

Factsheet 1 of 6:

Direct Payments

What is a Direct Payment?

A **Direct Payment** is money you can receive from the Council to buy care and support services to meet your needs, instead of having social care staff arrange them for you. This means that you can be in charge of your own care or support, giving you independence and flexibility over who provides your care and how and when it is delivered.

Direct Payments are not a benefit or income therefore will not affect any benefits you may already receive.

Payment for a Direct Payment is made via a Pre-Paid card.

Who can have a Direct Payment?

You will need to have an assessment of your social care needs. If you are eligible for social care services, you may be able to have a Direct Payment. For example

- If you have a physical disability, learning disability, mental health illness, sensory impairment and need support with independent living.
- Older people who need support at home.

Following your assessment, the Council will calculate your Indicative Personal Budget – this amount is based on the average cost of meeting your eligible social care needs. Your Actual Personal Budget is based on the actual approved cost of your care and you can receive this money as a Direct Payment via a Pre-Paid card.

You will be financially assessed to see if you need to make a contribution to the cost of any support you are entitled to.

You must be willing and able to manage the Direct Payment, with additional support if required. A “suitable person” may be appointed to manage a Direct Payment on behalf of the recipient if they lack mental capacity to do so themselves.

If you are already receiving support you can request a review of your care arrangements where you can talk over the possibility of a Direct Payment.

Can I cancel my Direct Payment?

Yes, if you feel that the Direct Payment is not meeting your care needs or it is no longer required then you can contact the Duty Team on 0300 300 8033.

How do I find out more?

Direct Payments are your choice.

Further Direct Payment Factsheets are available

For more information contact the Direct Payments Team:

Telephone 0300 300 8341

or e-mail direct.payments@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk