

# Managing your support with Direct Payments

 **01792 636445**

## What is this factsheet about?

Some people with an illness or disability, including older frail people, need support to help them live independently. Living independently is about having choice and control over your life and being able to do what matters to you.

If you have had an assessment that shows you are eligible for social care and support services, you may prefer to organise your services yourself using money that the Council gives you rather than have the Council do this for you. This is called a **'Direct Payment'**.

The Social Worker or Care Manager who carries out your assessment (or review) must offer you the option of a Direct Payment.

## What are Direct Payments?

Direct Payments are a more flexible way of delivering social care services to those who are eligible for Social Services support.

The key principle is that day-to-day control of the money and provision of your support is given to you, the service user, so that you have more choice and independence. As you know your own needs best, you can decide how to spend the money you receive to arrange for support that best suits your lifestyle.

With Direct Payments

**You** choose **who** provides your support, and  
**You** control **when** you receive your support

Social Services make a payment directly to you so that you can arrange and purchase your own support. In some cases the payment can be made to someone else to manage on your behalf (see page 2).

You might use the money to:

- employ someone directly to help with your support (a Personal Assistant)
- buy care from a private registered care agency
- make your own arrangements instead of using Social Services day care or respite care.

Whatever arrangements you make, you must ensure that any outcomes identified in your Support Plan (see page 2) are met.

Direct Payments are just one option for care and support; if you prefer to receive services in the traditional way, you can. Some people even choose a **mix** of Direct Payments and services or choose to use their Direct Payment to purchase care and support from the local authority.

## Who can have a Direct Payment?

Direct Payments can be offered to almost everyone who is eligible to receive social care services. In a very few cases, Court Orders relating to drug/alcohol dependency may mean that a Direct Payment is not possible.

Usually you can have a Direct Payment from the age of 16. There is no upper age limit. A parent carer can receive a Direct Payment to provide support for a child under 18.

## How do I get a Direct Payment?

In order for you to get a Direct Payment, you first need an assessment of your care or support needs by Social Services.

If you are eligible to receive services and choose to have a Direct Payment, your Social Worker or Care Manager will discuss with you what personal outcomes you would like to achieve and agree how much money you would get as a Direct Payment. You can then work out a plan of how your care or

support needs can be met. This is called a Support Plan. It is for you to decide what should be in your support plan, but if you wish you can have help from your Social Worker or Care Manager, from the Independent Living Team (see page 3) or from family and friends. So long as the identified objectives are met, you can be as creative as you wish in putting together the support arrangements.

Social Services will then pay money into a separate bank account which you will need to set up. You then use this to pay for your support arrangements.

If you have already had an assessment, and are already receiving services, you can switch to Direct Payments instead. Talk to your Social Worker or Care Manager.

If you have been told you are not eligible to receive a service, we will not be able to give you a Direct Payment.

### **What is involved in managing my Direct Payment?**

With the choice and flexibility offered by Direct Payments there are also responsibilities. You are in charge of administering the money and keeping records to show it has been spent in the right way. However, you can have help with doing this from a friend or relative.

If you choose to employ someone as a Personal Assistant, you have all the usual responsibilities of an employer. However help is available with this (see page 3).

### **What are the options for someone who cannot manage a Direct Payment themselves?**

Some people who are eligible to have a Direct Payment would not be able to manage the financial and contractual arrangements themselves. Some reasons for this may be:

- They do not have the mental capacity to do so (perhaps because of a learning disability or dementia)

- They need additional support with the paperwork
- They are not able to open a bank account
- They are very ill

There are options available to enable such people to use a Direct Payment and remain in control of the support they receive. These are:

#### **Indirect Payment**

This is a Direct Payment paid into the bank account of a relative or friend of the person using the payment. However the person for whom the payment is made must be the legal employer of any Personal Assistant. The person who receives the payment must administer the account in the best interests of the person who receives support, in the same way that a regular Direct Payment user would have to do and can use all the support services available to people receiving a regular Direct Payment.

#### **Direct Payment to a Suitable Person**

This works like an Indirect Payment but is used when the person for whom the payment is made lacks capacity (as defined by the Mental Capacity Act 2005). In most cases the Suitable Person will be a family member or close friend already involved in the care of the service user. The Suitable Person will be the legal employer of any Personal Assistant.

#### **Managed Account**

Compass Independent Living (see page 3) can provide a Managed Account on behalf of the person using the Direct Payment. This means that they hold the payment on that person's behalf, pay all necessary agreed outgoings and provide regular statements.

While anyone can start off by using a Managed Account, the Council's Independent Living Team will provide help, support and encouragement for those who would like to be able to manage their Direct Payment themselves in time. However those who cannot manage without support will be able to continue with a Managed Account.

## Independent Living Trust Fund

These funds can be set up on behalf of someone who does not have mental capacity. The Direct Payment is made to a group of people (at least three) acting on behalf of the person using the Direct Payment. These trustees would have the same responsibilities for administering and accounting for the payment that a regular Direct Payment user would have.

If you are considering any of these options, the Independent Living Team can give you more information and can discuss with you and your family exactly what is involved.

## What support is available to me?

Swansea Social Services has its own **Independent Living Team** who provide a range of support to people who use Direct Payments. All their services relating to Direct Payments are **free**.

Specially trained staff are available to give you all the information, advice and support you will need. Their service includes:

- developing and reviewing your Support Plan with you
- practical help with recruiting and employing staff
- a brokerage service to help you get the most appropriate service from a support agency
- health and safety advice

To contact the team

☎ 01792 636445

Email: [independentliving@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:independentliving@swansea.gov.uk)

The Council has also arranged for support with financial issues such as paying wages, and sorting out tax and National Insurance to be provided free for Direct Payment users.

The service is provided by **Compass Independent Living**

☎ 0330 3330089 or 01823 282823

Email: [payroll@compassdisability.org.uk](mailto:payroll@compassdisability.org.uk)

Website:

<https://compassindependentliving.org.uk>

Address: Units 11 – 12  
Belvedere Trading Estate  
Taunton TA1 1BH

## Will I have to pay anything?

You may be asked to pay part of the cost towards your care. This depends on the type of care or service you are assessed as needing, and may also depend on how much income and savings you have. You may need to have a financial assessment.

If you have to pay something, this amount will be the same whether the services are arranged for you by Social Services or whether you choose Direct Payments. The usual maximum you could be asked to pay for non-residential services is £80 per week. To find out more ask your Social Worker or Care Manager for information about how charges are worked out.

## How do I get an assessment from Social Services?

If you already receive support from Social Services, speak to your Social Worker or Care Manager.

If you do not currently receive a service from Social Services, and you wish to ask about an assessment, please contact the relevant team from the list below.

Older people or people with a physical disability:

### Common Access Point for Health and Social Care

☎ 01792 636519

SMS: 07796 275412

Email: [CAP@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:CAP@swansea.gov.uk)

People who have mental health problems:

### Area 1 – West Swansea

☎ 01792 517800

### Area 2 – Central Swansea,

☎ 01792 517853

### Area 3 – North Swansea

☎ 01792 545780

Adults who have a learning disability:

**Community Support Team**

☎ 01792 614100

Email:

[community.support.team@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:community.support.team@swansea.gov.uk)

Children with a disability:

**Child and Family Information, Advice and Assistance Service**

☎ 01792 635700

Email: [access.information@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:access.information@swansea.gov.uk)

This team deals with initial referrals for disabled children and will pass appropriate referrals to the Child Disability Team.

**What if my needs change?**

If your needs change, you may be able to change your Direct Payment. If you find that Direct Payments turn out not to be right for you after all, you can switch to having services provided by Social Services.

**Other useful information**

Social Services' website has a wide range of social care information - not just about Social Services, but a wide range of other ideas of how you and those you care for can get the support you need.

[www.swansea.gov.uk/socialcare](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/socialcare)

There is also a section with more information about Direct Payments

[www.swansea.gov.uk/directpayments](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/directpayments).

Apart from Social Services, there are voluntary groups that may be able to provide support for your particular needs. Take a look at Swansea's on-line **Healthy City Directory** [www.healthycitydirectory.co.uk](http://www.healthycitydirectory.co.uk) or at **Info Engine** [www.info-engine.org.uk](http://www.info-engine.org.uk).

Alternatively, please contact **Swansea Council for Voluntary Services (SCVS)** which is the umbrella organisation for

voluntary activity throughout the City and County of Swansea;

SCVS Voluntary Action Centre  
7 Walter Road  
Swansea SA1 5NF

☎ 01792 544000

Website: [www.scvs.org.uk](http://www.scvs.org.uk)

**Swansea Social Services and personal information**

Swansea Council is the data controller for the personal information you provide to us. Your information will be used in the exercise of our official authority and will not be used for any other purpose. We will not share your data with third parties unless we are required or permitted to do so by law. Data protection law describes the legal basis for our processing your data as necessary for the performance of a public task (Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014).

For further information about how Swansea Council uses your personal data, including your rights as a data subject, please see our corporate privacy notice on our website [www.swansea.gov.uk/privacy](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/privacy)

We can give you more information about how we handle personal information. Phone 01792 636902 for a factsheet.

**Comments and complaints**

We welcome any comments about our services – good or bad. We are interested to hear how we could do things better, and we like to know when we are doing well.

If you are unhappy with the services you receive, we encourage you to make a complaint. Full details are given in the leaflet 'Making a comment, complaint or compliment about Social Services.' For more advice or information about making a complaint, you can contact our Complaints Officers on 01792 637345.

This information is also available in Welsh and in alternative formats, such as large print, on audio CD, in Braille, or electronically. Please phone 01792 636902 for copies.