



Induction using the Common Induction Standards case study

Nina Osborne, individual employer

“As an individual employer, I use the existing Common Induction Standards (CIS) to plan staff induction and training. I also use them as a reference guide when designing in-house training. The CIS are useful to assess whether you are covering everything that you want your personal assistants to know and are all applicable to personal assistants.

The CIS can be used as a tool to understand the role of a personal assistant in an interactive way. I use the Supporting Starters, Common Induction Standards manager’s guide during induction too. We read the standards together; I go through it with the personal assistant and discuss which aspects apply in their role as an employee to me. We usually skip briefly over less relevant areas and concentrate more on the areas of importance in my personal setting. I encourage my personal assistants to reflect on how they work, encourage them to ask questions and help them explore how they can best meet the standards. I use the manager’s guide to check if we are covering essential points.

The length of time that each induction takes varies and usually depends on the number of hours someone is working with me. Usually we have discussed everything in terms of induction in the first three months.

Recently, my personal assistants and I also decided to use the CIS in a different way. We recognised that, because of our style of working, we were not setting time aside for regular supervision. Because of the close one-to-one style of working, we were expecting supervision issues to be addressed in an ongoing, less formal way. Some people need a more structured environment to question and air concerns. Because I cannot afford to timetable regular sessions, which may or may not be needed, I still felt it was important for personal assistants to have an opportunity for formal supervision. Therefore, when necessary, we decided to combine supervision opportunities with the reviewing of standards and their implication on our work.

Once a month I sit down with each member of staff for half an hour over a cup of coffee. If there are no specific issues they wish to discuss, we look again at the list of standards, choose one and see if we are still dealing with this appropriately. We look at how it applies to the personal assistant’s job and reflect on how they are working at the moment to meet the standard and whether anything needs to change. For example, we might consider my current use of medication and how they support me within current agreed ways of working. Often, questions arise. Do we both feel this is still appropriate? Is there a need to change the agreed way of working? What changes need to be made to help me? What needs to be in place to help the personal assistants further?

I think it is really important that personal assistants have the opportunity to develop transferable skills too, so we might also discuss how things might be different in other settings and what different training they might need to do something in a registered

establishment. This can help us both identify training needs and what the personal assistant might want to do for their professional development. Even if it isn't strictly necessary for their work with me, training helps them feel confident and valued in their role, which means they are more likely to stay in the post. Some training also gives them the skills they need to work as a personal assistant in other places, to top up the hours I can offer. This also means they don't have to leave to get the money they need.

Training is important for safety and quality of care. As an employer, you have to be creative about training. For example, one of my personal assistants did a PTLLS (teacher training) qualification, so that she could support me in the classroom, when I run my training courses. However, costs often mean that we need to train our personal assistants ourselves. I find CIS and the managers' guide are a big help with this. It would be better if we had more user-friendly versions, (more suitably worded for individual employers and personal assistants but with the same expectations as for other workers). However, CIS brings together collective knowledge about induction all in one place, which a person who uses services, even with all their direct experience, might not know. I think it is a really worthwhile tool for individual employers."