



Your Care, Your Choice

A guide to self-directed support and personal budgets



The way that people receive social care has changed recently. One of the main changes is that we now use self-directed support.



This factsheet gives you information about how your social care support can be arranged using the self-directed support.

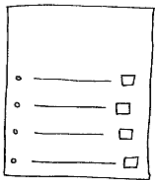


We have to make sure that we help those people with the greatest need for support. To do this we use the Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) eligibility criteria. We only arrange support for those people with critical or substantial needs.



Information on eligibility for adult social care can be found on our website:

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/eligibility or in our leaflet: *Adult Social Care in Warwickshire*. Copies can be ordered by calling: 01926 410410.



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What is self-directed support?

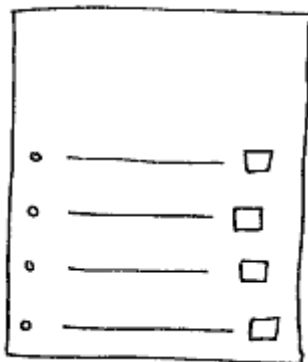


If you have been assessed and told you are able to have social care support we want to put you in control over the help you need. We call this self-directed support.

This factsheet gives details of self-directed support and how we arrange personal budgets in Warwickshire.

Steps to self-directed support

There are 7 main steps to self-directed support.



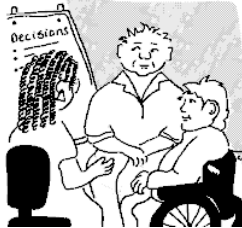
1. A social care practitioner will work with you to complete an assessment form
2. They will then work with you to write a support plan
3. They will agree the support plan with you.
4. They will talk to you about how you could use a personal budget
5. They will let you know what personal budget you will received and if you have to pay anything
6. They will tell you if you need to keep records (if you are using direct payments)
7. We will then check with you after a short time to see if everything is OK – this is called reviewing.

Step 1: Working with your social care practitioner to complete an assessment form



The form is called “My Assessment”. It helps us to find out:

- about your day-to-day life
- about what help you need and
- if you can have social care support.



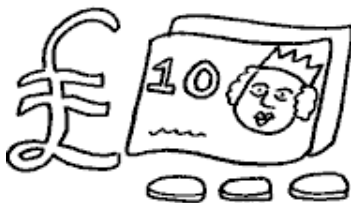
We will arrange to visit you so that we can complete the form. If you want, you can have a family member, carer, friend or someone else who is important in your life there to help you.



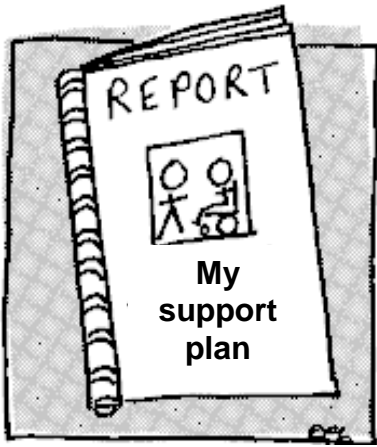
We also want to support carers. If you have someone who regularly cares for you, for example, a family member, friend or neighbour (as long as they are not being paid for caring for you) we can also complete a carer’s assessment, which looks into their own needs as a carer. They may be able to have help in their own right.



The form asks you about changes you would like to make. It also asks about your goals in life and what you would like to do.



After we have filled in the form we will look at what you have told us and work out an estimated amount of money you may need to pay for your support (we call this your estimated personal budget). This will help to plan your support.



Step 2: Writing a Support Plan

How you want to use this money (your estimated personal budget) will be written in a plan called “My Support Plan.”

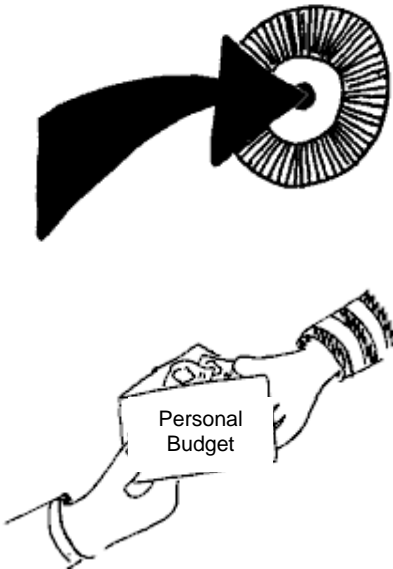
A social care practitioner will meet with you to help you with your plan. You can also have a friend, family member to help you as well.



In this plan we write down how you want to be supported to meet your social care needs and how you plan to achieve your goals. This must also keep you safe, well, and be legal.

It will include:

- what you will spend the money on
- any help you need to arrange your support
- how having support will help you keep safe, healthy and well
- how having support will help you be as independent as possible and
- how having support will help you achieve your plans and goals in life.



The final amount of money is only decided when your support plan is agreed. This is called your “personal budget”.

Step 3. Agreeing “My Support Plan”



Your personal budget must be spent on meeting your social care needs and your goals in life. We write how this will be done in your support plan. You can use your personal budget on lots of different things. For example:

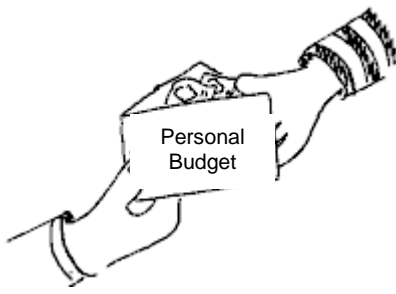


- employing someone to support you in your day-to-day life (we call this person a personal assistant or PA)
- buying support from a care agency
- meeting other people, perhaps at a local club
- keeping well by having regular exercise like swimming or going to the gym
- having help to run your home
- having a break so that your family carer can have some time off or
- learning a new skill.

Often talking about this with someone else can help you think about what you want to do.



If we cannot agree your support plan, or the amount of money, the plan will need to be looked at again (reviewed). We will talk with you about the ways we can agree your support plan, but if you still aren't happy with our decision, you will be given details of how you may appeal.

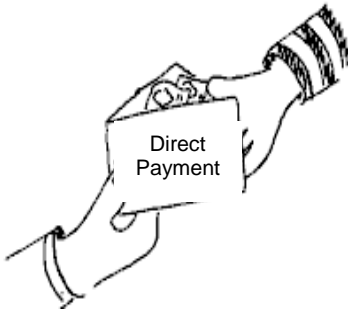


Step 4. How do I use my personal budget to pay for my support?

There are a number of ways you can use your personal budget to pay for your support. You could have:



- Direct Payments
- A Personal Managed Budget
- Combination budget or
- Individual Service Fund.



What is a Direct Payment?

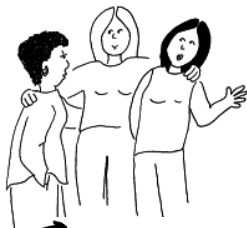
Direct Payments give more choice in the way you arrange the support you want. You can include things that we (the council) do not provide or pay for.



The Direct Payment is a sum of money that gets paid directly into your bank account every 4 weeks. This is the money you use to pay for your support.



If you want to have Direct Payments but you do not think you can manage it alone, you can have a **Trust** or a **Managed Account**.



- **A Trust** is usually a small group of people such as members of your family who look after your Direct Payment on your behalf.



- **A Managed Account is when** we (the council) agree that someone else or an organisation can receive the money for you and pay the bills on your behalf.



If you are helping someone who cannot look after the money on their own you may be able to become a **Suitable Person**. As a **Suitable Person**, you will be responsible for receiving and managing the Direct Payment. The law tells us who can be a Suitable Person.

There are some things you cannot use your Direct Payment for:



- you cannot buy long-term residential care, but you can take short breaks
- you cannot buy a service from us, as the council is not allowed to sell their services in this way
- you cannot use it for health services, like a visit to the dentist
- you cannot use it to pay for: clothes, food, household bills, rent, and mortgage
- you cannot use it for gambling, buying alcohol or cigarettes
- the law tells us you cannot pay someone who lives in the same house as you, unless we agree it, and
- you cannot use it for anything that is illegal or does not keep you safe and well.



Here in Warwickshire, we have a Direct Payment support service. This service can help you with support, information and advice. Please ask us for their contact details.

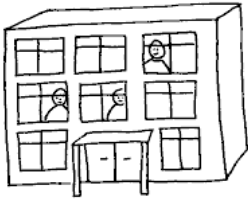
What is a personal managed budget?



This is when we (the council) use your personal budget to arrange your support for you.

Working for Warwickshire

If you choose to do this your support will be limited to the organisations that we use and the services we provide.

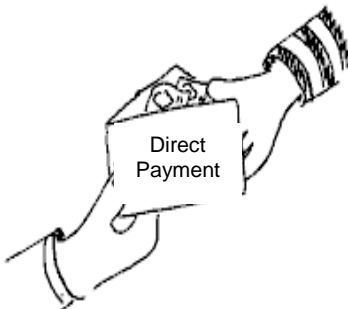


If we agree with you that residential care is the best way to meet your support needs, this will be arranged as a managed budget for legal reasons.

What is a combination budget?

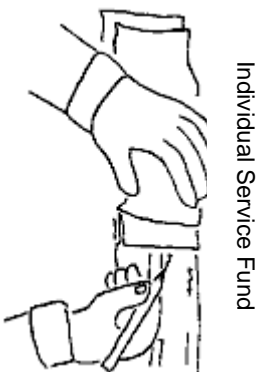


A combination budget is when you have mixture of a Direct Payment and a Managed Budget. For example:



You may want a Direct Payment for some of your support, but you want your Social Worker to arrange some other types of support for you - we call this a combination budget.

What is an Individual Service Fund?



Individual Service Funds are when a service provider arranges your social care support for you. We will work with you to choose a provider that will help you meet your needs and your goals that we agreed in your support plan.

The provider can only use your personal budget for your support and must only do as you tell them.



We are only just starting to use individual service funds. Please talk to us if you are interested in using your budget in this way.

Step 5. Paying towards a personal budget - How much will it cost me?

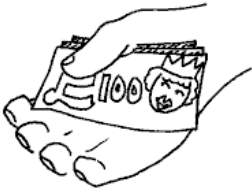


We will carry out a financial assessment with you to see how much money you can afford to pay towards your support. You may be asked to pay towards your personal budget to buy the support you need.

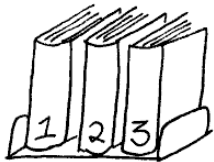


You will be told how much you need to pay before you get your personal budget.

6. Keeping records (if using Direct Payments)



If you are going to have Direct Payments, we would advise you to open a separate bank account in your name, or the name of the person you have agreed will help you look after the money.



We will tell you how to keep simple records and how to get the types of help and support to make things easier for you.



For the first 3 months we will need to look at your bank statements for the Direct Payment bank account. This is so we can help you manage and keep on top of things.



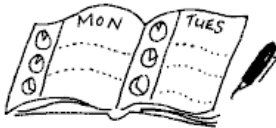
If you find that you are spending more money each month than you have coming in, you must tell us so we can help you to find out why.

Please remember, we cannot give you more money if you run out. If this happens we will look at how much you have in your personal budget. If you do not spend all of your personal budget, we will ask you to pay it back.



In some cases we can let you save up an amount of money to help you to plan for such things as your employer responsibilities and achieving your goals. It's usually around 8 weeks of savings. Anything saved above this must be agreed during your support plan or review meeting.

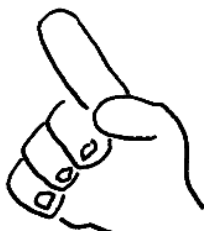
7. Reviewing



To make sure you get the right amount of support we will arrange review meetings with you. However, you can tell us at any time if you feel your needs have changed.



At the review meetings we will look at your support plan and see if your support is still helping you to achieve your goals. We will look at what you want to change, or keep the same, and check that the amount of money for your personal budget is meeting your needs.



You will only get a personal budget if you are entitled for social care support. If your needs change and you are no longer entitled, we will support you to close down your personal budget.

Here is what some people have said about having personal budgets:

“More people should try direct payments they don’t know what they are missing. We have the freedom to choose who comes into our home.”

“I am doing more things than I have ever done before. I can go out with my PA when I choose and do the things that I want to do on that day. I go to the farm and work with the animals - I love it.”

“Direct payments are fantastic for people with mental health conditions. They give them the choice and flexibility to have the kind of support they need to live their lives fully.”



For further information

If you require further information about our services please contact Warwickshire County Council on 01926 410410 in the first instance.

Compliments, comments and complaints

If you have any comments or complaints about our services, please let us know by contacting:

Customer Relations Team

P.O. Box 9, Shire Hall

Warwick

CV34 4RR

Tel: 01926 410410

Information in other formats

If this information is difficult to understand, we can provide it in another format, for example, in large print, on audio tape, easy read, or in another language. Please contact the Interpreting and Translation Unit on 01926 410410.

Customers can also contact the Coventry and Warwickshire Sign Language Interpreting service for the information to be translated into Sign Language:

Text: 024 76229667 Voice: 024 76520378

Fax: 024 7622 6326 Email: office@cwsliis.co.uk

Are we getting it right?

We are interested to know what you think of our information. For any feedback please contact:

Promotions and Publications

Saltisford Office Park

Ansell Way

Warwick

CV34 4UL

Email: promotionsandpublication@warwickshire.gov.uk

Tel: 01926 410410

SSAL725

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