

Social Care, Health & Housing



An information
leaflet about the
Direct Payments
Scheme in
Carmarthenshire

www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk

**If you require this information
in large print, Braille or on audiotape
please  01267 228703**

Information about services provided by
Carmarthenshire County Council can be found on
the council's website: www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk

This leaflet tells you about the Direct Payments Scheme. It explains what Direct Payments are, who is eligible for the scheme, how to use it and what support is available.

What are Direct Payments?

A Direct Payment is a payment that can be made to people who are eligible to receive community care services from Social Services, and who would prefer to arrange their own services.

Direct Payments makes it possible for you to buy the services that you have been assessed as needing, in a way that gives you greater choice and control. Direct Payments also allows for another suitable person to act on your behalf if needed.

You can decide how your needs will be met, by whom and at a time that suits you. You will have a wider choice of services as well as real control over your life – you will be managing your own care package. Direct payments help give people the opportunity to live as independently as possible.

Where this leaflet refers to the person needing care, it may refer also to another suitable person who may act on behalf of the individual requiring care.

Who can receive Direct Payments?

Direct Payments can be offered to people who are eligible to receive Social Care Services.

People who are eligible may include:

- People with physical disabilities;
- People with sensory impairment;
- People with learning disabilities;
- People with long-term illness;
- People with mental health conditions;
- Carers and Young Carers for people with needs as described above;
- Adults with parental responsibility for a child who has a disability.

What can I use the Direct Payment for?

Direct Payments can only be spent on services to meet the needs described in your assessment and detailed in your care plan.

You can use your Direct Payments to buy community care services such as:

- To help with personal care such as washing, dressing and eating meals;
- Practical help and support with activities;
- Respite care;

You cannot use Direct Payments for health or housing services.

What are the benefits?

- You can choose how your needs will be met;
- You can choose who provides the services;
- You can receive services at a time that suits you;
- You will receive help and support to manage the scheme.

What would my responsibilities be?

You will be responsible for managing the way that your Direct Payments are spent in accordance with a contract which you would agree with the Local Authority.

If you employ a Personal Assistant directly, you will have the responsibilities of an employer.

You may employ anyone as long as the person is **not** a spouse/partner, or a close relative living in the same household.

Will I need to keep records?

Yes, the money you receive as a Direct Payment is for services to meet your social care needs. It remains public money, you must spend it on services to meet your care needs. When you start the scheme you will be told what records to keep and what information you will be expected to provide.

If you are worried that you might not be able to manage Direct Payments on your own you can get help. An independent Living Adviser from the Rowan Organisation can offer you advice and support with this, and assist you with recruitment and managing staff.

How much money will I get?

This depends on an assessment of how much and what type of assistance you need. Your Care Plan will state the number of hours per week you need and how much this will cost.

Will I have to pay anything?

You may be asked to make a contribution towards the cost of your care. This will be the same whether the services are arranged for you by the Social Care, Health and Housing Department or whether you choose Direct Payments.

You will be entitled to have a financial assessment (means test) and the results of this will determine how much you will be asked to contribute.

Will Direct Payments affect my benefits?

No, Direct Payments do not affect your benefits at all and they are not classed as income for tax purposes.

What do I have to do to get Direct Payments?

You can find out about the Direct Payments Scheme through:

- Social Care Teams
- The Rowan Organisation

A **Social Worker** will visit you to talk about your situation and the help that you require. This is called an assessment. Once you have been assessed as having social care needs, a Care Plan will be arranged and your social worker will discuss the option of Direct Payments with you.

The **Rowan Organisation** is an organisation committed to enabling disabled people to live independently by providing support, advice and information. If you decide you would like to receive Direct Payments an Independent Living Adviser from the organisation will visit you to discuss the scheme with you.

If you would like to find out more about Direct Payments:

Contact your Social Worker if you have one or contact
The Rowan Organisation
0800 783 1755
www.therowan.org

If you would like to receive an assessment of your care needs you can contact Careline+ on **01267 224466**.