

Direct Payments in Greenwich

What are Direct Payments? Direct Payments are payments from Health & Adult Services to people who need social care. Instead of having services arranged by the Council, a Direct Payment allows you to arrange and purchase your own care and support.

Why should I think about having a Direct Payment? Direct Payments put you in control of your care. They allow you to arrange your own support and spend the personal budget we agree you need, in the way that best suits you. Direct Payments can help you fit your support to your lifestyle as have more choice over your care services. With a Direct Payment you can decide:

- **Who supports you and how:** For example, you could employ a Personal Assistant (support worker)- choosing someone you feel will “fit” with your lifestyle, and who has the qualities and skills that are important to you.
- **When they support you:** – for example if you have good and bad days or weeks, you get more support when you need it and less when you don’t. Direct Payments can work better if you don’t want to keep to a rigid timetable.

People often say a Direct Payment helps them feel in charge, and able to have a more normal life. There is more responsibility, but if you are willing & able to take this on (or you have a friend or relative who can do this for you), a Direct Payment may be the way to go!

Who can get a Direct Payment? Anyone who has had an assessment of their needs and has been found to be eligible for care and support services at home or in the community in the medium to long term.

How much would my Direct Payment be? Your personal budget will be calculated by working out how much it will cost to buy the care and support you need each week. Control of the money is passed to you so you can buy the services you need.

How do I get a Direct Payment? If you are eligible for care services Direct Payments are an option. Ask your social care assessor. They will calculate a

personal budget for you, and refer you to the Direct Payments Team who will explain how Direct Payments work, help you decide which type of account is best. If you are happy to go ahead they will help you develop a Support Plan, which sets out how you plan to spend your personal budget. Once the account is set up, you will be able to receive your Direct Payment.

What can I spend a Direct Payment on? You can use it to pay for services or items. Everything you buy or arrange must be legal, meet your needs as agreed in your support plan, and be affordable within your allocated budget. Examples include:

- Support – Choose a Personal Assistant who can visit you at a time of your choosing to support you with daily tasks like washing and dressing and other tasks, e.g. shopping, and domestic support where needed.
- Social activities – support to access activities in the community.
- Respite care – If identified as an assessed need during your assessment.
- Agency care, Day care, specialist equipment, and other goods or services as long as agreed on your support plan.
- Insurance, Payroll and administration costs if needed.

What can't I spend a Direct Payment on?

We will explain more in your set-up meeting, but you must not use your Direct Payment on items or services that do not meet your needs as shown on your Support Plan or on anything illegal or that places you at unacceptable risk. Direct Payments can't be used for services that should be provided by the NHS, such as physiotherapy or for daily living equipment where suitable items may be loaned or provided free on prescription. Your budget is not for adaptations to you home.

Can I get help with my Direct Payment? The Direct Payments Team can provide you with information, advice and support to manage your Direct Payment. This may include:

- Support to get set up and “how to” advice on managing your account
- Help to recruit staff (e.g. support with advertising and interviews etc.)
- Source funding to train your support workers
- Help to deal with any problems you have with the Direct Payment
- Making your contribution
- A payroll service for staff you employ.

For Further Information please talk to your social care assessor or contact the **Direct Payment team on 020 8921 5706.**