

An introduction to self-directed support, personal budgets, individual budgets and direct payments

Self-directed support is the new system in social care. This factsheet aims to give you a quick explanation of self-directed support and some of the terms you are likely to come across.

» Self-directed support

Self-directed support gives people in receipt of social care services more control over their care and support.

We use national guidelines to work out if you are eligible for support from us. People who are eligible tend to:

- be aged 65 and over, and/or
- have a disability, and/or
- have mental health problems.

If you are eligible we will use the **self-directed assessment process** to work out how much money you are entitled to. We will then offer you a **personal budget**.

» Personal budgets

A personal budget is money paid to you by adult social care for the sole purpose of paying for care and support which you have arranged yourself.

If you are entitled to a personal budget we will ask you to develop a support plan. A support plan shows how you will spend your personal budget to get the support you need. You can work with a family member, friend, care manager or broker to develop your support plan.

Once everyone has agreed to the support plan, we will pay the agreed amount of money to you to cover your care and support needs.

» Individual budgets

When you have a social care assessment we will check if you are entitled to money from other places such as the Independent Living Fund, Access to Work or a Disabled Facilities Grant.

Your personal budget plus any money you are entitled to from other places is called your **individual budget**.

» Managing your budget

There are different ways for you to organise your personal or individual budget. You decide

how you want to manage your budget when you have made your support plan. One way might be to take some of the resources as cash in the form of a **direct** or **indirect payment**.

» [Direct and indirect payments](#)

A **direct payment** is money which adult social care pays into a person's bank account for them to spend on a specific item or activity identified in their support plan.

An **indirect payment** is money which adult social care pays to a brokerage service for them to handle on behalf of a social care client.

You would receive the same amount of money whether you choose to get a direct or indirect payment.

» [Case study: Simon's story](#)

Simon has had Multiple Sclerosis for the past five years. He has had support from the council for the last two years because his condition has got worse. At a review, the council offered Simon a personal budget.

In the past, home care workers came to Simon's home to help him get up and shower. He went to a day centre three days a week. The rest of the time, Simon was at home with his wife and children.

Simon told his social worker that he liked his team of home care staff – they were really consistent. However, he was very bored with the day service. He thought he could do far more with his day, like attending a computer course.

Simon decided that his social worker could manage some of his personal budget – the part that paid for home care support and two days of day service. The money for the third day service day would come to Simon as a direct payment. He would use this money to employ his own personal assistant to help him go on a college course.

Simon said that if he couldn't find a suitable personal assistant he could use an agency for support. He also said that, if this worked well, he may want to take more hours as a direct payment and less day support or vice versa. The choice was his.

» [Other useful factsheets](#)

Title	Reference
<input type="checkbox"/> How to contact us	Factsheet 01
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct payments	Factsheet 21



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