

Appendix 1

Brief overview of the Reablement Team

What is reablement?

The reablement approach supports people to do things for themselves. It is a 'doing with' model, in contrast to traditional home care which tends to be a 'doing for' model.

Reablement services help people to retain or regain their skills and confidence so they can learn to manage again after a period of illness.

The service is usually provided in the person's own home by a team of mainly social care professionals. Consistency of workers is important to enable a relationship to be built with the person and for progress to be properly monitored.

Reablement, not rehabilitation

Reablement is an approach that, irrespective of diagnosis, aims to assist people to continue to live as they wish. It seeks to enable the individual to do ordinary activities like cooking meals, washing, dressing, moving about the home and going out.

Reablement is used to support discharge from hospital, prevent readmission or enable an individual to remain living at home. It can be provided for anyone who will benefit from it. It is typically provided for up to six weeks although it is not unusual for someone to need only a couple of weeks of reablement.

There is a tendency for the terms 'reablement', 'rehabilitation' and 'intermediate care' to be used interchangeably. The **National Audit of Intermediate Care** defines reablement as services that help people live independently, provided in the person's own home by a team of mainly social care professionals.

Local authorities have a duty to prevent, reduce or delay needs for care and support (Care Act 2014 s2) for all adults including carers; this means early intervention to prevent deterioration and reduce dependency on support from others. Reablement is one of the ways to fulfil this duty. It is a flexible and inclusive approach that can be used with a variety of different people including those with physical disabilities, cognitive impairments and learning disabilities.

Promoting/maintaining independence

Offering and providing more support than people need can make them more dependent on others. Reablement support workers are trained to stand back, observe, encourage, and prompt the individual to learn new skills or re-learn skills they may have lost.

At times this approach is difficult for those struggling to complete a task and for those observing.

Key features of the reablement approach

- Focuses on a person's strengths to promote and maximise independence and wellbeing.
- Rebuilds confidence after a spell of illness, deterioration in health, an injury, a hospital admission, or an acquired disability.
- Different to traditional home care as it involves care providers standing back and encouraging the promotion of self-care skills that may have been lost.

- Supports people to regain or retain skills to enable them to manage with minimal or no support.
- Short-term and intensive; typically provided for up to six weeks.
- Not means-tested – the service is free to people who meet the locally defined eligibility criteria.
- A focus on restoring independent functioning, rather than resolving healthcare issues.
- Aims to prevent re-admission to hospital or premature move to a care home.
- About setting and working toward meaningful goals.
- Aims to reconnect people with their communities to reduce social isolation.
- Can help to reduce the amount of care the person needs from carers and family.
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The benefits of reablement

Research has shown that people who have received a reablement service view it positively and see the benefit of improvement in their confidence, functional ability, mobility, independence and wellbeing.

It has also been found that even for people who were previously receiving traditional home care services, reablement approaches brought about improvements in independence, which in turn prolonged their ability to live at home and reduce the amount of traditional care subsequently required.

This supports the view that everyone should be considered for reablement as part of the review or re-assessment process.

The reablement approach offers benefits to all concerned.

- For the **person** it offers increased independence and improved quality of life.
- For **carers and family members**, they can enjoy seeing their relative improve and can ultimately spend less time supporting or caring for them, and therefore more time just enjoying their company.
- For **staff**, this is a rewarding approach where improvements lead to a feeling of real achievement.

The role of reablement support workers

Reablement is an intensive service provided by reablement support workers who have received additional training; they may also be assisted by occupational therapists or physiotherapists who will give expert advice and support.

Reablement uses a 'doing with' approach, which involves supporting people to do things for themselves. Support workers are taught to stand back and allow the person the time to complete a task on their own. This may involve the person being shown a different way to carry out the task to achieve independence, such as putting the weaker arm with the least amount of movement into the sleeve of a top first. The worker may also support the individual to reconnect to their local community by providing information, as well as by promoting confidence in outdoor mobility and the use of public transport.

Supporting people to do things for themselves initially takes more time, so reablement support workers are likely to visit more frequently and stay for longer than a conventional home care worker who may have done the task more quickly on behalf of the person. Throughout the process, reablement support workers stand back, observe, encourage, and prompt the individual to learn or re-learn skills they may have lost. At times, this approach is difficult for those struggling to complete a task as well as for those observing.

Types of support

Reablement focuses on what the person can do for themselves and sets goals that can be realistically achieved. Goals are usually focused on ordinary day-to-day things such as:

- Mobility (Moving around the home and going out)
- Making food and drinks
- Personal care
- Housework
- Shopping
- Maintaining contact with family, friends, and community groups

Reablement support is not limited to day-to-day tasks, and can also involve:

- **Income maximisation** – ensuring the person has access to information and advice to ensure they receive all their financial entitlements and benefits.
- **Health and wellbeing** – supporting independence with medication and monitoring any health issues or deterioration - ensuring the person can access appropriate help.
- **Managing pain** – It is hard to motivate someone if they are in pain. If the person has had an injury, it may be very painful at first and it is important to work with the individual so they can do tasks at a tolerable level. The reablement team ensure that the person has access to support from healthcare professionals so that pain is well managed.

Assessment and goal setting

When a person is referred to a reablement service, a reablement assessor, an occupational therapist or social worker will visit them to assess their abilities and needs in relation to the goals the person identifies. The person's views are central to the process and carers and family are included as appropriate. The process seeks to identify strengths and overcome barriers that could be:

- **physical** – relating to illness or disability
- **environmental** – relating to the layout of the home
- **psychological** – relating to fear or confidence.

For each task, the goal is for the individual to achieve it independently or with minimal assistance. The occupational therapist may become involved in the assessment for adaptations and mobility aids and can be integral to the success of the outcomes.