

Factsheet 5 — What is a Direct Payment?

Direct payments are an easy and convenient way of receiving your personal budget. They are money payments paid by the council for you to spend on services you need.

What are the benefits to you?

With a direct payment you are in control. You can choose who supports you, how they support you and when. People who use direct payments enjoy the choice that direct payments can bring, and frequently comment on how they have gained greater self-esteem, confidence, and control over how they live their lives.

Who can have a direct payment?

All services included in your care and support plan can be provided through direct payment, with the exception of long term residential care services.

People who are eligible include people with:

- Physical disabilities
- Sensory impairment
- Mental health conditions
- Learning disabilities
- Adults with parental responsibility for a child who has a disability
- Disabled adults with parental responsibility for a child
- Carers

How does a direct payment work?

If you have unmet eligible needs, your social worker/care co-ordinator agrees with you a plan of how your support needs can be met.

This is called a care and support plan. They will talk to you about how you would manage the direct payment, and will also agree how much money you would get as a direct payment to help to put the support plan into practice.

What can you spend the direct payment on?

You can use direct payments to pay for any care or support that would otherwise be arranged and paid for by East Riding Council.

This could include:

- Practical help (for example, shopping and cleaning)
- Short breaks (where carers can have a break)
- Things to do during the day
- Independent living equipment

Your services within your direct payment need to meet the outcomes you agreed with your social worker/care coordinator in your care and support plan and need to be legal, affordable and safe.

What happens next?

If you have already had an assessment and are receiving services paid for by the council you can apply to switch to a direct payment. Just discuss it with your social worker/care coordinator or contact customer services.



Direct Payments continued...

If you are not eligible for help from the council with care and support, we won't be able to give you a direct payment.

If you **are** eligible and would like to go ahead with a direct payment instead of the council buying services for you, then you will need to decide with your social worker/care coordinator what help you need to manage your direct payment. Most people have their direct payment managed on their behalf, but we will discuss the options for managing your direct payment with you. You and the council will each sign an agreement setting out each other's rights and responsibilities.

Do you have extra responsibilities with a direct payment?

Yes – when you agree to have a direct payment you need to decide how it is managed.

- You, a friend or a relative must be willing and able (with support) to manage a direct payment.
- You must use the money to pay for your assessed care
- You must keep records of how the money is spent and send them to the council.
- You will usually need to open a separate bank account just for your direct payment.

How we can support you?

Support to help you arrange, manage and use direct payments is available from either:

- Your care management team worker
- The Direct Payments Support Service
- Family and friends
- The voluntary sector

Our Direct Payment Support Service is a team that can help you set up and manage our direct payment. We can:

- Help you to find the right care agency, staff, short breaks etc.
- Provide information and advice on all aspects of recruiting and employing personal assistants e.g. advertising, interviewing, job contracts.
- Help you set up payroll - so you don't have to calculate tax, National Insurance.
- Help you set up the right bank account for your direct payment.

What to do next?

If you decide you want to go on direct payments you will be put in touch with the Direct Payments Support Service, who will arrange to visit you.

For further information contact customer services:

Telephone: (01482) 393939

Email: customer.services@eastriding.gov.uk