

Direct Payments

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

Direct Payments make 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 factsheet 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 include those people who have been assessed by the local authority as having eligible care and support needs, or in case of carers having support needs.

This 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 of people with needs as described above.
- Elderly people who need community care services.
- Adults with parental responsibility for a child who has a disability.

What can I use a Direct Payment for?

Direct Payments can only be spent on services to meet the needs described in your assessment and detailed in your care and support plan, or in the case of carers, their support 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 your Local Authority.

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

You may employ anyone as long as they promote your well-being.

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 adviser from the Direct Payments support scheme 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 Council 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 your Social Worker. Your 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 and Support Plan will be arranged and your social worker will discuss the option of Direct Payments with you.

Carmarthenshire County Council Direct Payments Support Scheme

Carmarthenshire County Council previously contracted with Diverse Cymru to support people who are in receipt of direct payments. However, since 1st April 2021 Carmarthenshire County Council now provides this service. Almost all recipients of direct payments have some support, however how much support they want is a matter for them.

It is important for potential recipients of a direct payment to know what support Carmarthenshire County Council can provide, the below is a list of the services on offer:

- Help with recruitment of a Personal Assistant (PA)
- Provide employment advice
- Providing draft employment contracts
- Deliver training for PAs
- Payroll services
- Managed accounts (which includes setting up a bank account, making sure the direct payments are received into that account, making sure that the personal

assistant is paid etc; everyone who is eligible for a direct payment is entitled to a managed account if they want)

- Budget Plans
- Assistance to complete applications to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- Assistance with Auto enrolment into work-based pension scheme
- Disciplinary and grievance advice and support
- Responding to problems and queries as and when they arise

As can be seen this is quite a comprehensive source of support and by explaining to the potential recipient about the services on offer it is hoped that it will allay any concerns that they may have about managing their direct payments.

For more information on the services that Carmarthenshire County Council provides, please contact the general enquiries telephone number on Tel No. 01267 242324 or email SCHDirectPaymentsBrokerage@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

If you would like to find out more about Direct Payments in Carmarthenshire, contact your Social Worker or Occupational Therapist (if you have one) or if you would like to receive an assessment of your care needs you can contact Delta Wellbeing (previously called Careline) on 0300 333 2222 or by Minicom on: 01554 756741 or by SMS: 0789 2345678 or by making a referral through their website: www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/Socialcare

Pembrokeshire – Direct Payments:

To find out more about Direct Payments in Pembrokeshire, contact your Social Worker or Occupational Therapist (if you have one). For further information, a Guide to managing Direct Payments is available on their website: [Guide to managing Direct Payments – Pembrokeshire County Council](#) The Direct Payments Team have a range of information available to support you in managing your direct payment and have information leaflets to help you and can also provide you with telephone and face to face support. The direct payment team can help you keep on managing and using your direct payment. You can contact them by email: directpayments@pembrokeshire.gov.uk or telephone: 01437 776590

If you would like to receive an assessment of your care needs you can also contact Pembrokeshire Social Care Services on 01437 764551. For further information, you can also visit website: <https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/social-services-and-wellbeing>

Ceredigion – Direct Payments:

To find out more about Direct Payments in Ceredigion, contact your Social Worker or Occupational Therapist (if you have one). Ceredigion also offer a Direct Payments Support Service. For further information, you can visit: [Direct Payments – Ceredigion County Council](#) The Ceredigion Direct Payments Support Service provides you with information, support as well as practical help with recruiting and employing staff, paying wages and helping with tax

and National Insurance payments. If you choose to employ a personal assistant, the Care Council has developed an online toolkit which provides guidance, practice examples and practical tools. This will enable you to support your personal assistant to gain the skills they need to be confident and competent in their roles. You can access the toolkit by visiting: [Individual employers \(skillsforcare.org.uk\)](http://skillsforcare.org.uk)

If you would like to receive an assessment of your care needs you can contact Ceredigion County Council on 01545 570881 (during office hours) or email: cllc@ceredigion.gov.uk For Safeguarding or social care concerns please telephone 01545 574000 or email contact-socservs@ceredigion.gov.uk In an emergency, please telephone (**out of office hours only**): Social Services emergencies: 0300 4563554

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Contact details

Carers Trust Crossroads West Wales
The Palms, Unit 3, 96 Queen Victoria Road, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, SA15 2TH
Tel: 0300 0200 002

Email - Llanelli Office: info@ctcww.org.uk

Email - Pembrokeshire Office: carerssupportpemps@ctcww.org.uk

Website: www.ctcww.org.uk



Facebook: facebook.com/CTCWW



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