

Things that you might want to know about Direct Payments



What is it?

A Personal Budget is the amount of money given to you to pay for care and support to meet your needs.



A Direct Payment means that the money is given directly to you so that you can choose who supports you and use the money to pay them.

A Direct Payment can only be used for:

- Meeting the needs that social services have agreed to pay for (these are called 'eligible needs').
- Support that has been agreed in your Support Plan.



A Direct Payment cannot be used for:

- Buying alcoholic drinks or drugs.
- Gambling.
- Buying NHS services.

Why should I have one?



- You know your own needs better than anyone else.
- You know what kind of support you need to make your life better.
- Many people want to be able to choose what care they get and who provides it.
- You can choose a service that is not on a set list of providers.

What needs to happen before I can have one?

Your Council must:

- Make sure that your support plan will meet your needs safely.
- Have a signed agreement to say that Direct Payment rules are being followed.



Who can be responsible for a Direct Payment?

- The person receiving the money.
- Someone else, if the person receiving the money says it is ok.
- A parent or guardian if the person receiving the money is under 16.



Can carers have a Direct Payment?

Yes, if a Personal Budget is offered after a Carer's Assessment they may receive a one-off payment.



When is the money paid?

It is paid directly in to a bank account every 4 weeks and will include any 'contribution' (what you pay towards) the cost of your support.

Do I need a bank account?

Yes, you will need a current account that is separate from your own personal account.





Can I have a Direct Payment?

- Yes - if you can manage it (by yourself or with help from someone else).
- If it is a good way of meeting your care needs.

Is there anything that could stop me having a Direct Payment?

- If you are having drug or alcohol treatments following a court order.
- If you or someone supporting you are unable to manage your services and the support they give.



What support is available?

Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire CCG can offer: **Direct Payment Information & Advice** - to tell you about Direct Payments and how you can use them.

Skill-Up Program - to help you become confident with using a Direct Payment or being an employer.

Employment Information & Advice - if you want to employ your own Personal Assistant you can have help to do this and understand what you need to know.

Employment Support - Helping you to find a Personal Assistant and employ them.

Payroll Service - to help you to sort out your employee's wages, tax and pension.

Managed Account Service - to receive your Direct Payment money and pay care bills on your behalf.



What is a Direct Payment Pre-Paid Card?

This is one way of making a Direct Payment easier to manage. It works in the same way as a debit card and you can use it to pay for services on-line or over the phone.



How much should the Direct Payment be?

It should be enough to cover all the costs needed for your care. This might include employing someone yourself if that's what you choose to do.



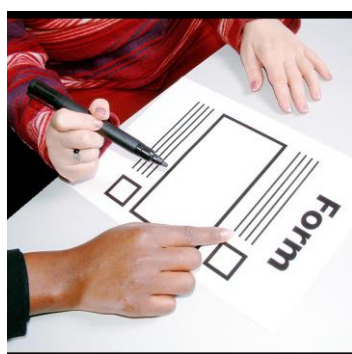
What if I move out of this Council Area?

If you move home to live in a new area the Council there would have to assess your needs again.



What happens if I spend time in hospital or a residential home?

Your Direct Payment can still carry on. There might be things that you need help with even while you are in hospital. You will still need support when you get home.



What are Direct Payment Monitoring Forms?

If you choose to open a bank account and manage your Direct Payment yourself, you will need to fill out a form every few months to tell the council how you have used your Direct Payment money. You will also need to send copies of bank statements with the form.

If you have a pre-paid card you don't need to fill in the forms.



Can I employ a member of my family as a Personal Assistant?

Yes! If it is a close family member living in the same home the Council would need to agree that this was OK.

Can the Council stop a Direct Payment?

Yes it can, but only:

- If you no longer have eligible care needs because your condition has got so much better that you no longer need care and support.
- If you have a court order to receive treatment for drug or alcohol use
- If the Council felt that the Direct Payment was not being used in the right way. However, everything possible will be done to help you to carry on with your Direct Payment before it comes to this.

