

Monmouthshire County Council

Social Services, Health and Wellbeing

Direct Payments

If you or someone you care for, has a disability and you need care, you may be eligible to receive a Direct Payment.

What is a Direct Payment?

If you have a physical, sensory or learning disability, if you are disabled by illness and you need support, or if you are a carer, you may be eligible to receive money from Social Services called a Direct Payment to purchase your own support privately, or to purchase your own equipment.

This scheme is available to adults and children, both cared for and carers.

The Direct Payment Scheme is designed to give you more independence, choice and control and to help you manage your life in your own home. If you need assistance with personal care, everyday living tasks, support in your caring role or if you need equipment or any other type of support to enable you independently, you have three options:

- To receive support or equipment directly from Social Services
- To receive a budget through a Direct Payment to purchase the type of support you need privately
- Or a combination of the two.

You may also be able to use Direct Payments for short periods of respite, if agreed by Social Services as part of the support you need..

How do Direct Payments work?

A social worker or specialist assessor will visit you to talk about your situation and the support or equipment that you may need. This is called an assessment. For example you may need help with personal care such as washing and dressing, or tasks such as shopping or meal preparation. This is an opportunity to discuss thoughts and ideas you may have about different types of support available.

If you choose to receive a Direct Payment to pay for some or all of the support that you may need, the weekly cost of your budget will be worked out. Social Services will then pay you the money every four weeks in advance. A one off payment can also be made if a specific item or time limited support is needed.

In certain circumstances, the Direct Payment could be made to a parent or carer or a Suitable Person. A Suitable Person is someone who is appointed to act in the best interests of a person who does not have the mental capacity to

manage a Direct Payment. The Suitable Person agrees to manage the Direct Payment on their behalf.

If you choose to receive a Direct Payment to purchase a piece of equipment, which may be different or more expensive than the equipment provided by Social Services, the cost of the equipment will be worked out. You will then receive a single payment which you can top up yourself to purchase a more expensive item. The person who completes your assessment with you will advise you on what you can purchase yourself.

I

You can use your budget to purchase the support which has been identified in your Care and Support Plan. This may mean you becoming an employer and employing your own personal assistants. We will ask you to keep records of how the money is spent. By managing your own support in this way, you have more choice about how you receive your support that best fits in with your lifestyle.

Who can I employ?

You can employ anyone as long as the person is not your spouse/partner or close relative who lives in the same household as yourself, except in very exceptional situations.

To receive Direct Payments

You must be:

- assessed by Social Services and eligible to receive support, or already receiving support from Social Services.
- willing and able to manage your own arrangements.

Assistance will be provided from the Direct Payment Independent Living Advisors. They can provide support with all aspects of your Direct Payment, including the recruitment of a personal assistant, identifying a care agency if you need this, and advice on record keeping requirements. The Independent Living Advisors can offer ongoing support whenever you need it.

Will I have to pay?

You may be asked to make a contribution towards the cost of your support, depending on your circumstances. This is worked out in accordance with the Social Services charging policy.

Will Direct Payments affect my benefits?

No. Direct Payments are not taken into consideration when the Benefits Agency calculates your benefits. Also you do not have to pay tax on the Direct Payment money.

Help us get it right

If you are not happy about the services we arrange for you, or about the way you have been treated, you can complain. Also if you think we have done something well you can tell us. We have a leaflet called "How to be heard" which gives information about how to compliment us or complain.

You can get these leaflets from your social worker or from any of our offices or you can contact the Customer Relations Team:-

Tel: 0800 652 4121 (Freephone) **or** 01633 644672

Fax: 01633 644577

Email: talk2us@monmouthshire.gov.uk

How can I find out more?

By contacting:

Monmouthshire County Council One Stop Shops:

Chepstow One Stop Shop: Tel 01291 635700.

Caldicot One Stop Shop: Tel 01291 426400.

Abergavenny One Stop Shop: Tel 01873 735800.

Monmouth One Stop Shop: Tel 01600 775200

Or email: onestopshop@monmouthshire.gov.uk

At the time of printing this information was correct. We try very hard to keep information up to date but cannot be held responsible for any changes. If you do find any errors please contact the Customer Relations team on 01633 644672.

If you would like this information in another language, Braille, large print, tape or a range of electronic formats please contact the Customer Relations team on 01633 644672