



Personal Budgets Explained



By offering options instead of providing social care services, such as day care, we are giving people greater control over their lives and enabling them to make their own decisions about how their care is delivered.

Personal Budgets offer people the choice about how their care and support can be provided. One option of delivering a Personal Budget is through a Direct Payment. Direct Payments give more flexibility to how services are provided to people who are assessed as eligible for social care support.

Project Manager Ian Lancaster is working on providing a simple method based on a Resource Allocation System (RAS) that will allow us to calculate the value of support we may be able to offer people, provided it meets their assessed needs and outcomes.

Very soon people in Devon will be asking us to explain what a Personal Budget is...

Here are some likely questions and how you might want to answer them.

Why are people being offered a Personal Budget?

The idea of a Personal Budget is to make you aware of the value of your care and support. We offer you the opportunity to make a choice about how this is provided, or even take total control.

What is a Personal Budget?



From autumn 2010 money will be allocated by us (Devon Adult & Community Services) to you, which can be used to arrange your own care and support, after your assessment or your review.

Who will get a Personal Budget?

A Personal Budget will be available to people who, following an assessment of their needs and financial position, are eligible for support and assistance from us. We can discuss this with you at the time, or you can read the factsheet FS1 Assessment and Fair Access to Care.

What can I spend my Personal Budget on?

Your Personal Budget must be spent on achieving the needs and objectives we have agreed in your support plan. It cannot be spent on anything that is illegal or would endanger you or another person.

We will make sure, with you, that any risk is properly managed. Some people may use their money to employ a personal assistant to help with everyday tasks such as washing and getting dressed. Others may choose to use the money to buy support, or services from organisations or individuals.

You may also want to spend your money on transport or local services such as a day centre. We will give you help to complete a plan and understand what is appropriate to meet your needs.

Why do you give me an estimated amount?

It gives you an approximate idea of the value of the support we may be able to offer you. This is helpful because it allows you to make a realistic plan. We will complete an assessment to identify your care and support needs and then estimate the amount of money we will offer you. The actual amount allocated to you may differ according to the plan you make for your support.



How much will my Personal Budget actually be?

The actual amount of your Personal Budget is determined by your support plan. You can make choices about how your support fits your preferences and suits your living situation. We will agree the plan and, as a result, your actual Personal Budget may be more or less than your estimated amount.

What is a Support Plan?



Your Support Plan is a document which outlines the support you need, what outcomes you want to achieve, and how you want to receive it. It forms an agreement between you and us (the Council) indicating the amount of your Personal Budget and what it will be spent on.

You can develop your support plan yourself, with the help of someone else, use an organisation to help you, or we can help you. When the support plan is finished it will need to be agreed by us before we release any money to you.

Is a Personal Budget taxable and will it affect any benefits that I might receive?

No. A Personal Budget does not count as income for tax or benefit purposes. A Personal Budget is specifically to pay for your care and support; it is not a loan.

What if I need help to manage my support or money?

If you think you need help to manage your support or your money, a suitable organisation, a family member or a friend could help you. We are here to help you too – members of our Direct Payments team can offer you advice and support. Or, you can nominate an agent to act on

your behalf who can help you manage the Direct Payment including any employment and payroll responsibilities.

What are the options for managing my Personal Budget?

There are currently three ways to manage your Personal Budget:
Option One: Direct Payment.

You can have your Personal Budget sent direct to a bank account set up to manage your Personal Budget.

This is called a Direct

Payment. You can use the money to be creative about how you organise, buy and manage your agreed support. You are responsible for paying for your support from this money, and record everything you spend to show the Council. For more information please read the factsheet F58 Direct Payments.

Option Two: Managed Personal Budget.

We (the Council) can organise, buy and manage your agreed support in the traditional way and manage the Personal Budget for you.

Option Three: Combination Personal Budget.

You may choose to use a combination of the previous two options. You could choose to receive some of your social care support as a Direct Payment, while other things could be paid for directly by the council. We can discuss this with you.



How do Direct Payments relate to Personal Budgets?

A Personal Budget is the total cost of all the social care support that you might need, regardless of how that support is provided. A Direct Payment is one way of receiving all or part of your Personal Budget.

Further information will be available soon as Frequently Asked Questions online:

www.devon.gov.uk/puttingpeoplefirst along with a new factsheet 'FS7 Personal Budgets.' Until then please keep up-to-date with The PPF project on the staff intranet: <http://staff.devon.gov.uk/puttingpeoplefirst>