Self-Directed Support and Personal Budgets

Information
for people with learning disabilities

Cambridgeshire County Council
Cambridgeshire NHS
Self-Directed Support is new. It gives more choice and control to people who the Council agrees need social care support.

What is Self-Directed Support?

Instead of a care plan or package of support decided by the Council, people will be given a sum of money - a “Personal Budget” to buy the support they need.

This “Personal Budget” funding can be used to pay for support or activities to meet their needs.

Will I have to have a Personal Budget?

All people who can get support from us will now have a Personal Budget. But you will have a choice about how it is used.

You can manage it yourself. You can have help. Or ask the Council to arrange and pay for your support.

How will I get my Personal Budget?

The Council checks if your needs are enough and you are allowed to get support from us - your needs have to be “substantial” and “critical”.

If you are then you will be sent a “Support Questionnaire” to fill in. You can have help to fill this in if you need it.

The questionnaire will tell us what you think your needs are.

The Council will check your Support Questionnaire.

We will tell you the amount of money we think you need to meet your level of need.

We use a special system called a “Resource Allocation System” (RAS). The amount will be agreed before you are asked to prepare a Support Plan.

How much funding will there be?

The amount of your Personal Budget will depend on your needs.

Social care support will still be available for people in an emergency.
Will I be asked to put any of my money in?

**We will do a check to see:**

- If you are on the right benefits.
- If you can claim more benefits (we can help with this).
- What you can afford to pay.

This check is called a Financial Assessment. It will help us work out how much you have to put into your Personal Budget.

How is the personal budget managed?

**You can choose one of three ways to manage your Personal Budget:**

1. You get all of your money paid to you as a Direct Payment.
2. Part of your budget is paid to you and part of your support is arranged by the Council or someone else like a relative or agency.
3. All of your Personal Budget is spent on your behalf either by the Council or someone else like a relative or agency.

Who decides how the personal budget is used?

**You will be asked to produce a Support Plan. You can have help to make this. The Plan will cover a number of areas including:**

- What is important to you.
- How the Personal Budget will be used.
- How your support will be managed.
- How you stay safe.

The support plan can be in a format to suit you. It is YOUR plan but it needs to be agreed by the Council. You will be asked to sign a form to agree the plan.

You can use the money (your Personal Budget) to buy the support you need.

It must be legal. You cannot buy health care.

Can I still do things I enjoy doing now like attending the day centre?

Yes if that is what you want.

The people who support you will need to make sure that they provide the services you want.

Or if you wish to spend your Personal Budget on other activities (a more individualised service) you can. For example, you might want to go to a social club, cafe or leisure centre.
What happens if I don’t spend all of the money?

It depends on why the money hasn’t been spent. If you did not need all the money to get the support listed in your Support Plan then your Personal Budget for the next year will be changed. If you planned to buy something that hasn’t happened and the money is still needed then that money may be able to be carried over as long as it is spent in an agreed time.

Your Support Plan will show how you plan to spend the money to meet your needs and achieve your goals. Sometimes an agreement is made for emergencies or particular things. Any money left over has to be returned to the Council.

What records do I need to keep?

You will have to keep some records. You can have help. What you will need to keep will depend on if you are managing your money yourself or if someone else is doing it for you.

The Council has to check things like:

- bank statements,
- what you have received
- details of what you have spent.

You will not have to include a receipt for every cup of coffee or bus ticket that you buy.

How often will there be a review?

A first review takes place after 12 weeks. This will check how things are going and if any changes need to be made.

You will have a review each year from the date your Personal Budget started.

You can ask for a review at any time during the year if your needs change.

If your needs change you will need to complete another Support Questionnaire and provide information.
more information

Further information is available on our website:
www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/cambridgeshirelearningdisabilitypartnership
or by contacting the Contact Centre on 0345 045 5202.

If you have any questions about this booklet please contact:

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This leaflet is available on request in large print, Braille, Urdu, Bengali,
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for people with learning disabilities