

A Guide to Pooling your Funding with other People

Direct Payments – Your Life, Your Choice

November 2019

Aim of this guide

This guide is for people who need paid care and support and who wish to pool their funds with others to share the costs and get better outcomes.

The guide is designed to support you through the process of pooling your funds, including how to find someone to pool with, how to set up a pooling arrangement and how to end the arrangement.

You will also find examples of how you might meet your care and support needs through a pooled arrangement.

Flintshire County Council understand that for some people deciding whether to pool their funding might be a daunting decision and some of the information you will be given can be overwhelming at first.

We are committed to providing people such as yourself with all of the information that you need to make a decision that is right for you.

We have an experienced Direct Payments team within the council who are there to support you with any queries or information that you need. We also work in partnership with Penderels Trust, an organisation who specialise in supporting people who choose to receive a Direct Payment. Penderels Trust is on hand to provide as much help and reassurance as you need.

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Pooling your available funding means taking some of your money and adding it to the funding of one or more other people to meet your collective support needs and personal goals.

Not only can this give you better value for money, but it can enable you to share solutions with your peers, and help you do the things that are important to you more effectively.

This guide contains details of how to pool your funds – whether through a Direct Payment, or using your own money. It details How to set up an arrangement with others, how to manage the finances and how to end the agreement.

We have also provided examples from people who have experience of pooling their funding.

Funding Streams

There may be a number of different funding streams that you may wish to consider pooling to meet your support needs, including Direct Payments and/or your own personal finances.

Direct Payments

A Direct Payment is funding given to you by Flintshire Social Services to support your independence and enable you to meet your support needs and personal goals in ways that you choose.

Direct Payments can be used flexibly, giving you more choice and control than if the council made these arrangements for you. Direct Payments can be used to meet lots of different goals, and these will be agreed and written in your support plan.

Remember, the money you spend must be within your current funding (the amount of money you have been told you will get as a Direct Payment)

Your Direct Payment must be used to provide you with the support you need. You cannot spend your Direct Payment on anything that hasn't been agreed, and the arrangements that you make must support your independence and keep you safe and well.

For more information about Direct Payments please ask for a copy of: Direct Payments – Your Life, Your Choice information booklet

Personal Funding

Some people choose to use some of their own funding to pay for their own care and support, or to top up funding they receive as a Direct Payment.

If you are using your own money, you can spend it how you wish. However, you may find this guide useful.

What does pooling funding mean?

Pooling your funding means using all or part of your available funds with others to purchase a service, an item of equipment, contract with an agency or to employ a Personal Assistant (PA), which will be shared to meet common needs, aspirations and goals more effectively and efficiently.

What can pooled funds be spent on?

Pooled funds can be spent on a range of things and it is up to you to decide how the available funding would be best spent:

- You and your friends might choose to pool your available funding to employ a Personal Assistant (PA), go away together on a respite break, arrange day time activities that you all enjoy, or do social things together.
- You may choose to use the money to access existing services, or by setting up your own.

Remember when pooling funds you still need to be able to show that your agreed needs and the needs of the people you are pooling with are being met effectively.

Personal Assistants

A Personal Assistant (PA) is someone that you choose to employ to support you with personal care and/or other tasks. Depending on what you need help with your PA may be able to support you to achieve a whole range of personal outcomes.

Example: when four college friends came to the end of their course they decided to live together. Each requires PA support for personal care, and general support to remain independent and safe. They pool their Direct Payments to share the costs of support, rather than each person doing this individually.

Accessing the community and social support

If you need paid support to go out into the community, access social activities and/or meet people, this will be reflected in your support plan.

Pooling your Direct Payments for this type of support might enable you to take part in activities you may otherwise have not thought of, or may never have been able to afford.. For example:

- Attending leisure activities, such as sports club or gym
- Hiring a venue to hold a social group, or hiring transport to get to a venue
- Setting up a social group for meeting new people, or a club around a particular hobby
- Setting up a small enterprise
- Setting up a shared opportunity, such as gardening, or managing an allotment
- Hiring a PA or other staff member to help make the above options a reality

Example: Rather than going to a traditional day centre a group of friends decided to pool some of their available resources to take over an allotment, fund essential materials and purchase support to help them.

What are the benefits of pooling funding?

Pooling funds can give you better value for money

When you pool your funds with other people you are sharing the costs of the things you pay for, which will help you to make your available funds go further.

You can be far more creative with how you meet your needs And achieve your personal goal and outcomes

Putting your heads together and thinking collectively, may help you to come up with more creative ideas, which are not only more cost effective, but help you to get more out of your opportunities.

Become more independent

Pooling your funds could help you to try new things that you haven't had the confidence to do on your own.

You could spend your pooled funds on something that helps you to overcome barriers you currently face.

You may feel that there isn't currently anything in your area that is right for you, so could consider setting something up alongside people you know. For example, you could set up your own activity as a group.

Increase your social networks and shared activities with people who have common interests

Being part of a group or partnership which has similar interests to you could be a more enjoyable and sociable way to meet new people and help you to achieve your personal goals.

How do I go about pooling my funds?

Ensure all appropriate funds are in place

If you are eligible for Direct Payments you are entitled to pool your payments with others.

If you already have a service from Social Services (either a Direct Payment or a managed service, such as a care agency), you may need to have a review before you can consider pooling your Direct Payments.

You can ask for a review by calling the Flintshire County Council 'Single Point of Access' on 01352 702000 or by speaking to your Care Coordinator if your support is arranged by a Community Mental Health Team.

If you do not currently have a service, but feel that you would be eligible you can arrange to have a Social Care Assessment by calling the Flintshire County Council 'Single Point of Access' on 01352 702000 or by speaking to your GP.

Deciding who to pool your funding with

The decision about who you want to pool with will depend on which aspects of your support you want to use the funds for.

You may want to think about a person, or people you already know and get on well with, who have similar support needs to yourself, or have things in common with you such as hobbies and interests.

For example, if you attend day services, some of the other people might be interested in pooling and sharing an activity. Likewise, you may have neighbours or college friends who might consider pooling with you.

Penderels Trust, the local Direct Payments support organisation, would be happy to talk to you about pooling your funds, and might even be able to introduce you to like minded people.

Penderels Trust can be contacted on: 01352 706235

Decide how you will use your pooled funding to meet your needs

Once you have decided who to pool your funding with, you will need to discuss how you are going to use the available funds to meet your collective needs. You should ensure that everyone involved is happy with how this is going to be done. It is important to ensure all members of the pooling arrangement are able to meet their needs in a way that they are comfortable with.

You may want to discuss:

- Whether everyone is happy with the proposed arrangement
- Make sure that everyone wants the same things
- Would you like to employ one or more Personal Assistants (PA's)

- You will need to agree what a Personal Assistant would be employed to help you to achieve. For example, do you want a PA to support you with care tasks, or to achieve specific goals and outcomes?
- You will need to decide how much you need to pay your PA. An Independent Living Advisor from Penderels Trust will be able to help you with this.
- You will need to decide how you will recruit a PA. For example, will you advertise in a local newspaper, in a shop window, at the job centre, or do you already know somebody who might be suitable. Again, Penderels Trust will support you with these decisions.
- Will you employ staff directly, or through a care agency?
- Do you require someone with specific skills, expertise or experience? If you are going to employ somebody for a particular activity, do they need a qualification or experience in that area?
- Whoever you decide to provide your care and support, you need to ensure that all members of your pooling group are happy with the choice of PA or care provider.
- You need to decide how the staff member will be trained and managed. And agree this with all concerned. You may want to think about whether the individual's previous experience is sufficient, or whether you would like them to have further training or pursue a particular qualification.

Would you like to use your pooled funds to access social activities or to get out and about?

- If you are going to pool Direct Payments, first ensure that it has been agreed for you to use the money in this way
- If you are going to set up a new activity, how is this going to work and what are you hoping to achieve?
- Do you need to hire a venue?
- Will the group be open to more people?
- How will you promote the opportunity to more Direct Payments holders you would like to get involved?
- If the social activity already exists, will you use the funds to pay for someone to support you and the person or group you are pooling with to undertake the activity?

How will you manage your funds?

- How much will each of you contribute to the arrangement?
- If everyone involved in the pooling arrangement receives the same support, it is important to ensure everyone contributes equally.
- You will need to make arrangements for the money to be held. For example, you might choose to set up a shared bank account.

Storing funds and managing money

Once all members of your pooling group have decided how much you will each contribute to the arrangement, you should set up a separate bank account for the pooled funds to be stored in. This will enable you to monitor the money and keep track of how you are using it.

The Direct Payments funds you add to the pool remain subject to the FCC Direct Payments financial monitoring arrangements.

Account Options

Set up an individual bank account

This is just a normal bank account, like a standard current account. This type of account will be managed by just one person who will have any associated cash cards and/or cheque books in their name.

Set up a group or community bank account

This is an account specifically designed for groups.

Having such an account will enable more than one member of the pooling group to have access to the money in it.

In order to set up either an individual or group account, you will need to check with the bank which of their accounts is best suited to your needs, and what information they require to open it for you. You will also need to check whether there are any bank charges associated with the account, and if so, factor these into the overall costs.

Set up an account with a credit union

Credit Unions are an alternative to high street banks and can provide you with an account for your pooled funds.

It is important to check with your local Credit Union about the accounts they offer, and any associated charges, as each one is different.

For more information about Credit Unions in Wales, and to find your local Credit Union go to the Credit Unions of Wales website at: www.creditunionsofwales.co.uk/ or contact them on 0845 872 3467

Set up a managed account with Penderels Trust or another payroll agency

Penderels Trust is an organisation commissioned by Flintshire County Council to provide support to Direct Payments holders.

Penderels Trust and other payroll providers can look after your funds on your behalf. Whilst you retain complete control over how the money is used, the payroll provider can take on the responsibility of account management and deal with the associated payments. There is likely to be a cost associated with this option, so please take this into account.

Making Payments

There are generally only two things that you will need to make payments for as part of your pooling arrangement:

Paying a member of staff (Personal Assistant or other member of staff)

In order to pay a Personal Assistant, you will need to keep a record of the hours they have worked and provide your payroll provider with a regular time sheet, so that they can process wages to be paid.

If your care and support is provided by an agency worker you will be required to pay invoices, usually on a 4 weekly basis.

Payment for a service (such as room hire, transport hire or subscriptions)

If you are using your pooled funds to pay for another service or an item of equipment you will need to get an invoice. If you are managing your own funds, you will be able to pay this from your account or joint account. If an organisation such as Penderels Trust is managing your funding for you, they will pay the invoice for you.

You will need to keep records of how you use the money so that you can show that you have been spending your funds on the things agreed and outlined in the care & support plans of each of the people you are pooling funding with. Someone from Flintshire CC may ask to see these.

Arranging Support

You can employ someone to help you in two different ways:

1. Employ a Personal Assistant (PA) directly

Penderels Trust can support you to recruit a PA and the process is detailed below.

Job description/person specification

As you and the person/people you are going to pool your funds with will be sharing the PA, it is important you agree on the sort of person you would like to recruit (this will form your person specification) and the exact tasks you would like them to support you all with (the job description).

Advertise

To find a PA you can advertise in local papers, through the job centre, on the Penderels Trust website, or through local schools and colleges etc. You can also access a list of available PA's and their details via the local PA finder service.

As well as telling prospective PA's where the job will be based, the hours they will be expected to work and how much they will be paid, you should also tell them a little about the activities they will be supporting you with (using your job description).

Use your person specification to describe to the person what sort of expectations you have of them.

Interviews

Once individuals have applied for the position you will need to collectively decide which of the applicants you would like to interview. Penderels Trust can prepare you for the interview and will support you at interview if necessary.

Service and employment agreements/contracts

Once you have agreed with your group who you would like to employ, Penderels Trust can support you to establish exactly what your expectations are of the PA, what their responsibilities will be, what is expected of them in terms of hours and how much they will be paid. Penderels Trust will put this information into a contract that everyone can agree to.

Safety

It is recommended that you ask anyone you want to employ (following interview) to provide two references from people who know them well, preferably people they have worked for before.

It is also essential that you ask them to complete a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check. This is funded by Flintshire CC and will tell you if the person you want to employ has been convicted of crime in the past.

Paying your Personal Assistant

If you use a payroll provider, such as the service run by Penderels Trust, you will simply need to send them a record of the hours your PA has worked each month.

If you choose not to use a payroll service, you will need to calculate the tax and National Insurance you need to deduct for your PA. It is advised that you speak with HMRC to ensure you are doing this correctly.

2. Using a Care Agency

Some people prefer to use their Direct Payment to pay for a carer sent from an agency. You can find a list of registered agencies in your area on the CSSIW (Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales) website www.cssiw.org.uk

Agreements

There are several types of agreements that you might wish to consider:

An agreement between all the people you are pooling funding with

We suggest, as with any other financial matter, that you think about signing an agreement to make sure that everyone is clear about the following things:

- How much money each person is contributing to the arrangement.
- How the money is going to be spent (to meet the assessed needs and shared aspirations)
- Details of the activities the money will be spent on e.g. attending a social club, employing a Personal Assistant etc.
- How often the activity or service will take place and where.
- Ending the arrangement – how will the arrangement be ended if it doesn't work out.

An agreement between you and the person you employ

If you pool your Direct Payments or your own funds to employ someone, you must ensure you meet all your legal responsibilities as an employer.

The contract will help to ensure that you meet your responsibilities as an employer, as well as making it clear to you and the others you are pooling with, what is expected from all parties. This contract may include:

- The number of hours and times your member of staff is going to work.
- What they are going to support you with.
- How much they will be paid.

Penderels Trust can support you to develop agreements and contracts that are right for your situation.

Pooled Direct Payments Agreement (Example)

This Agreement is to be signed when two or more Direct Payments holders choose to pool all or part of their funding to meet their individual agreed outcomes.

1. All parties to this agreement acknowledge that the Direct Payments holders referred to below will pool part or all of their Direct Payments, to form a budget for use in jointly securing their chosen solution/s to meet their agreed outcomes
2. All parties to this agreement have agreed that the Direct Payments holder named below as the lead person will assume the following responsibilities:-
 - (i) to assume, either directly or through a Suitable Person or Trustee the role and responsibilities of an employer for the purpose of securing the services of a Personal Assistant(s);
 - (ii) to ensure that all relevant insurance policies are in place.
3. All parties to the pooling arrangement agree to contribute the agreed sums referred to below from their personal Direct Payments. We acknowledge that the contributions towards the pooled budget do not include personal expenses, for which individual's will be responsible.
4. We agree to the person identified below assuming the role of the Lead person within this pooling arrangement.
5. We agree to maintain all relevant insurances as required by the Lead person.
6. We agree to the use of a Direct Payments Card Account to support the administration of the pooled budget arrangement.
7. We agree that all Direct Payments holders who are party to this Agreement, are jointly responsible for all actions, proceedings, costs, claims, liabilities, losses and expenses howsoever arising as a consequence of any act or omission arising from the operation of this Agreement. Accordingly, we each agree to indemnify the other Direct Payments holders in this respect.
8. If any Direct Payment holder wishes to withdraw from this Agreement, four weeks notice shall be given to the other parties to enable decisions to be made regarding the continued use of the pooled budget.

Lead Direct Payments Holder	
Print Name	
Signature	
Date	
Weekly Contribution	£

Direct Payments Holder	
Print Name	
Signature	
Date	
Weekly Contribution	£

Direct Payments Holder	
Print Name	
Signature	
Date	
Weekly Contribution	£

Direct Payments Holder	
Print Name	
Signature	
Date	
Weekly Contribution	£

Anyone who employs a Personal Assistant using their Direct Payment must take out insurance to cover them if things go wrong. For example, if your PA is injured whilst working, or you have a dispute of some kind.

You may also want to consider specific insurance to cover activities you are undertaking as part of the pooling arrangement. For example, if you are setting up a Social Enterprise which involves providing a service to members of the public, you will need to discuss with your insurance company, levels of Public liability Insurance needed.

There are a number of insurance providers who specialise in services for Direct Payments holders, so it is advised that you talk to some of them to Find out what they can offer and how much they will cost. Penderels Trust can support you to find a level of insurance that is right for you and your circumstance.

Three regularly used companies offering these types of services are listed below. Remember, others are available.

Premier Care Insurance
www.premiercare.info
0845 538 4709

Ellis Bates Insurance
www.ellisbatesgroup.com
01423 724 513
01423 724 514
01423 724 518

Fish Insurance
www.fishinsurance.co.uk
0800 012 6329

Getting Started

The following checklist goes through all the steps you Need to take in order to pool your funding with others.

Actions	Things to think about	Who can help me?	Tick
Decide which funding you will pool	<p>Do you receive a Direct Payment, or do you currently fund your care and support needs in another way, for example, using your own funding?</p> <p>Do you receive either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from Social Services • Support from a Mental Health Team • Other funds, for example, access to work, disabled facilities grant, independent living fund, housing related support 	<p>Penderels Trust</p> <p>My Social care Practitioner</p> <p>FCC Direct Payments Section</p>	
Decide how you can meet your needs better by pooling funding with another person or people.	<p>Are there things that you need help with which other people you know need help with too?</p> <p>Do you want to achieve things that other people might also want to achieve?</p>	<p>My Social care Practitioner</p> <p>FCC Direct Payments Section</p>	
Decide who you could pool your funding with to meet your needs and goals	<p>Think about a person or people who have similar support needs to you (or how you might go about finding a person or people with similar support needs to yourself if you do not already know someone).</p> <p>Think about a person or group of people with common interests, who might want to join similar activities to you.</p>	<p>My Social care Practitioner</p> <p>Flintshire CC Direct Payments Section</p>	
Decide how to pool your funds and what you want to use your pooled funds for?	<p>What are your common interests?</p> <p>Do you want to do something new, like setting up a social group?</p> <p>How can you meet your support needs by working together?</p>	<p>The other people in the pooling group</p> <p>Flintshire CC Direct Payments Section</p>	

Exit arrangements

When you set up a pooling arrangement with another person or people, it is important to discuss arrangements for ending that agreement. Some of the reasons this might happen include:

- The level of funding changes, or you are no longer eligible for funding and do not wish to pool your own funds
- You no longer need support, or require different support
- You want to do something different with the money
- The activity you undertook has come to an end, for example a group cookery course

The steps that you need to go through in order to end your arrangement will vary depending on how you are pooling your funding. The following points should be used as a guide; however, some may not apply to you.

- Refer to the pooling agreement you all signed with the other members of the group
- If you employ staff and your pooling arrangement is ending, you will need to let your staff know, and give them notice. This is a letter which explains that their job will be ending and tells them when you expect their last day to be.
- If you have a shared bank account, this will need to be closed down, once any money has been withdrawn. If you have been pooling Direct Payments, this may need to be returned to Flintshire Social Service. Personal funds will need to be returned to each person who contributed them.

Penderels Trust are available to provide advice and support you to deal with all of the above exit arrangements.

Example templates

The examples templates provided are for guidance purposes only, and may help you to think about the things you and other members of your pooling group will need to discuss and decide on.

If you wish to draw up legally binding contracts, please get the advice of Penderels Trust or a Solicitor.

Pooling Agreement

This is an agreement between [insert names of all the people entering into the agreement] and details how we will spend funds we are pooling together to pay for *[insert activity]*.

The above activity includes *[list everything that will be involved. For example PA costs, hiring a venue, accessing a local service etc]*

This activity will continue for *[insert amount of time or indefinitely]*

Employment *[delete this section if you are not employing someone]*

In order to achieve the above activity we will be employing *[insert number of PA's]* This PA, or PA's will support us with the following *[detail the support the PA will give you]*

Finances

Each member of the pooling group will contribute £ *[insert the amount of money each of you will contribute each month]*

This will be stored in bank account, which will be managed by *[insert those managing the account]*

It will be the responsibility of [insert name] to ensure that all staff employed pay their tax and national insurance

Working together

The roles of each member of the group are as follows *[list all members]*

[Name] will be responsible for *[insert role]*

[Name] will be responsible for *[insert role]*

If someone is not happy with the arrangement, we will *[detail how you will address any problems as a group]*.

The group will review the arrangement by *[meeting, phone, email]* every *[detail how often you will review to ensure everyone is happy with the arrangement]*

Staff Advertisement

[Details about you]: A group of people require a Personal Assistant to support them with *[insert activities]*.

We have set up a group who will *[insert activity]* and we will need some support to do this.

We are looking for a Personal Assistant who will enable us to carry out our planned activities as successfully as possible. We would like you to be *[say a little about the type of person you would like to employ]*.

You will be paid £*[insert amount]* per hour and we will need you to work *[insert number of hours]* per week.

The closing date for applications is *[insert date]*.

We plan to interview on *[insert date]*.

[Tell people how they can apply, e.g. by submitting a CV] and [how they can contact someone if they have any questions].

Positive Examples of Pooling Funds

Tom is 22 and has a learning disability. Tom lives with two other people who he pools his funding with.

Towards the end of his residential college placement, Tom and his family began to think about the future and how he could build on the progress he had made in college and continue to live a full, independent life. Rather than moving away, or living with people she didn't know, Tom and his family opted to find a way for him to remain living close to home with friends he had made at college.

Tom and his family began to consider the option of pooling funding And along with a group of other people in similar situations, they began to develop a plan that would enable them to fund this idea.

Along with a group of parents who's children had similar needs to Tom, they began to look for a suitable property. The families worked closely with the council through Tom's social worker. Tom's mum felt that sharing support would save money for the local authority, but also free up money for Tom to do different things.

Tom intends to move into his new home with two friends. The plan is for him To pool part of his direct payment with his housemates to pay for the support they share. They are going to use staff from an agency of their choice because this seems more straightforward for them. They will use this support for their personal care and for getting out and about.

Tom will be able to live his life in the way he chooses because pooling his direct Payments with his housemates will make this affordable. Tom and his housemates plan to Be even more creative with their funding which will enable them all to do more, and Continue learning life skills and socialising.

The challenges for Tom have been finding the right people to share his home with, but, Overall, pooling will enable Tom to get the most out of his Direct Payments, to live Independently with friends and have a full social life.

Sports Group

This example is of a mental health user-run sports and social group. The group focuses on befriending and socialising, as well as a range of sports activities. They provide social support to each other in the evenings and at weekends.

The group was set up when people were given the opportunity to pool direct payment. As well as having individual assessments to work out their individual needs, the local authority carries out group assessments.

To set the group up, they asked for the support of the direct payment lead officer at the local authority. Once ready to begin the local authority paid the agreed money into a community account that was managed on their behalf. This paid for the set up costs.

Café

A community café was set up in response to the needs of people with learning disabilities who required supported, meaningful experiences in the community.

The café was set up by a parent with her daughter. Using Direct Payments they aimed to provide valuable work experience. A funder who saw the potential in the idea then helped her to create a social enterprise.

The café currently gives opportunities to 8 people to participate in a café environment to serve the community in two separate locations, as well as providing outside catering services.

The café is helping people with a wide range of disabilities to value their own contribution as citizens and at the same time increase their skills, and social networks.

Drama

A group of disabled people in Norfolk pooled their Direct Payments to fund and establish a drama group.

Each person was supported by the local Direct Payments support provider to set up their individual Direct Payments and to look at pooling part of this to meet their collective needs.

Once the group was up and running, other Direct Payments holders were able to buy the services of the drama group using their funds, and likewise self funders could join, paying with their money too.

Where to go for more information

Flintshire County Council – Direct Payments Section
mark_cooper@flintshire.gov.uk
01352 701101

Penderels Trust
www.penderelstrust.org.uk
01352 706235

A free support service for people using Direct Payments in Flintshire.

Penderels support in all aspects of becoming an employer, with guidance
Through employment law, assistance with safely recruiting a Personal Assistant,
Preparing contracts of employment and assisting individuals to resolve issues that
May occur.

Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW)
www.csiw.org.uk
0300 7900 126

CSSIW are responsible for registering all care agencies in Wales who provide domiciliary
care to people in their own homes, and ensuring that they are meeting the required
standards of care and welfare.

Flintshire Advocacy Services
www.flintshireadvocacy.co.uk
01352 759332

Flintshire Advocacy Service provide a range of independent advocacy services to
Flintshire Citizens

ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)
www.acas.org.uk
08457 47 47 47

ACAS has a range of services which can help individuals or groups
Of employers to avoid or resolve problems and disputes in the workplace.

Access to Work: A Government employment support programme for people With a disability.

Assessed Needs: Your assessed needs are defined during conversations with your Assessor (such as a Social Worker) about the things you need support with. Your Direct Payment must be used to arrange care to meet these needs.

Assessment: An assessment is carried out by a carried out by someone from Flintshire Social Services, usually a Social Worker. Your assessor will work with you to determine what areas of your life you need extra support with, what you would like to achieve, and how you would like to be supported to do this.

Care Coordinator: If you have mental health difficulties your care will be coordinated By a care coordinator.

Direct Payment: This is the money made available to you to meet your care needs. The amount given is based on your assessed needs. It must be used to meet these Needs, but is flexible and controlled by you.

Domiciliary Care: Domiciliary care is care provided to you in your own home.

Financial Assessment: Depending on your household income, you may be required to contribute to some of the costs of your care. If you receive a direct payment, the amount paid by Flintshire Social Service will be minus any assessed contribution that you need to make.

Flintshire Social Services: Flintshire Social Services is the name of the directorate at Flintshire County Council that deals with the care and support needs of Flintshire citizens.

Funds: Your direct payment may sometimes be referred to as funds, but this may Also refer to your own money which is being used to pay for your care and support.

Local Authority: The Local Authority is another name for the Council. They are responsible for providing Social Services as part of their duty.

Personal Assistant: Your Personal Assistant is someone who supports you in the way that you need them to, in order to meet your assessed needs. Your Personal Assistant is usually employed by you and is often abbreviated to PA.

Pooling Funds: Sharing part or all of your available funds with others in order to meet common needs or outcomes.

Social Worker: A Social Worker is a representative of Flintshire Social Services, trained to carry out an assessment of your needs.

Appendix 1 – Direct Payments

What are Direct Payments?

Direct Payment is money from Flintshire Social Services given to a person who needs support with their daily living to enable them to live as independently as possible.

Someone from Flintshire Social Services will assess or review your care needs and decide if you are eligible for support. Flintshire Social Services will aim to help you to remain as independent as possible, therefore, anyone who is assessed as needing paid support will be given the opportunity to have a Direct Payment. If you are not eligible for support you will not be able to get a Direct Payment.

How do I get a Direct Payment from Flintshire Social Services?

If you are not already receiving support from Flintshire Social Services you will need to ask for an assessment to establish if you are eligible for support.

In Flintshire you can start this process by call the First Contact Team on 01352 702000. Following a telephone discussion with a representative of Flintshire Social Services an appointment may be made for a Social Worker to visit and conduct an assessment of your needs.

The assessment will be used to decide whether your needs mean that you are eligible for Support and agree the best ways to enable you to live your life the way you want to.

If you are eligible and need paid support, a financial assessment will be carried out to see if you need to contribute any money towards the cost of providing support.

If you have concerns about your mental health you should contact your GP, who will refer you to the appropriate service.

How can I spend my Direct Payment?

After you have been told that you are eligible for support, a care and support plan will be developed. This is a document outlining your care and support outcomes and details how your Direct Payment will be spent to meet them.

Your care and support plan will be developed with your Social Worker, and you may wish to ask friends, and family to help too. Your care and support plan can include both formal support and 'natural support' such as that provided by friends, family, wider informal networks, organisations and community resources.

Planning your support this way means you are involved in making choices and important decisions about how you want to be supported.

Your Direct payment can be used flexibly as long as it is used to meet your assessed needs and agreed outcomes (the things you want to achieve). This might include:

Personal Care: Support with washing, dressing, preparing and cooking food.

Accessing your Community: Support to join clubs, meet people, maintain relationships, to go out, access employment or education.

Purchase Equipment: Buying supportive aids to assist you with your daily living and Promote your independence.

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg. Cysylltwch â 01352 702000 i gael fersiwn Gymraeg.

This document is available in Welsh. Please contact 01352 702000 for a Welsh version.