

INTRODUCTION TO SELF DIRECTED SUPPORT

FOR CARERS

FIND OUT IF SELF DIRECTED SUPPORT IS RIGHT FOR YOU

What is Self Directed Support?

The term 'Self Directed Support' establishes the ways in which individuals and families can have informed choice about the way care is provided to them. Through a partnership approach to needs assessment individual outcomes are agreed.

Self Directed support allows people to choose how their care is provided, and gives them as much control as they want over their personal budget. Self Directed Support includes a number of options for getting support.

The individual's personal budget can be:

- Taken as a Direct Payment (a cash payment)
- A managed budget (where the Trust holds the budget, but the person is in control of how it is spent)
- Or the Trust can arrange a service.

Individuals can choose a mixture of all 3 of the different types of Self Directed Support.

How does Self Directed Support work?

Traditionally Health and Social Care Trusts assess an individual's needs and decide what supports they can arrange. Now, Self Directed Support means that once a Trust agrees that an individual needs social care support, they can work with the key worker to agree how care is provided to best meet their care and support needs.

If the person you care for needs help to organise their support they can ask the Trust, family members or a friend to help with this.

If I don't want Self Directed Support, can I refuse?

Yes. You do not have to direct your own support if you prefer not to. You can have support arranged by the Trust. Or you can have a mixed package where you direct only some of your support.

I am happy with the support I receive – do I have to change to Self Directed Support?

No. You do not have to change to Self Directed Support. You can continue with your current arrangements.

So is Self Directed Support different from Direct Payments?

In law Direct Payments permit individuals following assessment of need to receive a direct payment and purchase their own care.

Direct Payments have been in operation for a long time and are just one of the ways of getting Self Directed Support.

The main change with Self Directed Support is transparency about the budget and empowering individuals to work in partnership focusing on their agreed outcomes following assessment. Self Directed Support represents major change in the way services are assessed, organised and delivered.

I don't want to be an employer, what other options are available?

Direct payments are just one option under Self Directed Support.

Other options include:

- You can direct the budget – you choose what supports you want then the Trust makes the arrangements for you (Managed Budget)
- You can ask the Trust to choose and arrange your care
- You can have a mixture of the above options.

What happens if someone doesn't want the responsibility of managing their personal budget?

For those who do not wish to organise their own services the Trust will continue to provide services directly.

What are the advantages of doing things the Self Directed Support way?

Individuals are empowered and supported to exercise more choice and control over their social care services.

The aim of Self Directed Support is to promote independence by offering more flexibility in how services are provided to people who are assessed as being eligible for social care.

Self Directed Support enables people to take more control over decisions which affect their lives. It is intended to support independent living by giving people more choice control and flexibility over their own care.

Participants in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust Self Directed Support Pilot reported higher levels of satisfaction and a greater quality of life as a result of having engaged with the Self Directed Support initiative.

How can Self Directed Support benefit me?

Self Directed Support allows you to choose what support you receive and where and when you receive them. For example you might want to:

- Have support staff visit at a time that you choose
- Employ your own personal assistant

Will Self Directed Support affect my benefits?

No. Self Directed Support is not considered as personal income so it won't affect your benefits.

Can I use self-directed support to purchase respite / short breaks?

Yes, respite is a short break which is to act as a positive experience for the person with support needs and the Carer, where there is one.

If I'm not happy with my care plan, can I complain?

If you are unhappy at any point in the process you should let your key worker know straight away. The key workers will work in partnership with you to resolve your concerns with Self Directed Support as they would with any issue. If issues remain unresolved through local resolution you have the option to make a formal complaint through the Trust complaints procedure.

Can I get help with being an employer?

Yes, your key worker can offer you advice and support on being an employer.

The Centre for Independent Living is also available to offer advice on being an employer - <http://www.cilbelfast.org/>.

Can I consent to Direct Payments on behalf of the person I care for?

Yes, if you have parental responsibility for a child or young adult (aged under 18) you can consent to Direct Payments to purchase the support to meet the child or young person's assessed needs.

If you care for an adult who is unable to give consent to Direct Payments you can receive and manage a Direct Payment on behalf of the person you are caring for if you are legally appointed to do so. You will need to discuss this with your key worker who will advise you further.

Can I employ someone on behalf of the person I care for?

Yes, but that person must consent to this arrangement and you must be willing to take on the responsibilities associated with being an employer.

If the person cannot consent you must either have parental responsibility for them or be legally appointed. You will need to discuss this with your key worker who will advise you further.

Can I help the person I care for manage their Self Directed Support? What help will I get to do this?

Yes, you can if the supported person wants you to. Your key worker should consider whether you or the person you support need any assistance including (but not limited to):

- record keeping
- payroll service
- good employment practice
- managing Self Directed Support on an ongoing basis even through periods of fluctuating or deteriorating condition.

Your key worker can give you advice and support to help you manage a Self Directed Support package.

What happens if the Self Directed Support package breaks down?

Trusts should ensure that the individual receives the support they need, if the usual arrangements break down.

It is reasonable for a Trust to expect the person to have contingency plans and these should be clarified at the outset. However, if a Trust becomes aware that someone is unable to secure support to meet their care and support needs, then their responsibility to arrange supports for that person is the same as if the individual was not on Self Directed Support.

Where can I get more information about Self Directed Support?

Speak to your key worker for more information.

Information on Self Directed Support can also be found on the Health and Social Care Board website - <http://www.hscni.net/> and through the Transforming Your Care website - <http://www.transformingyourcare.hscni.net/>. The Centre for Independent Living is also available to offer advice on being an employer - <http://www.cilbelfast.org/>.

