

Tips to develop your provider store on Connect to Support

These tips have been produced to help you make your Connect to Support provider store as attractive as possible to potential customers and professionals using the site.

Customers can search for products and services by category and/or key word. Follow these tips to help customers find your products / services and everything they need to know about it to help them make their decision.

Search function:

By category:

If customers use the category search function by clicking on a category and sub-category down the left hand side of the screen it will show the customer every product and service within that category/sub-category.

If you provide a number of products / services it is important that you have a separate entry for each. For example if you provide personal care to customers but also offer a service to take them out in to the community, these would sit in different categories:

- Home support category = Personal care
- Activities and leisure category = Support and community groups

If these services were listed on the same entry in Home Support your entry would not be found in a category search for Activities and Leisure.

It is also important to have separate entries even if they sit within the same category. For example if you provide personal care and shopping/cleaning services, these would both sit in the Home support category but in different sub categories:

- Personal care sub category = Personal care
- Domestic services category = shopping/cleaning services

If these services were listed on the same entry in Home support and Personal care your entry would not be found in a category search for Domestic services.

To maximise the chance of potential customers finding your services it is essential that you structure your store entries to work within the website.

By key word:

If customers type a key word into the search function it will search:

- Product / service name first;
- Product / service description second; and finally
- Provider name and background description.

The information and words used within each of these need to be understood by customers so they can find your products / services. Try to make the product / service title as meaningful as possible and use a range of words in the product/service description that customers and members of staff may use when searching by key word.

General Advice:

Your customers

- Show clear and transparent pricing. This should include VAT showing the full amount that the person will pay. This is particularly important for the customer so that they can compare prices and also creates a level playing field for providers.
- Know your customers and what it is they are interested in
- Give your customers a valuable experience when using your store
- Organise your content – make it easy for customers to find what they want
- Give clear and detailed product or service information

Images and text

- Use clear images that are simple to understand
- Make your images relevant so your customer can easily see and understand what you are selling. A good example of this is the Active Social Care Limited store.
www.connecttosupport.org/Active
- Display your products or show the results of your services
- Show products such as equipment in context, for example, a picture of a grab rail in a bathroom is easier to see and understand than just an image of a grab rail.
- Include the areas that you work in for example, Meltham, Holmfirth as people may use this when they search by key word.
- Think about the language you use to describe your products and services. This should be in plain English and without jargon.
- Make your text large enough, use contrasting colours and increase line spacing to make it easy to read
- Check your spelling and grammar
- Provide all your contact details

Other considerations

- Think about what tasks customers will need to perform within your store when they visit and check out how easy they are to do
- Test your store and adjust it if required
- Think ahead – know what you are trying to achieve in the future

- Listen to your customers by reading customer reviews and checking your star ratings. Ask your customers for this feedback so that you can adapt your service as necessary to meet customers' needs.

Tips for Home Care service providers.....

Your customers may want to know:

How you will develop their support package?

- How you will get to know their needs and wishes or those of their relatives
- If you will develop a support plan and draw up a contract
- Who will need to be involved when making changes to the agreed support plan
- How you will provide cover when their usual support worker is on holiday

Try to answer these questions within your store

Your customers may want to know:

How you will monitor and adjust their support package?

- How often will you carry out a support plan review
- What will the review entail
- Can people that are important to them be involved also
- Can they contact you at any time to make changes to their support package

Try to answer these questions within your store

Your customers may want to know:

What is the price?

- What does the price include
- If an hourly rate is quoted is it for one to one or shared support
- Does the rate cover everything they need
- Are there any extra charges that they should know about
- What will happen if they need more support, how will this be addressed
- What will happen if they go into hospital
- Is there a notice period to be able to cancel a call without charge
- Payment options.
- Receipts, invoices or statements you will provide for them
- What is the process if prices need to be reviewed

Try to answer these questions within your store

Your customers may want to know:

Who will be supporting them?

- Do all your support workers have up to date criminal records checks
- If they will be involved in recruiting their own support worker
- Do staff have a development plan which sets out training requirements
- How will staff be trained in new skills

- Who will pay for staff training
- Who will cover for their support worker if they are away on training

Try to answer these questions within your store

Your customers may want to know:

If they will be well supported?

- Will support workers always carry identification
- Are you registered with the appropriate regulator
- Do you have a 'whistle blowing' policy
- What reporting do you do have in place for Health & Safety incidents and complaints
- Do you survey your customers about the service you provide and how often is the survey conducted

Try to answer these questions within your store

Your customers may want to know:

How they can end their agreement with you?

- What the procedure is for ending the agreement
- If there is a notice period
- Will there be any exit fees chargeable to them

Try to answer these questions within your store

Tips for providers selling products.....

Your customers may want to know:

- The quality and reliability of the product
- If the product is in stock
- If postage and package is an additional charge?
- Will the product need fitting?
- Suggestions of other products which may also be of help to them
- How well the product will be packaged
- The despatch date and expected delivery date
- If they will be kept informed of progress with their order
- What are your general terms and conditions
- What your returns policy is
- How they could make a complaint and your intended response time to the complaint

Please use the 'Supporting documents' section to share information

Need more information?

1. There's lots of information at www.connecttosupport.org/kirklees including information about why you should register and how to develop your store.
2. If you have a query about developing your store, please contact Kirklees Council on connecttosupport@kirklees.gov.uk or telephone 07528 988840.
3. If you have a technical query about the Connect to Support website please contact Shop4support on Kirklees@shop4support.com or telephone 01942 614088.