**Preparing for meetings & assessments**

* Make a list of what is important to you/your child & family – have this and other notes with you
* What will happen after? What are your possible options? Work out what a good outcome would be for you
* Check what information they have about you & understand previous assessment/minutes, make sure they are accurate and note any changes
* Get independent advice/information beforehand – know your rights!
* Check what experience the assessor has in that condition (make sure no assumptions are being made)
* If necessary, submit up to date information so they have the whole picture
* Find out if you need to bring any evidence (medical reports, letters)
* Arrange for support to attend the meeting with you – this could be a friend, family member, an advocacy worker. Agree with them what they will and won’t do/say
* Speak with a friend beforehand to check your feelings are justified and get some of the emotion off your chest before the meeting
* Leave plenty of time to get ready in the morning for the meeting so you aren’t rushing and plan something nice afterwards
* **At the meeting(s):**
* Make sure everyone is clear what the meeting is about
* Be clear with them what you need on the agenda and ask what their agenda is
* Check how long people have
* Get their contact details
* Take notes of promises made and check it’s in the minutes with dates things will be done by
* Get a date for the next meeting
* Be clear what works for you, about your own needs, the impact and the help and change required
* Talk from ‘me’/‘I’ not ‘you’
* Be prepared to describe your worst day, it is okay to admit that you are not coping
* Be prepared to say no, to put a case forward, and not give up!