

Self-Directed Support and Personal Budgets

My
Independence



My Choice



My Life



A guide for individuals and their carers
about a new way to organise your support

Published April 2010



About this leaflet

Northumberland Care Trust delivers adult social care services on behalf of Northumberland County Council. This leaflet is about a new way to arrange your support called **self-directed support and personal budgets**. It describes how people who need social care can have greater choice and control over the services they receive. It tells you:

- What self-directed support & personal budgets are?
- How self-directed support works?
- Where to find out more?

This is a new leaflet and we would like your views on it. There is a reply paid tear off card at the back of the leaflet for you to tell us what you think of it.

What is self-directed support?

Self-directed support is for people aged 18 and over who need social care and support in their daily life. It is the process by which you decide:

- what support or help you need
- when the support is used
- who provides the support

We use this information to give you an indication of how much money could be available to pay for the support you need. This money is called a **personal budget**.

This new service puts you at the centre of everything making sure the services you receive help you achieve the things most important to you.

Through self-directed support people can spend their personal budgets on employing their own 'personal assistants', arranging transport to get to places, and using community resources such as leisure centres, libraries, cafes, art centres and cinemas. They can also use it to buy 'traditional' social care and support services including meals services, home care and day time activities.



This is Joe, he is registered blind and deaf and he felt very isolated living alone in sheltered accommodation, not being able to leave his home without support, and not feeling able to socialise with other residents. Joe uses his budget to employ a communicator guide to help him to get out of the house, and he relishes having more freedom.

"The budget is a great help. It was never like this before. I felt lonely not being able to get out on my own. But now I get out and go for meals and do different things. I have the choice- it is actually me who decides and I do what I want to do."

Joe

Can I have a personal budget?

Self-directed support is for adults who are assessed as being eligible for social services support. We are not able to give everyone a personal budget so we use national guidelines to decide who we can help.

In Northumberland we provide services for individuals who need support to:

- look after their own personal care needs
- sustain employment or education
- go about their daily life and/or
- live at home independently.

If you would like to know more we can provide you with an information sheet entitled “Your entitlement to help”

People who could use personal budgets include:

- People with a learning disability
- People with physical impairment, disability or illness
- People with mental ill health
- The elderly

We also support carers. If you have someone who regularly cares for you but does not get paid, we can offer an assessment that looks at support for them.



Meet Abi and her husband Andrew. Abi was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1987 which led to her being confined to a wheelchair within a couple of years and she is now unable to use her hands and arms. Since getting a personal budget she enjoys having more control in her life and the flexibility of the support that she receives:

“My personal budget has helped me to think about what would make my life easier. It has really benefited me and Andrew a lot, and for me this has been its biggest advantage. It gives you a kind of freedom which you haven’t thought of. I choose to use mine to pay for special equipment, regular massages which are vital for my pain relief, and other services that take the pressure off Andrew and allow me to be far more independent. I also used it to buy computer equipment so now I can easily make phone calls, send emails, manage my finances without involving anyone. I no longer feel like the victim who needs babysitting.”

Abi

“The personal budget is useful because if your circumstances change, you have the freedom and flexibility to get on with things there and then. I feel much less like a carer and more like a real person.”

Andrew



7 steps to being in control of my support

To get a personal budget there are 7 steps that you will take.

1. My assessment- finding out what my needs are?

If you are eligible for social care support, we will ask you to tell us about yourself and your life. What works well and what extra help you need? Your assessment says what your needs are and what would help you to improve your quality of life. You might want your family or friends, or another organisation to help with this step.

2. My money- finding out how much

We use the information from the assessment to work out your personal budget for your support. It is not your personal income so this means your benefits stay the same. We will also let you know if you need to make a contribution, and give you information and advice on any other money that you are entitled to.

3. Making my support plan

You can now plan the support you want to meet your needs which will show how you will spend your money. Your plan must help you stay healthy, safe

and legal. You can get help from us, from your family and friends, or an organisation of your choice.

4. Organising my money

You need to say if and how you would like to manage the money. You can be paid, or someone can look after it for you (a person, organisation or the council). You will get as much help as you want to organise your support and your money.

5. Agreeing my plan

We need to agree that your plan says how your goals will be met and that you will be safe. You will need to sign an agreement.

6. Living life

You can use your personal budget as flexibly as possible to buy lots of different services and support. This step is about managing your personal budget, arranging the support and getting on with your life.

7. Seeing how it worked

We will keep in touch to make sure that everything is going well and that you are using the money in the way you said you would.

Remember – you choose how much help you want with each step.

My Independence, My Choice, My Life.



Tell us what you think about this leaflet

This is a new leaflet and we would like to hear from people who have read it. Please take a few minutes to fill in this tear off form to tell us what you think.

How useful did you find this leaflet?

Good No use Okay

How easy is this leaflet to understand?

Easy Difficult Okay

Do you have any comments or suggestions about the information we make available?

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Please post this tear off this form back to us.

There is no need for a stamp. Thank you for your help.

No stamp
required

FREEPOST RLTX-LBXU-SHBS
Transformation Team
Northumberland Care Trust
Merley Croft
Loansdean
Morpeth
NE61 2DL



Where can I find out more?

We can provide you with more detailed information. We also have a DVD which shows real examples of people who are using self-directed support and personal budgets. Please ask if you would like to see this.

Internet

www.northumberlandcaretrust.nhs.uk/personalbudgets

www.in-control.org.uk

www.supportplanning.org

www.dh.gov.uk/socialcare

How to get in touch?

If you or someone you know needs support or wants more information, please call **01670 536 400**.

If you require this document in another format (e.g. CD, audio cassette, Braille or large type) or in another language please contact The Transformation Team: call **01670 394 417**, write to us at The Transformation Team, Northumberland Care Trust, Merley Croft, Northumberland, NE61 2DL or email us ppf@northumberlandcaretrust.nhs.uk

We would like to thank those people who have allowed us to use quotes from their personal experiences, and the individuals, carers, and partners who have helped to develop this leaflet.



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