

This publication was withdrawn on 1 April 2022

This publication has been withdrawn because it's no longer current.



Department
of Health &
Social Care



Public Health
England

Direct Payments and Personal Health Budgets

A guide for local
councils and health
services



easy
read

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Introduction



The Department of Health and Social Care has written this guide for local councils and clinical commissioning groups (**CCGs**).



CCGs plan and pay for health services in their area.



We want to explain some changes to the way they provide **Direct Payments** and **Personal Health Budgets**.



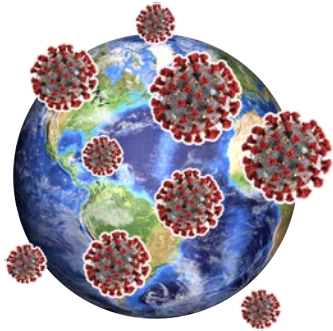
A **Direct Payment** is money that is given to someone to pay for their own care support.



A **Personal Health Budget** is money that is given to someone to pay for their own health support.



There are some changes to the way these are provided because of **COVID-19**.



COVID-19 is a new illness that is spreading around the world. It can affect your lungs and breathing.

People who receive direct payments or a personal health budget



There is a different guide for people who receive direct payments and personal health budgets.



Local councils and CCGs should tell people about it.



It is available here:

www.gov.uk/guidance-for-people-receiving-a-personal-budget-or-personal-health-budget

Carrying on with help and care



We have all had to do things differently because of COVID-19.



But local councils and CCGS must carry on providing help and care to people who need it, without stopping.



They should be **flexible** with the money and help they provide.

Flexible means willing to change depending on what is happening.



Local councils and CCGs should trust that the people receiving direct payments and personal health budgets are using it for their support.



People should be allowed to use the money how they like, as long as it is being used to support themselves.

Being flexible



Family members should be allowed to be a **personal assistant** for people that need care.



A **personal assistant** is a job where you help someone with their everyday tasks.



The personal assistant should be allowed to be paid using direct payments or a personal health budget.



Local councils and CCGs should be flexible about this.



People should be allowed to save some of the money they receive until next year.



Groups of people should be allowed to put their money together to make a fund for emergencies, like if their care has to stop.



Local councils and CCGs should work together with people who provide care to agree how to make things as flexible as possible.



This will help the people who provide support, and the people they are supporting, if there are more changes.

What local councils and CCGs should do



Local councils and CCGs should make sure they:

- use the COVID-19 help on **www.gov.uk**
- have up-to-date information about the people who receive direct payments
- keep track of how much help people are getting that they don't have to pay for
- understand what kind of help and care people need
- understand that some people who receive direct payments might be paying a personal assistant to work for them





- can help people if their personal assistant is ill or unable to work



- know who is providing the care and include them in decisions



- are able to pay a family member to provide care



- use other groups and services in the area to help with care



- think about using **assistive technologies** in people's homes to help with care

Assistive technologies are gadgets or equipment that make life easier.



- let people know about anything that affects their care or help



- include people, their carers and their families in decisions about their care.



Some things to do with care and payments have been made easier for local councils by the **Coronavirus Act 2020**.



The **Coronavirus Act 2020** is a new set of rules to help the government cope with COVID-19.



There is a guide for local councils about it here:

www.gov.uk/care-act-easements-guidance

Helping people who receive direct payments

Local councils and CCGs should:



- help people understand this guide, and other guides about the same thing



- send some advice to people who receive direct payments or personal health budgets about how to carry on



- ask people to let them know about any problems with carrying on with care, like not having enough **PPE**

PPE is special clothing that protects people from COVID-19, like masks and gloves.



- make sure they contact people in a way they understand



- think of ways to help personal assistants who are paid with direct payments.



There is a guide about helping care providers here:

www.local.gov.uk/coronavirus-information

Supporting personal assistants with Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)



Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) is money paid to you by your work if you are sick and unable to do your job.



The government has said SSP will be paid to anyone that has COVID-19 as soon as they are off sick.



This includes personal assistants who work for someone who receives direct payments.



Local councils and CCGs must help people to understand this.

There is a guide about getting money if you're off sick with COVID-19 here:
www.gov.uk/worker-support

Emergency help for people who have personal assistants



People who use direct payments to pay a personal assistant need to make a plan in case the assistant can't work. Local councils and CCGs could help with this.



Local councils and CCGs should have a plan in case they need to provide extra money to pay for people's support if their regular support changes.



They should also make sure people have extra help, like with emergency telephone numbers and getting PPE.

Help for people using direct payments and receiving community health services



Community health services provide help and care to people in local areas.



Community health service providers should:

- make sure they have up-to-date details for the people they are caring for



- find out how much help people are getting that they don't have to pay for



- share information with local councils and home carers



- decide which services should stay open longer to help people in the **community**

A **community** is a group of people living in the same area.



- find out about other ways to provide care where they can, like by telephone



- plan the best way to continue care around COVID-19

There is a guide about this here:
www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus



- work with local councils to cope with COVID-19 by sharing staff and equipment, and using **volunteers**

A **volunteer** is someone who does work without being paid.



- get volunteers, local councils and home carers to work together to help people.

For more information



If you need more information, please go to: **www.gov.uk/direct-payments**