

shop4support at the heart of biggest regional social care e-Marketplace

shop4support has been appointed as provider for the biggest social care e-Marketplace ever developed in the Yorkshire and Humber region.

The e-Marketplace will help people access the support they need all in one place, by visiting a “shop” online, viewing care services, leisure services and other activities that promote health and wellbeing.

Web users will be able to use their own money, or funding they get from their local council, to safely purchase online services that meet their social care needs, the same way as they would purchase their grocery shopping.

Martin Farran, Executive Director of Adults & Communities at Barnsley Council and Chair of the Association of Directors of Adult Social services (ADASS) in the region, said:

“The Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership in Yorkshire and Humber provided the funding needed to kick start this important piece of web work. The regional Joint Improvement Partnership, which commissioned the e-Marketplace project, would like to congratulate shop4support on their successful tender. It represents a major step forward for the government’s personalisation programme of social care in the region.”

This highly innovative regional e-Marketplace will give people needing social care more control and say over their own support, through the use of Amazon–style local authority websites.

Joan Beck, Director of Adult Services in Doncaster - the council leading the region on this initiative - said:

“Each local authority will have its own gateway to the Yorkshire and Humber e-Marketplace, enabling it to tailor the solution to its own citizens needs. The e-Marketplace as a whole will harness the strong ethos of collaboration across the region. This collaborative approach will result in people being able to access local, regional and national information, advice and services in a way that has never been possible before.”

Tim Gollins, who is overseeing the rollout programme said:

"The partner local authorities worked in a truly collaborative manner to develop a very strong vision and a detailed specification for this project. After an extensive evaluation process we are confident that shop4support is the perfect partner, delivering value for money and economic sustainability. Using shop4support, participating local authorities are able to realise their shared vision of providing a web-based resource that will benefit all of the region's residents and support delivery of the Government's 'Think Local Act Personal Agenda'."

The arrangements also allow for other UK local authorities to use the e-Marketplace solution without having to undertake a procurement process. The first to do this will be Manchester City Council.

Caroline Tomlinson from shop4support said:

"We are delighted to be working across the Yorkshire and Humber region and we commend all the local authorities that are involved for their foresight and determination. shop4support was originally conceived for this very purpose, and we know from our experiences that it will provide true choice and control for people in need of support and their carers. We would also urge local authorities outside of the region to contact us to find out how they can also participate."

shop4support can be found at www.shop4support.com

Notes for Editors

- The e-Marketplace will be rolled out to 15 local authorities over the next 15 months. The first will be Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, after which a phased implementation will see it rolled out to local authorities including Kirklees, North Lincolnshire, Barnsley and Bradford in early 2012, followed by Calderdale, Sheffield, Wakefield, Rotherham, North Yorkshire, Hull, East Riding, York and Leeds.
- shop4support and Harrow Council's online marketplace won the 'Support for Independence' Award (London region) at the NHS Health and Social Care Awards 2010.

- Caroline Tomlinson has been nominated in the Guardian Public Services Awards 2011 'Public Servant of the Year' category for her work with people in need of social care.

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