

Top tips for siblings - working with your brother or sister's care home or supported living setting

1. **Be confident.** You do have the knowledge, you do have the expertise and you have built up years of experience on your brother or sister's medical, behavioural, communication and personal needs.
2. **Build relationships** with the people who acknowledge and support you in your role as an advocate or carer for your brother or sister e.g. a strong relationship with an epilepsy nurse will be helpful if care home staff struggle to recognise seizures.
3. **Use the care provider statement of intent.** Ask your brother or sister's care provider to sign Sibs statement of intent to demonstrate their pride and commitment to working with siblings.
3. **Communicate clearly with managers** who are ultimately accountable for your brother or sister's care. If things go wrong, a good manager will take responsibility and work with you to make changes. Be assertive, not aggressive – this will get you better results.
4. **Be kind to support workers** as they have a difficult job and often receive little recognition for their role. Thank them when they go the extra mile. They will be more likely to do it again in future and build a positive relationship with your brother or sister.
5. **Know the difference between a personal mistake and a poor culture.** Mistakes will happen – we are all human. It's important to recognise the difference between a personal mistake that someone takes responsibility for, and an organisational culture of poor care, neglect or abuse. If the latter is in effect, take action and make a formal complaint and report safeguarding concerns.
6. **There are ways you can be more assertive.** You may find that it's difficult to put your point across when you're face-to-face with people. Send an email in advance or jot down relevant points to take with you. Take a friend, and ask them to remind you of the points you want to make. Just having someone with you can boost your confidence to communicate your views. They can also help by taking notes of what was said in the meeting.
7. **Know that you can change providers** if the organisation does not meet your brother or sister's needs. Even if you have been told there are few providers in your area, it's important to tell adult social care that your brother or sister's needs are not being met by the current care provider.

Care provider statement of intent <https://www.sibs.org.uk/support-for-adult-siblings/guides/>

What to do if your disabled brother or sister doesn't receive the care that they should

<https://www.sibs.org.uk/support-for-adult-siblings/guides/>

Taking action on safeguarding concerns <https://www.sibs.org.uk/support-for-adult-siblings/safeguarding-concerns/>