

Information about Direct Payments. This is money that can be paid directly to parents or carers looking after a child who is eligible for social care services, as an alternative to having services arranged by the County Council.

This booklet provides answers to the most frequently asked questions about Direct Payments for children and young people in Hampshire.

For a copy of this publication in another language or format (e.g. large print or in an audio format) please contact 01962 845375 or email: childrens.services.enquiries@hants.gov.uk.

Section 1: Introduction to Direct Payments

What are Direct Payments?

A Direct Payment is money paid to you by Hampshire County Council (HCC) so you can arrange services or buy equipment for your child to meet their eligible social care needs.

To receive Direct Payments your child must be eligible for social care services from the County Council. As a parent/carer you can choose to have Direct Payments but must be able to manage the money, with support if necessary.

There are a few people excluded from the scheme, under legislation. A social worker can tell you more about this.

Who can receive Direct Payments?

The majority of people eligible for social care services from the council have the right to Direct Payments:

- families with disabled children and young people;
- disabled parents;
- disabled people aged 16 and over (contact Adult Services);
- carers, in place of receiving carers' services, including those with short as well as long term needs (contact Adult Services);
- older people who have been assessed as needing community care services (contact Adult Services).

What does eligible mean?

There is a published criteria on the Hampshire County Council website defining those with complex or severe needs that could be met by access to specialist services (www3.hants.gov.uk/vision.htm). This considers:

- the needs of carers;
- the revised Continuing Care criteria;
- a mediation process;
- the role of self-assessment.

We will carry out an assessment and if your child's needs are identified within the eligibility framework, you will qualify for help from specialist social care services. If you do not meet this criteria, you will be given help to access targeted services for disabled young people and support from the Information and Participation

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Hubs. There are three Hubs in Hampshire run in partnership with Barnardos and the Rose Road Association, for details see: www.parentvoice.info.

Will I have to pay anything?

No, but for some short break activities there could be a parental contribution required. Any bank account fees or bank charge costs will be your responsibility.

How can I get Direct Payments?

Telephone: 0845 603 5620.

Section 2: About Direct Payments

Why should I consider Direct Payments?

Direct Payments give you more control. **You** can employ people or buy services **you** choose to provide the assistance that your child needs.

For example, you could choose to:

- arrange for an agency to provide care;
- pay a personal assistant to provide personal care and support;
- pay for equipment that will help your child to live a more independent life;
- arrange a short break for your child.

What does 'arrange' services mean?

Once you know what services you want to buy for your child, you can employ people directly or contact people that can provide the services. You can choose what services your child has and when they are delivered.

What are the benefits of asking a care agency to arrange services for me?

Someone else has the responsibility of employing the workers.

What is a personal assistant?

A personal assistant (sometimes referred to as a PA) is someone who assists in daily personal tasks. A personal assistant could help by:

- helping your child to get out and about, and take part in a variety of activities and social events;
- providing personal care, such as washing and dressing.

A Direct Payments support worker can explain this in more detail.

What are the benefits of employing a personal assistant?

You have control over:

- who works for you;
- when the care workers arrive;
- how much time they spend with your child;
- what tasks they carry out.

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What happens when my PA wants to take their holiday?

Current employment law says that employees are entitled to paid holiday. Direct Payments Support Workers will explain this and help you agree a plan, so you can make arrangements for these temporary absences. This will include paying for holiday pay and the cost of a replacement worker.

What if my PA is off sick?

A Direct Payments Support Worker will help you agree a plan, so you know what to do if this happens.

What would employing someone involve?

If you employ someone directly you will work with your support worker to:

- find someone suitable to provide the care and support that your child needs. This could involve placing an advert yourself or you could get advice and support from a Direct Payments support worker;
- interview the people that apply for the job;
- choose the people you want to work with your child;
- use Direct Payments to pay for wages, holiday pay and other employer related expenses including employers' liability insurance;
- draw up an employment contract;
- meet your legal responsibility regarding tax and national insurance contributions;
- you can use a payroll service to help. You can pay for this using Direct Payments.

If you choose to employ someone they must have a Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) check. Your social worker will organise this for you.

What is a Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) check?

A CRB check will give us information about whether the person you wish to employ has a criminal record. Please ask your social worker about this.

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What happens if I want to employ a family member to provide care for my child?

You can choose who you employ but this must be agreed as part of the care plan for your child. You will have to accept the responsibilities involved in employing and managing your own workers. There are some restrictions exemptions and your support worker can advise on this. You cannot use Direct Payments to pay someone on a casual cash basis – proper employment and financial records must be kept at all times.

Can I have a mix of provided services and Direct Payments?

Yes, you could choose to manage some of your own services and have other services arranged by a social worker.

What do I do in an emergency?

Our Direct Payments Support Workers will help you agree a plan so you know what to do.

If your plan fails you can contact Hampshire County Council, telephone: 0845 603 5620.

Can I use Direct Payments when I go on holiday?

Whilst you are on holiday, you can use Direct Payments to pay a PA, in the same way as you do whilst at home. You cannot normally pay for the PA's accommodation or travel costs whilst on holiday.

How do I get the money?

You will need to set up a separate bank account, so we can pay you the money. This account must only be used for Direct Payments.

You will need to agree to the terms and conditions of having a Direct Payment, by signing a Direct Payments Agreement, before we can pay you the money.

Section 2: About Direct Payments

What is a Direct Payment Agreement?

The agreement is a document, which sets out the conditions of having Direct Payments. It also set out what will happen if these conditions are not met.

The agreement will be explained by a social worker when you choose to have Direct Payments.

How much money will I get?

The amount will depend on your child's assessed and eligible needs. Direct Payments are an alternative to services arranged and provided by us.

What do I do if I am not happy about the care or support I receive?

If you are dissatisfied you should raise your concerns with the agency providing the support and your support worker or social worker.

Section 3: Getting the money and spending it

Can someone manage the money for me?

Your Direct Payment support worker can help you with budgeting. You can also nominate someone such as a partner, family member or friend to:

- help you manage the money;
- manage the money on your behalf.

Your social worker will be able to tell you more about this.

Will Direct Payments affect my benefits?

No, Direct Payments are not classed as income and cannot be taken into account when you are assessed for welfare benefits.

There are three agencies that can provide care, can I use the more expensive one?

Yes, you can add your own money to make up the difference between cost effective services and your preferred services.

What do you mean by cost effective services and preferred services?

Cost effective services are services that meet your child's needs and provide good value for money.

Preferred services are services you want to use.

We will not fund the costs of more expensive services, if better value services can be purchased elsewhere to meet your child's needs.

Do you want to know what I have spent the money on?

Yes, Direct Payments are public money and should be spent on meeting your child's assessed eligible needs. This means that we do want to know how the money is spent. You will need to keep evidence of how you spend the money, such as bank statements, time sheets, invoices and receipts. You will be expected to show these to your social worker and send copies to the finance team when you are asked for them.

Keeping these records shows us that you are able to manage the money and use it to meet your child's needs.

Section 3: Getting the money and spending it

What can I buy with Direct Payments?

You must use the money to meet your child's accessed needs so you can buy any of these things:

- services to meet your child's personal care needs such as: showering, washing, dressing and assistance with toileting, transfer and moving;
- support for daily living activities such as: developing or maintaining essential social and community contact;
- short breaks for your child;
- specialist equipment and adaptations.

If you are unsure please ask a social worker.

What happens if I don't spend all of the money?

If Hampshire County Council think you need to pay any unspent money back, you will be told.

Is there anything I must not buy?

You cannot use your child's Direct Payments for any of these things:

- long term residential care;
- nursing care or medicines;
- alcohol or tobacco products such as cigarettes or cigars;
- gambling such as horse racing, bingo or lottery;
- equipment that would otherwise be provided by the NHS;
- as a substitute for a Disabled Facilities Grant.

If you are unsure please ask a social worker.

Section 4: Managing Direct Payments and meeting your needs

How will you know that my child's needs are being met?

Your child's needs could change at any time, so to make sure Direct Payments are meeting your child's needs, we will keep in contact with you.

You should tell us:

- if your child's needs are not being met because we may be able to arrange more support or help for them.

Social workers will:

- check your financial records to see what services you are buying to meet your child's needs;
- monitor and discuss your child's care and support arrangements;
- carry out reviews;
- reassess your child's needs if they change.

The Children's Services Finance Team monitor your financial records and will:

- tell your social worker if you have any concerns.

Doing this means that if your child's needs are not being met we know and can help you.

What should I do if I am having difficulties managing Direct Payments?

Do not worry, we know that sometimes people need help. It is important to tell someone so you can get the support you need. If you are having difficulties you should contact your local Direct Payments Support Worker.

What should I do if my needs change?

You should tell your social worker as soon as possible.

Section 4: Managing Direct Payments and meeting your needs

Will you ever stop my Direct Payments?

Yes, we would consider stopping your child's Direct Payments if:

- you choose you no longer want to receive them;
- you are in breach of the Direct Payments Agreement;
- you cannot manage Direct Payments (even with agreed support);
- your child's review identifies changing circumstances.

Will I know when my Direct Payments are going to stop?

Yes, before we stop Direct Payments Hampshire County Council will discuss the situation with you.

If you are having difficulties managing Direct Payments Hampshire County Council would expect you to get support. If this does not help we will work with you to look at all of your options.

What happens if you stop my Direct Payments?

Hampshire County Council will arrange services for your child if your child is eligible for social care support.

Where can I get more information?

There is a Department of Health document called 'A guide to receiving Direct Payments from your local council – a route to independent living (March 2008)'.

If you would like a copy please contact:

DH Publications Orderline, PO Box 777, London SE1 6XH
Email: dh@prolog.uk.com Tel: 08701 555 455 Fax: 08700 102 870 (8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday) Web: www.dh.gov.uk

Please quote 282882/'A guide to receiving Direct Payments from your local council'.

Section 4: Managing Direct Payments and meeting your needs

What are the contact details for my local Children's Services Office?

Telephone: 0845 603 5620.

- Alton – Park House, High Street, Alton GU34 1EN
- Basingstoke – Sun Alliance House, 37-41 Wote Street, Basingstoke RG21 7LU
- Havant – Town End House, PO Box 61, East Street, Havant PO9 1UB
- Romsey – Former Magistrates Court, Church Street, Romsey SO51 8AQ
- Winchester – Corinium House, 10-14 Andover Road, Winchester SO23 7BX

Aiming High for Disabled Children Team – Children's Services Department, The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UG (Email: aiminghigh@hants.gov.uk)

Section 5: Support

Direct Payments Support Workers

We have a contract with Southampton Centre for Independent Living and Enham to provide support workers to help you with Direct Payments.

Direct Payment Support Workers will support you on setting up and managing your child's Direct Payments.

Please contact them to discuss your individual situation, they are waiting to help you.

- **Southampton Centre for Independent Living Ltd (SCIL)**

Unit 12, 9-19 Rose Road, Southampton SO14 6TE

Website: www.southamptoncil.co.uk

Telephone: 023 8033 0982

Text phone: 023 8020 2649

Fax: 023 8020 2648

Email: directpayments@southamptoncil.co.uk

Areas covered: Eastleigh, Fareham, Gosport, Havant, New Forest, Petersfield, Romsey.

- **Enham**

Enham Place, Enham Alamein, Andover SP11 6JS

Website: www.enham.org.uk

Telephone: 01264 345862

Minicom: 01264 345862 extension 5601

Fax: 01264 333638

Email: direct-payments@enham.org.uk

Areas covered: Aldershot, Alton, Andover, Basingstoke, Winchester.