



Direct Payments

Information
Handbook

YOUR LIFE. YOUR CHOICE

Direct Payments Your Life – Your Way

Giving you real choice over the support you need

For a copy of this leaflet in other formats such as Braille, large print or audio tape call Social Services on 01352 803444. An Easier to Read version is also available.



What are Direct Payments?

If you are having difficulty managing aspects of your life due to age, disability, or caring for somebody, Flintshire County Council may be able to give you money to organise support that is right for you. This is called a Direct Payment.

You can use your Direct Payment to arrange support that is right for your individual needs, lifestyle and personal circumstances. This means you can be creative with your support if you choose.

Having a Direct Payment means that you can have more choice and control over the support you need, and can organise far more flexible arrangements than services provided by the council.

People in Flintshire are using their Direct Payments to arrange things like:

- Support with daily life and activities
- Support with personal care
- Respite care, to give Carer's a break
- Pooling direct payments with other people to do things together
- Equipment and technology to be more independent
- Support that helps people develop their skills and abilities
- Support to get out and about in the community
- Support to access education, or occupation

More and more people are choosing to receive a Direct Payment, most of them are telling us that the flexible arrangements that they have organised have changed their lives for the better.

Having a Direct Payment is a personal choice that will hopefully enable you to achieve a better quality of life. Flintshire County Council understand that taking control and deciding to have a Direct Payment can, for some people, be a big decision, and some of the information you will be given may seem confusing to begin with.

We want to make sure that you have all the information that you need to make choices that are 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 will provide you with as much help and reassurance as you need until you feel confident to manage the Direct Payment yourself.

Direct Payments do not have anything to do with Social Security benefits. Direct Payments will not affect your benefits in any way.

Remember, any support that you arrange must help you to meet your assessed needs and achieve the goals that you have agreed with Flintshire Social Services – These will be written in your care and support plan.

Direct Payments are just one option for support; if you would prefer the council to arrange services for you, they can. Many people choose a mix of Direct Payments and services arranged by the Council.



Who can have a Direct Payment?

If you need extra help to manage aspects of your life because of the effects of:

- Old age
- A physical or learning disability
- A mental health difficulty
- A long term illness
- Parental responsibility for a Child with a disability
- Caring responsibilities

You may be able to get a Direct Payment to arrange the support that you need.

Usually you can have a Direct Payment from the age of 16. If you are under 16 the direct payment can be paid to your parent(s) or legal guardian(s).



How do I Get a Direct Payment?

To get a Direct Payment you need an assessment of your personal needs. If you have a social worker or care coordinator then contact them.

If not please call Social Services for Adults on 01352 803444 or Social Services for Children on 01352 701000.

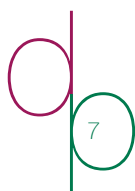
If you are eligible for support from Flintshire County Council a social care practitioner will agree a plan with you of how your needs and goals can be met.

They will talk to you about the ways you may choose to use your Direct Payment and will also agree how much money you would get to put the Support Plan into practice.

Social Services will support you to decide how your Direct Payment will be managed.

If you have already had an assessment and are already receiving services you can apply to switch to Direct Payments instead. For further information please talk to your social care practitioner, or the Direct Payments Support Team.

If you have been told you are not eligible to receive support we will not be able to give you a Direct Payment.





What is Involved in Managing My Direct Payment?

With the choice and flexibility offered by Direct Payments there are also responsibilities to spend the money wisely. We will work alongside you to ensure the arrangement is right for you.

If you choose to employ someone as a Personal Assistant you have all the usual responsibilities of an employer. There is as much support and help available as you need to understand and manage these, so please

What if My Needs Change?

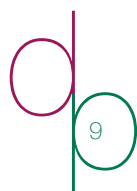
If your needs change you may be able to change your Direct Payment. If you find that Direct Payments turn out not to be right for you after all you can switch to having services arranged by the council.

What Support is Available for Me?

Flintshire Social Services have a dedicated Direct Payments Support Service. The team specialises in providing information and support to people choosing to use direct payments.

As well as all the information and practical support they provide the team can help you think about how you use the available money to achieve the things that matter to you.

Please contact them for further information.



Will I Have to Pay Anything?

You may be asked to pay part of the cost towards your support. If you do have to pay something the amount will be the same whether your support is arranged for you by Social Services or if you choose Direct Payments.

What Should I do if I Want to Find More about Direct Payments?

Please speak to your social worker or call:

**Direct Payments Support Service
Ty Dewi Sant, St David's Park, Ewloe CH5 3 XT**

Tel: 01352 701100

Email: dp.support@flintshire.gov.uk

**or Social Services for Adults 01352 803444
or Social Services for Children 01352 701000**

People who are in hospital:

Ask to see the Flintshire Hospital Social Worker or call 01352 803444



