



BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET

**A Guide to
Direct
Payments for
Carers**

What are direct payments?

Anyone assessed as needing a service from social services could be eligible for a direct payment instead. Direct payments are money paid by social services to enable you to manage and arrange your own services.

Who can receive a direct payment?

- ◆ People with physical or sensory impairments
- ◆ Older people
- ◆ People with a learning difficulty
- ◆ People with mental health difficulties
- ◆ People with HIV or AIDS
- ◆ 16 and 17 year old disabled people
- ◆ Parents of disabled children
- ◆ Carers (16+) of adults

Direct Payments for Carers

The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 enables carers to receive direct payments to meet their own needs as a carer.

In order to receive a direct payment as a carer you need to be eligible for carer's services. To find out whether you are eligible you need to ask for a carer's assessment from Bath and North East Somerset Social Services. Under government legislation all carers have the right to a confidential carer's assessment.

As a carer, what services can I purchase with a direct payment?

Government legislation does not define carers' services but places an emphasis on what carers say they need to support them in their caring role. It is for you to discuss with the social worker how best you feel you can be supported and whether direct payments are your preferred means of providing you with this support.

An example of the use of direct payments to meet a carer's needs:

Peter and Anne used to live in London and recently moved nearer the coast. Peter's health has deteriorated significantly and his wife provides a significant amount of care. Peter receives 14 hours per week of homecare services. His wife is under a great deal of pressure and now has very few support networks around her.

The social worker undertakes a carer's assessment and discusses with Anne the best way of supporting her in her caring role. Anne would ideally like to visit friends in London once a month. The social worker arranges for her to have a direct payment for her to do this and arranges for the services to Peter to be increased while Anne has a break.

Anne achieves the outcome she most desires and the social worker is reassured that her stress and workload are reduced, even though they have agreed that they will monitor the situation. The caring role remains sustainable for the foreseeable future.

An example of direct payments to meet the needs of a parent of disabled children:

Lucy and Ben are the parents of three children, one of whom is disabled. The three children all attend different schools. Ben used to take and collect the children from school but is no longer able to drive due to a deteriorating health condition. Lucy is unable to drive and has been struggling to get the three children to school on public transport. The social worker undertakes an assessment and agrees for her to have direct payments so that she can have driving lessons. Being able to drive will significantly support her in her parenting role.

Can I get support in managing my direct payment?

Yes, the Direct Payments Support Service offers ongoing support and advice to people receiving a direct payment.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the benefits of a direct payment?

Many people who choose to receive a direct payment state that they have far greater choice, control and flexibility over the services they arrange to meet their assessed needs.

How can I take part in the service?

To take part in the scheme you should have your needs assessed by a social worker. To ask for an assessment please contact: 01225 477000. If you have already had an assessment, talk to your social worker about taking part in the scheme.