drive and motivation not only to keep going, but to remain as well and active as possible.
- I also recognise I need to reach out more to those around me if I am having a down day and not hold it all in.
- I want to access more social and support groups to maintain my mental/emotional wellbeing.
- I need to keep going to the gym and exercising to keep my body fit and healthy.

My Life:

- I want to have total autonomy over my life
- I want to be in the driving seat of everything in my life, including my care package. I want to be 'on top of' things in my life and to be proactive and think ahead rather than waiting for things to happen and then dealing with them.
- I want to ensure I make the most of my time and spend my time in ways that are constructive and conducive to my life, my relationships, my wellbeing and my happiness. Life is short and precious.
- I want to be a good person and contribute to the world around me - I need to have a purpose to my life and have things to live for. Being able to volunteer, get back into work and to get back into sport all give me a sense of purpose. I need to be 'doing something' with my life.
- I want to be more organised in terms of recording my income and outgoings and managing the money I spend.
- I want to achieve all my goals and I want to be able to keep setting new goals and always have something to strive towards to keep me motivated.

My Relationships:

- I want to be able to spend quality time with my family members, including mum, Jane and my sister and nephew.
- I want to be a good son – I want to take care of my mother as she's always taken care of me and be able to provide support to my mother, who is getting older and needs more help with things
- I want to be a good partner to Jane, my girlfriend. I want to provide her equally as much support as she gives me.
- I want to propose to Jane within the next 6-9 months and marry her one day.
- I don't want my girlfriend Jane to become my carer.

Return to Employment – My Action Plan:

My broker and I have worked out a plan for how I can get back into paid employment. We have identified some key steps to the process, key enablers and different ideas of how this could happen.

Option 1:

Work on my CV with the job centre work coach and continue applying for jobs.

Option 2:

Start my own business and seek support in fulfilling this including funding, mentoring and business advice.

My choice:

I have decided I am going to start my own business, as I like the idea of flexibility to choose my own working hours, being my own boss and being able to provide the service that is within my areas of interest and expertise.

Making this happen:

I have been on Universal Credit and so the Jobcentre Work Coach told me I was eligible for New Enterprise Allowance. I have applied for New Enterprise Allowance and I am going to be granted £50 per week for 25 weeks and a loan of £4,500 to get started from the British Business Bank pending successful completion of the New Enterprise Allowance programme.

With support from my broker, Sarah Richards and my Jobcentre work coach, Hermann Raczkiwiak, I have applied for Access to Work funding and I have been granted:

- £6,257.16 per annum towards one day per week with a Personal Assistant to support me at work – ensuring I always have the support I need whilst visiting clients
- £1,450 towards a new MacBook Pro laptop to use for work – I use a MacBook Pro due to its accessibility features and Apple having the software I am used to using
- £259.99 towards Dragon Professional (dictation software) - I get upper limb fatigue when typing for long periods of time
- £1,000 towards a new wheelchair (which I will combine with my Personal Wheelchair Budget)
- £1,000 per annum for hotel fees for staying overnight with a PA when needing to travel for work
- £850 for a portable, collapsible shower chair for travel
- £350 towards an online course in accessibility in tech and assistive devices to deepen my knowledge
- £1,440.18 per year (8 hours per month at £15 per hour / £120 per month) towards admin support – helping with booking accommodation, filing, paperwork, going to the post office, invoicing clients etc.

My business:

I will be using my skills from my previous job in IT (software engineering) to start my own self-employed business doing software creation, websites, databases and app development, with a special interest in working within the healthcare space and within the third sector.

Next steps:

I have found an online course that I can use to deepen my understanding of accessibility in software and tech. I have some knowledge of this already but since I lost my job, things have moved on and so I need to bring my knowledge up to date. I then feel this is an additional service I can sell, specialising in accessibility for software, websites and tech.

What do I need to do to start my own business?

Done

In Progress

Not Yet

Business Setup	Funding / Support	Launch
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create my business plan • Register as self employed • Set up a dedicated bank account • Source an accountant to help with finances • Register with an accounting platform such as QuickBooks to track invoices, orders and receipts • Set up my website • Set up social media channel(s) • Promotional items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with my job centre work coach • Apply for New Enterprise Allowance • Apply for Access to Work for disability related costs important for working • Find a business mentor • Join the Essex Business Forum • Become a member of Disabled Entrepreneurs • Undertake some e-learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch the website • Start posting on social media and utilise social media adverts • Add my services to local directories • Contact local businesses and charities offering my services • Hand out flyers • Organise for my flyer/poster to appear in public places • Hand out business cards and flyers

A Week in My Life: What Could A Week in My Life Look Like?

Day	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Night
Monday	<p>08.00 – go to the gym</p> <p>09.30 – start work (work from home)</p> <p>12.00 – have a lunch break and go and eat round at mum’s</p>	<p>13.00-16.00 – working from home</p> <p>16.00-17.00 – Zoom quiz with my mum, sister and nephew</p>	<p>Have dinner with my girlfriend Jane</p> <p>Every fortnight/month to go to the befriending club</p>	
Tuesday	<p>09.00 – start work (work from home)</p> <p>12.00 – have a lunch break and go for a walk on Thundersley common</p>	<p>13.00-15.00 – work from home</p> <p>15.00-18.00 – Go to the Essex Outlaws Wheelchair Basketball Club</p>	<p>Dinner with Jane once I get home</p> <p>Spend the rest of the evening relaxing with Jane</p>	
Wednesday:	<p>08.00 – go to the gym</p> <p>09.30-12.00 – work on my diploma</p>	<p>Work on my diploma</p>	<p>Portuguese social group first Wednesday per month</p> <p>Jane spends the evening with her family and I will have food at the social group</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Jane and I will have a “date night” and go out for a meal and to the cinema or other outing</p>	

Thursday	<p>08.00 – do a 5km walk in wheelchair around the village to keep fit</p> <p>10.00 – have a shower</p> <p>10.30 – start work (work from home)</p> <p>12.00 – have a lunch break</p>	13.00-17.00 - Work from home	<p>Jane goes to a creative writing class at UPS/SEEVIC from 18.00-19.30, so I have a night in and relax at home.</p> <p>We'll have a late dinner, either I'll cook for us both or I'll order something from Just Eat to be delivered once she gets home.</p>	
Friday	<p>09.00 – 11.30 – work from home</p> <p>11.30-13.00 do a 5k wheelchair "run"</p>	<p>13.00 – have lunch</p> <p>Work on my diploma</p>	<p>Go to the pub with friends at 18.00 and have dinner there</p>	<p>Late night at the pub so I usually don't return till midnight – sometimes later</p>
Saturday	<p>Do a Parkrun (9am) or go to the gym</p> <p>If I go to the gym, a personal training session if I can</p> <p>Sometimes Jane has to bring work home so she may be working on that whilst I'm at the gym</p>	<p>Take my mum to visit my sister and her son every other week</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Volunteer at computer classes / volunteer with the spinal charity</p> <p>Relax at home</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Go out for the day</p>	<p>Social activities with Jane and/or mum</p> <p>Or</p> <p>We'll still be on our day out and likely eat at a restaurant or get a takeaway on the way home</p>	
Sunday	<p>Go to the gym if I haven't gone the day before – PT session if I can.</p> <p>Spend time with Jane</p> <p>Go out and take photographs</p>	<p>Take mum shopping</p> <p>Sunday lunch with mum and Jane</p>	<p>Lazy night with Jane</p> <p>Sometimes Jane ends up doing work on weekends too</p>	

My Current Support: What Works – What Doesn't

Here I list the things that work for me, and the things that do not.

Working	Not Working
Having carers come in every morning and every night to support me with transferring in and out of bed and dealing with any incontinence	Having an agency provide my care – lack of continuity, unreliable with timing, sending unsuitable staff and the agency and the staff are not prepared to increase their skills – such as doing delegated tasks
Having been able to use a different provider when I've been on holiday to Norfolk at the Lin Berwick Trust Berwick Cottage property and the Local Authority commissioning that for me outside my regular care package	Not being able to run my own care package and have total choice over when and where I receive my care
My flat is largely accessible and enables me to be as independent as possible	Not being able to choose my own staff – lack of continuity, unsuitable staff sent
Having my own adapted (hand controls) car that I can drive, but which I also share with Jane	Not having additional support that I can receive away from my home and adapt to what I am doing that day
Being able to build my own support plan with my broker rather than the agency deciding on my support plan	Jane being expected to step in and do my care when the agency can't find staff – and having to call upon the district nurses when I can to do the continence care, if they will, as I will not allow Jane to do that (a few times I've even had to ask my mum to step in just to do my continence care, which isn't something I want to do)
I have most of the equipment I need	Current care workers not being allowed to care for me outside the home – leaving me trying to find friends or having to get Jane to help
Being able to access support from the Spinal Injuries Association and Backup Trust	My current wheelchair is no longer suitable, it's getting old, but I am going to get a new one

My Care and Support: How I Want to Organise My Support Moving Forwards

This is how I want to organise my support moving forwards.

I want to manage my support as a Direct Payment

I would like to receive my funding as a direct payment and manage the finances myself as well as employ and manage my own staff.

Jane, my girlfriend is an accountant and she said she'd support me to manage the finances. My neighbour Kim works in Human Resources Management and said she can advise around HR issues. I also know of places such as ACAS who can be of great support and my PA insurance will provide legal and other advice.

Insurance:

I have identified Fish Insurance who charge £135.00 per year for specialist PA insurance.

PA Training:

I will access online training for my PAs on Social Care TV and using other free resources from different providers. I have budgeted for this within my Social Care Personal Budget. On Social Care TV, most courses cost £1.49 per person. I also use other free training providers and my tissue viability nurse will train my PAs in pressure and skin care. I also have an additional course I would like my PAs to undertake subject to sourcing additional funding.

Recruitment:

I will use word of mouth, social media and free advertising on Indeed to source my staff.

Staff:

I have calculated I will need 4 regular PAs plus 3 backup PAs, the latter who will be on zero-hour contracts.

Contingency:

I would like to have Helping Hands Homecare provide my contingency as a backup.

I will allow 2 weeks care as my contingency, at £30 per hour, to be accommodated in my weekly Personal Budget income.

My Care and Support Needs: What Do I Need Help With?

Need	Information	How this need will be met
Transferring	I require support from my PAs to transfer from bed to wheelchair and wheelchair to bed.	My PAs will support me to use a banana board and a slide sheet every morning and evening
Continence care	Bowel washout	I self-manage my bowel washouts and intermittent catheterisation.
	Intermittent Catheterisation	I would like my PAs trained in case of emergency and I couldn't do it. My continence nurse Julie is happy to train them.
	Dealing with incontinence	My PAs will deal with this of a morning when they get me up
Pressure care	Harriet my tissue viability nurse oversees my skin and pressure area care, but her visits could be reduced to once per month or even "as needed" if my PAs were trained to assess my pressure areas	My PAs will be trained by Harriet to check my pressure areas and seek advice if anything develops or they have any concerns
Stretching and exercises	These are set by my Spinal Cord Injury Specialist Physiotherapist, Anna Wessley	My PAs will support me to stretch and do my exercises every morning These are mainly stretching my legs and feet to stop contractures and ease spasms

How I Will Ensure My Needs Are Met:

Every day:

Support	Duration	Tasks
<p>Funded PA Support: PA to help with morning routine</p>	1 hour per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PA deals with any overnight incontinence and undresses me from my night clothes • PA helps me transfer out of bed and onto my shower chair • I catheterise my bladder • I grab a quick shower • PA helps me get dried, helps me get transferred into my wheelchair and helps me get dressed • PA cleans up the bathroom and puts things in the wash
<p>Self-managed: Pre-bed routine</p>	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will transfer myself onto our toilet and do my bowel washout routine 1 hour before bedtime. • I will do my final intermittent catheterisation.
<p>Funded PA Support: Night-time PA support</p>	30 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PA will arrive • They'll support me to get undressed • Help me do a quick freshen up • Transfer me into bed • Put discrete padded underwear on in case of any incontinence • The PA will then clean up my bowel washout equipment and get it ready for the next day and clear up any mess in the bathroom

Weekly or Less Frequently:

Support	Duration	Tasks
Self-managed / Support from Jane: Shopping	1.5 hours per week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jane and I go shopping together at least once per week We take my mother shopping too I also go to the village shops to pick things up
Access to Work: PA support whilst at work / doing work Funded by Access to Work	8 hours per week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting me to travel to clients Supporting with toileting away from home if we can't find a suitable accessible toilet Providing general assistance with work tasks
Informal Support: Support at the gym Once per week	1.5 hours per week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My gym buddy Richard is happy to help me out at the gym if I need it, so when he's around I often use some of the more challenging, more inaccessible equipment
Access to Work: Admin support	8 hours per month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admin support Supporting with organisation of work Invoicing clients Running errands

PA Core Skills and Training

My broker and I have worked out that my PAs need to understand the following things in caring for me:

- Pressure and skin care
- Moving and Handling
- Infection Control
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults
- First Aid
- Personal care support

I have identified my PAs need the following training:

Training / Course	Provider	Cost
Pressure and skin care	Tissue viability team	Free
First Aid Awareness	Social Care TV	£1.50
Moving and Handling (Theory)	Social Care TV	£1.50
Moving and Handling (Assessment)	Social Care TV	£1.50
Infection Control	Social Care TV	£1.50
Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults	Essex Safeguarding Board	Free
Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Personal Care Needs	Learning Curve Group	Free
Infection Control (COVID)	SCIE	Free

Desired:

Using a Skills for Care Individual Employer grant, I will also fund the following training course for my staff:

Managing a Spinal Cord Injury (virtual training sessions)	Spinal Injuries Association	£400
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Risks and Mitigation:

Sarah, my broker and I have identified these possible risks to the package.

Identified Risk	Impact of Risk	● Mitigation
Difficulty recruiting staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of support – thus lack of safety and wellbeing ● Package breakdown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have a team of bank/backup staff ● Have a contingency agency to step in for a short time ● Use a PA recruitment platform such as PA Pool ● Use paid-for adverts
Struggling to retain staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of support – thus lack of safety and wellbeing ● Package breakdown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate why staff are not staying ● Have a team of bank/backup staff ● Have a contingency agency to step in for a short time ● Use a PA recruitment platform such as PA Pool ● Use paid-for adverts
Staff letting me down at the last minute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inability to find cover ● Risk to safety and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have bank/backup staff ● Have an agency for backup ● Call friend Richard if I get completely stuck
Staff illness – Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inability to find cover ● Using up all contingency ● Lack of funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Having sufficient regular and backup staff ● Contingency agency
Staff illness – Long term illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inability to cover all shifts ● Affording sick pay long-term ● Insufficient funds to manage needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Having sufficient regular and backup staff ● Contingency agency ● Call friend Richard if I get completely stuck
Continance or other needs change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PAs not skilled in that need ● Needing more training for staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Up-skill my PAs to help with additional tasks ● Use agency as backup until staff are trained

Sarah, my broker and I have looked at the importance of taking some risks.

Identified Risk	Taking the Risk	Not Taking the Risk
Rodrigo being left without support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk to Rodrigo's safety • Needs not being met • Rodrigo's wishes not being followed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rodrigo not achieving his goal of independence over his care • Rodrigo not having the flexibility to make his care work for him • Rodrigo feeling like he has no 'say' in his own life
Rodrigo struggling to manage the funds and employing staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misspending funding • Not keeping sufficient records for audit • Doing something contrary to employment law • Rodrigo not using social care funds in line with the agreed support plan • Package breakdown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rodrigo not having the chance to be fully independent • Rodrigo's right to self-determination not being realised • Rodrigo's mental health failing as a result of having to receive commissioned care over which he has no control
Rodrigo wanting to change back to another form of package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needing a reassessment at short notice • Needing to commission more broker support to develop a new support plan • Not having time to sort out a new package before the previous one ends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rodrigo doesn't get the chance to 'try' and manage his own package • He doesn't get the chance to be independent in managing and autonomous over his care • He will feel like people are being too cautious and not thinking about his want to try something new

Resources:

Regular Money Coming In:

Source of money in	Per Week	Notes	Per Year
Personal Budget/ Direct Payment	£182	Local Authority Personal Budget including Rodrigo's £40p/w contribution	£9,490.03
Personal Independence Payment	£151.40	Daily Living component - £89.15 Mobility component – £62.25	£7,894.45
Access to Work (PA support)	£120	1 day per week with a Personal Assistant	£6,257.16
Access to Work (Admin support)	£27.62	8 hours per month with someone providing admin support	£1,440.18
TOTAL:	£481.02		£25,081.83

All calculations are based on 52.143 weeks per year

One-off or short-term Income:

Source of money in	Amount	Notes
Skills for Care	£465.00	Grant for PA training
New Enterprise Allowance	£1,250	£50 per week for 25 weeks
Access to Work (equipment grant)	£4,909.99	Includes £1000 towards wheelchair

Personal Wheelchair Budget	£950	Personal Wheelchair Budget – NHS contribution
Spinal Injuries Association	£500	Wheelchair grant
TOTAL:	£8,074.99	

How I Plan to Spend My Funding:

Money Out:

Social Care Personal Budget Outgoing:

Included are:

- Regular outgoings
- Indicative budget vs actual budget comparison
- One-off cost

Description	Details	Amount / week	Amount / Year	Source
Personal Assistant	£10 per hour x 10.5 hours per week	£105	£5475.02	Local Authority Personal budget
PA Employment Costs	20% of weekly PA cost	£21.00	£1095	Local Authority Personal budget
PA Training Costs	6 courses per staff member per year £1.50 per course 7 staff members	£1.25	£63.00	Local Authority Personal Budget
PA Insurance	Fish PA Insurance	£2.59	£135.00	Local Authority Personal Budget
Payroll software	Sage	£2.76	£144	Local Authority Personal Budget
Contingency	2 weeks contingency care: (£30 per hour x 10.5 hours) x 2 = £630	£12.10	£630	Local Authority Personal Budget
TOTAL:		£144.70	£7542.02	
<i>All calculations are based on 52.143 weeks per year</i>				

Social Care Personal Budget – Comparison

Indicative Budget	Actual Budget	Difference
£9,490.03	£7,542.02	£1,948.01

Personal Budget One-off Cost (grant funded):

Description	Details	Amount	Source
PA Training (upfront)	PA training upfront costs via Skills for Care Individual Employer Grant	£465.00	Skills for Care

Brokerage Support

Description	Details	Amount	Source
Brokerage (One-off cost for fees building this plan)	Separate agreement with Local Authority 22 hours x £45 per hour	£990	Local Authority (Directly Commissioned)

Other Outputs

Description	Details	Amount	Source
Shopping Support	Jane – girlfriend supports Rodrigo to go shopping for a “big shop” / weekly shop	£0.00	Family/Community
Support at the Gym	Richard – friend – often attends the gym at the same time as Rodrigo, they plan their sessions so Richard can help Rodrigo if needed	£0.00	Community

Peer support / emotional support	Friends through the Spinal Injuries Association and Backup Trust provide emotional and psychological support – remotely or face-to-face when possible.	£0.00	Community
Contingency Support	Richard (friend)	£0.00	Community

Rodrigo's Individual Budget Outgoing:

These are for the costs existing outside Rodrigo's Social Care Personal Budget and what he has to spend from other resources. It does not include his financial income as that is not a fixed sum, and is not taken into account with regards to social care funding.

It includes direct money coming to him, as well as money that'll be reimbursed from Access to Work or that will be funded via another source than payment directly to Rodrigo.

Description	Details	Amount / week	Amount / Year	Source
Personal Budget Contribution	Rodrigo's social care contribution	£40	£2,085.72	Personal Independence Payment – Daily Living Component
Personal Independence Payment – Mobility Component	Spent on the adapted vehicle Jane and I share, insurance and related costs	£62.25	£3245.90	DWP
Virgin Active Membership	£57.99 per month	£13.35	£695.88	Personal Independence Payment – Daily Living Component Leftover 35.8
Wheelchair Basketball Club Membership	To become a full member of the wheelchair basketball club	£2.50	£130.36	Personal Independence Payment – Daily Living Component

Portuguese heritage support group	Membership fee	£5.00	£260.71	Personal Independence Payment – Daily Living Component
Access to Work (PA support)		£120	£6,257.16	Access to Work/Govt
Access to Work (Admin Support)	8 hours per month at £15 per hour for admin support (total x 12 / 52.143)	£27.62	£1,440.18	Access to Work/Govt
Ongoing Brokerage Support (retained services)	10 hours per year x £45 per hour	£8.63	£450	Personal Independence Payment – Daily Living Component
TOTAL:		£270.72	£14,116.15	

One-off or Short-term Outgoing Costs:

Description	Details	Amount	Source
New Enterprise Allowance – business and living costs	£50 per week for 25 weeks Paid towards my living and business costs	£1,250	Government / New Enterprise Allowance
Access to Work	Grant for equipment	£6,474.28	Access to Work/Govt
New Wheelchair	Personal Wheelchair Budget: £950 Access to Work: £1,000 Grant from the SIA charity: £500	£2,450	Personal Wheelchair Budget (NHS) Access to Work Grant from the Spinal Injury Association (charity grant)
TOTAL:		£10,174.28	

Other Financial Considerations:

I have been advised by my support broker that since my Assistance Dog can help reduce my dependence on carers, that I may be allowed £35 per month from my budget to go towards my Assistance Dog. This would only come into effect on the successful partnership and handover of the Assistance Dog to me, following residential on-site training.

I have decided to personally retain the services of my broker for 10 hours per year. This is to support me with my package if I needed it, or to explore other avenues and support for future and if I needed to change my plan, that my broker can help me to change it and submit it to the Local Authority for consideration of the change(s).

Contingency:

Social Care Personal Budget – Funded Contingency:

My contingency is with an agency called Helping Hands Homecare. They have said they will be able to meet my needs with existing staff and that due to the lack of complex care tasks that any of their staff could step in to support me in an emergency, meaning if I had a short notice or even a very last minute cancellation it'd be unlikely that Helping Hands Homecare wouldn't be able to find a PA to come in and support me – it just won't always be able to be exactly at the right time but they'll endeavour to get the staff to me as quickly as possible or as near to the time of need as possible.

Their hourly rate varies from £23.00 up to £32.00 (depending on whether they're helping during the daytime, night-time, weekends or bank holidays) so I felt allowing a contingency of 2 weeks per year (21 hours) at £30 per hour would be sufficient to cover me as my contingency.

My broker and I have costed the contingency into my package and I accumulate my contingency over time. Each week from my budget, £12.10 is set aside for my contingency, adding up to covering 2 weeks care over the course of each year. Over years, I accrue more contingency, which means that if my direct payment care package broke down after a few years, I'd have 4-6 weeks care contingency built up from the preceding years (provided I've not used it all).

Other Contingencies:

Richard:

I do have my gym buddy Richard who wouldn't mind supporting me if I needed it and all other options had failed. He helps me out at the gym if I get stuck. I don't mind him helping me out (even with continence related tasks) as he provides care to his disabled father and so it doesn't bother him and he doesn't make me feel uncomfortable when he's helping me, so that helps. I've never had to call on his help outside the gym before, but he has always told me I can just ask him if I need anything, even if that was to come and get me up or get me into bed if a carer didn't turn up. He only lives a 5-minute drive away too.

Jane:

Jane can help me in a lot of ways, but I absolutely do not want her ever to do any personal "down there" stuff. I think that would ruin our relationship and the romance. As such, she doesn't ever help with me getting out of bed in the morning or going to bed at night. It is absolutely not ok for her to be expected to form part of my contingency for that aspect of my support.

Putting My Plan into Action:

What?	Who?	When?	Complete?
Agree the plan with the Local Authority	Sarah James Social Worker	Within the next 7 days	
Create the paperwork necessary for my new staff – adverts, job descriptions, policies, contracts and so on.	Sarah Richards (broker) and Rodrigo	Within 7 days	
Advertise for PAs	Rodrigo with support from Sarah	10 days from now – provided package is approved	
Interview PAs	Rodrigo with support from Sarah	25 days from now	
Choose PAs Seek references	Rodrigo	28 days from now	
Purchase PA insurance and training credits	Rodrigo	Within 20 days	
Start package with PAs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PAs sign their contracts • Organise PA training • PAs undertake training • Organise PA rota • PAs begin their first shifts 	Rodrigo	35 days from now	
Contact the Basketball Club and charities he wants to work with	Rodrigo	4 weeks	

Join Portuguese heritage club	Rodrigo	6 weeks	
New working party agreement drawn up For Sarah to continue supporting Rodrigo on a longer-term as-needed basis, outside the Local Authority commissioned support.	Sarah and Rodrigo	6 weeks	
Purchase wheelchair Using Notional-Plus Personal Wheelchair Budget	Rodrigo	Within 6 weeks	
Get the business set up and running	Rodrigo, with support from Jobcentre work coach and business groups/mentor	Now	
Pay for items funded by Access to Work and claim back	Rodrigo	32 days	
Recruit Access to Work PA and admin support	Rodrigo	45 days	
Review plan and check it's working for Rodrigo	Sarah and Rodrigo	3 months	
Review plan and check it's working for Rodrigo	Sarah and Rodrigo	6 months	

Review Schedule:

Review Period / Date	Who will be involved?	Completed - Date
3 months	Sarah Richards – Broker Rodrigo	
6 months	Sarah Richards – Broker Rodrigo	
12 months	Sarah James – Disabilities Team Social Worker Rodrigo Sarah Richards – Broker	

Sign-off (plan developers)

Signed	Name / Role	Date
	Rodrigo Álvarez This is my plan	09/12/2020
	Sarah Richards Support Broker	09/12/2020
	Sarah James Social Worker	10/12/2020