

## **A Brief Guide to Direct Payments Information Sheet**

### **What are direct payments?**

Direct payments are a way for you to take control of your care. With a direct payment you make your own care and support arrangements. A direct payment is your personal budget paid to you instead of the council arranging services. This means you don't have to use services arranged by the council and can choose what is right for you.

### **What are the benefits of direct payments?**

Direct payments give you control and flexibility. You choose what services you use when you use them and who you purchase them from. You are the expert and know the best way to meet your needs.

Having a direct payment means you can:

- be more independent
- have more control over your life
- make your own choices
- Have more flexibility

### **Can you get direct payments?**

If the council has agreed that you are eligible for social care support, then you should be able to have a direct payment. You can choose to have all your personal budget as a direct payment, some of it or none. You can also change your mind at any time. We do need to make sure you are able to manage the direct payment. If you can't manage direct payments yourself, you may ask a trusted friend or relative to manage them for you. A relative or friend can request a direct payment for you if you aren't able to.

### **What support will I have?**

The council's direct payments team is here to help make things as easy as possible. They will provide you with information and signpost you to whatever help you need.

Some support which is available includes:

- managed accounts to support with the finances
- support to recruit personal assistants
- support with payroll
- support with becoming an employer

We will help you get whatever support you need.

### **What can I use a direct payment for?**

You can use a direct payment to buy services or employ carers, if what you buy meets the outcomes that have been agreed in your care and support plan.

This might include:

- paying an agency to send a carer to your home to help you with your care and support
- employing a carer (called a personal assistant) to help you
- pooling your direct payment with others to share costs
- attending a day centre or club

### **Is there anything that I cannot use a direct payment for?**

Yes, there are some things that aren't allowed, for example:

- anything that isn't detailed in your support plan
- ordinary living costs such as food, drink, housing costs, bills
- health care needs
- gambling
- long term care in a care home
- to pay your husband, wife, partner, or a close relative who lives with you to provide care for you unless we agreed this specifically for you.

### **Do I have to have a financial assessment?**

Yes, this will determine how much you may have to pay towards your care and support. You can find out what you may have to pay towards your care by visiting the council's BetterOff webpage, [derbyshire.gov.uk/betteroff](http://derbyshire.gov.uk/betteroff)

### **How can I get a direct payment?**

If you already have a service, arranged by Adult Care, you should speak to your Adult Care worker and request a direct payment.

If you don't receive a service from Derbyshire County Council Adult Care already, you will need an assessment first to determine whether you are eligible for support. You can contact Call Derbyshire on **01629 533 190** and ask for a social care assessment.

For further information about direct payments see [derbyshire.gov.uk/direct-payments](http://derbyshire.gov.uk/direct-payments)

Or contact the direct payment advice line on:

Tel: **01629 533 345** or email: [asch.directpayments@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:asch.directpayments@derbyshire.gov.uk)