

## Factsheet 6 – 07 March 2011 (2 Pages)

# Estimating your Budget

We have changed the way we provide social care by estimating how much money we think you will need for your care and support. **You may find it helpful to also read *Factsheet 7 Personal Budgets*, which explains more about how you can manage your money.**

### What we do when estimating your budget

- First of all we will give you a **social care assessment** to find out whether you are eligible for support from us.
- We will put the results of your social care assessment into our 'Resource Allocation System' (**RAS**) to calculate your '**estimated budget**' – an estimate of the amount of money we think you will need to meet your care and support needs. (At the moment, if your needs are less complex or if you have a learning disability or mental health problem, we work out your estimated budget in a slightly different way, but we are planning to eventually join all systems together.)
- During your assessment we will have a conversation about your support. We will take into account your personal circumstances and preferences. You will have the chance to discuss your estimated budget with us, as well as the support you need to meet your eligible needs and how you wish the support to be provided.
- This information will go into a '**support plan**'. Once your support plan has been approved, it will inform your '**personal budget**' – the agreed value of the financial package we will provide to meet your eligible needs.

Your personal budget may be more or less than your estimated budget, and this will also depend upon your personal circumstances and the local availability of the support that you need. We may also ask you to **contribute** towards the cost of your support, based on an assessment of your financial circumstances.

In most circumstances, we will give you an estimated budget before deciding upon your personal budget.

### More about our Resource Allocation System (RAS)

When you complete your social care assessment form with your Care Manager you provide information about a wide range of areas of your life including:

- your physical health, disabilities and well-being
- your relationships with family and friends
- your involvement with work, education or learning
- your need for support in managing your personal care and day to day activities
- the support that you currently receive from family, friends and/or other local people or services.
- your involvement in the community
- your safety
- your mobility

Your estimated budget is based on this information, which is recorded on your assessment form together with how much support may be needed.

Following a discussion and agreement between you and your Care Manager, scores will be given to each of the areas that reflect your current situation. as part of the assessment process. The RAS uses the score from the assessment to make the need as clear and precise as possible.

For example:

- a score of 2 on 'dressing and undressing' would mean that you '**often**' need the assistance of someone else to get dressed, whereas
- a score of '3' would mean that you '**always or nearly always**' need the assistance of someone else.

The formula gives different '**weightings**' to different **scores** so that your estimated budget is as close as possible to what is actually needed.

This formula has been developed nationally looking at the scores of thousands of people with care packages and allowed for local differences in the costs of care and support in different parts of the country. We have tested the system with local service users in Devon before it was used routinely. It is regularly checked and updated to ensure that it remains accurate.

### **How much money will I receive?**

The amount of money you receive will depend on the results of your social care assessment. Your Care Manager will make a decision based on the answers you give.

For example:

- We estimate that Pauline's support will cost £87 per week.
- Her **estimated budget** is £87 per week.
- Pauline completes her Support Plan which tells us how she wants to receive her support and how much it will cost.
- Pauline's actual support costs £85 per week and she is financially assessed as being able to pay £50 per week towards her support.
- Devon County Council contributes the remaining £35 per week.
- Pauline's **agreed personal budget** is £85 per week made up of £50 from Pauline and £35 from Devon County Council.

### **What happens if I don't agree with my estimated budget?**

If you feel that your estimated budget is not realistic – too low or too high – please tell your Care Manager and we can review your assessment. We would be happy to provide you with a full copy of your social care assessment to enable you to check that the information recorded was accurate.

We do recognise that nothing is perfect and everyone's personal situation is slightly different. It is for this reason that at this stage your budget can only be an estimate.

Remember though that no final decision has yet been made about your actual **agreed Personal Budget**. This final decision will be made only when the **Support Plan** to meet your needs has been agreed with you.

**Further factsheets** can be found online at [www.devon.gov.uk/factsheets](http://www.devon.gov.uk/factsheets)

If you have any further questions please contact **Care Direct 0845 1551 007**

A large print version of this factsheet is available on [www.devon.gov.uk/largeprint-factsheets](http://www.devon.gov.uk/largeprint-factsheets) but if you would like it in a different format such as Braille or audio, or in a different language, please contact our Customer Service Centre on 0845 155 1015 or email [customer@devon.gov.uk](mailto:customer@devon.gov.uk).

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