

Self-directed support

Getting your plan agreed

Your local authority needs to see and agree to your support plan before they can decide what your final budget is.

This fact sheet tells you how to get your support plan agreed by your local authority.



To get more help
contact In Control.
Tel: 01564 821 650
Email In Control
help@in-control.org.uk



Image from the How to be in control DVD.

Find more fact sheets at:
www.in-control.org.uk/factsheets



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This fact sheet was produced by In Control and Mencap as part of In Control and Me, a lottery funded project.
www.in-control.org.uk/icandme

The basic facts

The local authority needs you to answer these questions, so it can agree to your plan:

- What is important to you?
- What do you want to change or achieve?
- How will you arrange your support?
- How will you use your individual budget?
- How will you manage your support?
- How will you stay in control of your life?
- What will you do to make this plan happen?

Perhaps your local authority has a leaflet that says what they expect to see in your plan – ask if there is one.

Your local authority will tell you what your ‘indicative budget’ is. This is an indication of how much money someone with your support needs will get. Your support plan might show you need more or less than the indication. If so, you must be able to explain and justify the difference.

More information about getting your plan agreed

Your care manager (sometimes called ‘social worker’) can help you so that your plan answers these questions. Your care manager will also make sure:

- your plan will keep you healthy, safe and well
- the right person is in control of your budget – someone who will plan to spend the money in a responsible way.

Once the local authority has agreed your plan they will give the money to you or to the person you have asked to manage it for you.

You can make adjustments to your plan at any time. You need to let your care manager know if you want to make any big changes.

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More detail

What if the local authority doesn't agree to your plan?

Your local authority might not agree your plan if they think:

- you have gone significantly over the indicative amount and you can't justify the increase
- it does not answer the seven questions
- it will not keep you healthy, safe and well
- it does not help you be in control of your support.

If they don't agree your plan, they must tell you why. You can then talk together about how you can achieve what you want.

Some local authorities have a 'risk enablement panel' which helps to decide what would work in the best interests of the individual. A panel listens to everyone involved and tries to work out the best solution.

If you are still unhappy about the outcome you can still use your local authority's complaints procedure.

You can ask your care manager (or social worker) for a complaints form or ask them how you can make a complaint.

Please also see our fact sheet called '**What if I disagree with the resource allocation?**'

Your plan agreement

In Control recommends that local authorities agree plans in the way set out in this fact sheet. However, some local authorities have their own way of agreeing a plan and say they cannot change.

It is possible to challenge their way of doing things, but not everyone will want to do that.

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An example

George Doubleday

George says:

‘Thinking of my plan was quite a good experience because it gave me some time to think how I wanted my life to be, what I wanted to be doing. When you’re on benefits, it’s quite easy to drift.

The professionals’ opinion was that I desperately needed a break. I thought it was a positive thing to spend some of the money on a holiday in Tunisia. It would be cheaper than going into some residential home for a break.

I phoned up my friend, Abraham, who was actually in the process of booking a holiday. I had recently told him that I was being allocated some money for a holiday and he asked would I like to go. And I said well, yes, that would be nice, you know, and he said we were going to Tunisia, and I asked how much it was and it was cheaper than being in some B and B in this country and I said “book it”. He booked it and I wrote out a cheque to pay for it.’

Gill Stewart, Individual Budgets Project Lead, Norfolk County Council says:

‘In George’s case he was thinking in terms of having a holiday, so while he was actually writing his support plan he could just do it.

I know that his Care Co-ordinator was talking about respite care for him and the respite care would have been in a registered home. So he would have a break from his home but it would not have been as life-enhancing, I think, as going somewhere like Tunisia.’

George’s plan was agreed.

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There is a lot of information about self-directed support on In Control's website: www.in-control.org.uk

Here is a selection of things that tell you more:

Free to download from www.in-control.org.uk

What makes a good plan?

Making Your Support Plan

From www.supportplanning.org

Support Planning and Review

Free to download or you can buy a copy from:

In Control Support Centre, Carillon House, Chapel Lane, Wythall, B47 6JX or www.in-control.org.uk/shop

Top Tips and **In the Driving Seat** Helen Sanderson, Suzanne McStravick and Carl Poll

Printed publications for sale at:

In Control Support Centre, Carillon House, Chapel Lane, Wythall, B47 6JX or www.in-control.org.uk/shop

The Essential Family Guide: how to help your family member be in control Caroline Tomlinson

Keys to Citizenship: a guide to getting good support for people with learning disabilities Simon Duffy

Useful websites

Get more info: www.ncil.org.uk

About the **In Control and Me** project

A three-year project to produce accessible information for everyone who wants to direct their own support, funded by the National Lottery through the BIG Lottery Fund. You can find out more at www.mencap.org.uk/incontrol or www.in-control.org.uk/icandme

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