

# Direct Payments case studies and examples

## Example – Costs of direct payments

Mr J has been assessed as requiring home care support for 6 hours each week. The local authority has a block contract with an agency which has been providing support to Mr J twice per week. Mr J is happy with the quality of support he receives but would like more flexibility in the times at which he receives support in order to better meet his needs. He therefore requests a direct payment so that he can make his own arrangements with the agency, which is happy to provide a much more flexible and personalised service. The cost to the local authority of the block contracted services is £15.50 per hour. However, the more flexible support purchased by an individual costs £17 per hour. The local authority therefore increases Mr J's direct payment from £93 to £102 per week to allow him to continue to receive the number of hours he requires. The solution through a direct payment delivers better outcomes for Mr J and therefore the additional cost is reasonable and seen as value for money. The local authority also agrees it is more efficient for Mr J to communicate the hours he wants to receive support and handle the invoicing himself.

## Case study: Making direct payments support accessible

Andrew is a deafblind man; to communicate he prefers to use Braille, Deafblind Manual and email. He directly employs several staff through direct payments. He receives payroll support from his local direct payments support service. Andrew suggested ways to make direct payments management accessible to him. He communicates with the support service mainly via email, but they also use Ttypetalk. 1 At the end of the month, Andrew emails the support service with details of the hours that his staff have worked. The support service works out any deductions from pay (such as National Insurance and Income Tax) and email him to tell him how much he should pay the staff. They then send him pay slips to be given to staff. The envelope that the payslips are sent in has two staples in the corner so that he knows who the letter is from. The payslips themselves are labelled in Braille so that he knows which staff to give them to. Each quarter, the support service tells him how much he needs to pay on behalf of his employees in National Insurance and Income Tax. The service also fills in quarterly Inland Revenue paperwork. At the end of the year, the support service sends relevant information to the council, so that they are aware of how the direct payments are being spent. Andrew has taken on only some of the responsibilities of employing people; he has delegated some tasks to the support service. Control still remains with Andrew and confidentiality is maintained by using accessible labelling.

## Example of reduced monitoring

Mrs G has a stable condition and has been successfully managing their direct payment for over two years. The local authority therefore decides to monitor the payment by exception. Notwithstanding the required review in the Act and Regulations, Mrs G is now considered to have the skills and experience to manage on his own unless the local authority request otherwise or information suggested otherwise comes to the attention of the local authority.

## Examples – Direct Payments for shortterm residential care

Mary has one week of residential care every six weeks. Because each week in residential care is more than four weeks apart, they are not added together. The cumulative total is only one week and the four-week limit is never reached.

Peter has three weeks in residential care, two weeks at home and then another week in residential care. The two episodes of residential care are less than four weeks apart and so they are added together making four weeks in total. Peter cannot use his direct payments to purchase any more residential care within a 12-month period.

### Example of using a direct payment whilst in hospital

John is deafblind and is required to stay in hospital for an operation. Whilst the hospital pays for an interpreter for the medical interventions, John needs additional support to be able to move around the ward, and to communicate informally with staff and his family. The local authority and the NHS Trust agree that John's communicator guide continues to support him in hospital, and is paid for via the direct payment, as it was when John was at home. Personal and medical care is provided by NHS staff but John's communicator guide is on hand to provide specialist communication and guiding support to make his hospital stay as comfortable as possible.

### Example of local authority provided service

Graham has a direct payment for the full amount of his personal budget allowance. He decides to use a local authority run day service on an infrequent basis and requests to pay for it with his direct payment so that he retains flexibility about when he attends. The local authority service is able to agree to this request and has systems already in place to take payments as self-funders often use the service. The authority advise Graham that if he wishes to use the day service on a frequent basis (i.e. once a week) it would be better to provide the service to him direct, and to reduce the direct payment amount accordingly.

More information, advice and guidance is available from [The Care Act Guidance, Section 12 – Direct Payments](#)