Social Work Services

DIRECT PAYMENTS GUIDANCE

West Lothian
Community Health and Care Partnership

Direct Payments
Money to manage your own care services

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1. Our contact details:

Adults Assessment Teams, Livingston Social Work Centre, New Cheviot House, Almondvale Boulevard, Livingston, EH54 6QN. Tel. 01506 282252

Older People's Assessment Team, Bathgate Social Work Centre, 69 Whitburn Road, Bathgate, EH48 1HE. Tel. 01506 776700

Child Disability Service, Strathbrock Family Unit, 47 West Main Street, Broxburn, EH52 5RL. Tel. 01506 855244

Local Area Co-ordination Team (Learning Disabilities), New Cheviot House, Almondvale Boulevard, Livingston, EH54 6QN.
Tel. 01506 282252. Email: lac@westlothian.gov.uk

2. Help to read this:

Translation into different languages and accessible formats. The council can provide this information in a variety of formats – e.g. Braille, tape and various community languages. If you would like a council document to be produced in one of these formats or to arrange for an interpreter's help for council meetings and events, please contact the council service involved in the first instance.

3. Aims of the Direct Payment Scheme:

Direct Payments are paid in lieu of services and support that the Council would otherwise provide or purchase. Under the Direct Payment Scheme, West Lothian Council can offer you a cash payment to meet your eligible, assessed needs instead of arranging services and support for you. Direct Payments let you choose who provides your care and support. Many people like Direct Payments because they have more control over their care and support.

4. Who is the Direct Payment Scheme for?

You may be eligible to get a Direct Payment if you are a:

- Disabled adult assessed as requiring community care services, including housing support services (all forms of disability are included, e.g. learning disability or personality disorders)
- Disabled 16 and 17 year old to purchase housing support services
- Disabled adult or a 16 and 17 year old to purchase housing support services
- Older person aged 65 years and over who is assessed as needing community care services due to infirmity or age
- A community care service user aged 65 and over who is accessing free personal and nursing care to arrange for the **personal care** element of the package to be received as a Direct Payment

You may be able to manage a Direct Payment on behalf of another person if you are a:

- Disabled person with parental responsibility to purchase the children's services their children have been assessed as needing
- Parent or person with parental responsibility for a child in need (under the age of 16) who has been assessed as requiring children's services
- Parent or person with parental responsibility for children whose health or development may be impaired or below a reasonable standard without services from the local authority
- Attorney or Guardian with relevant powers to receive Direct Payments on behalf of people who are unable to give consent to arranging their own services

5. Where do I start?

If you want a Direct Payment and think you are eligible, you must first apply for a Direct Payment by contacting the relevant social work team.

A member of the team will carry out an assessment of your needs and, if you are eligible for a service, will work with you to develop a plan of how you will meet your care needs – this is called a 'Care and Support Plan'.

You will also be given a copy of *"Directing Your Own Support: A User's Guide to Self Directed Support in Scotland".*
(see this link - http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/03/31095340)

6. What can I use my Direct Payment for?

Your Direct Payment will be based on the amount of support that you need as shown in your Care & Support Plan. We will give you information to help you to decide how best to meet your needs. For example, you might want to pay a care agency or employ personal assistants yourself, or a mixture of both. You will be given enough money to pay for the services that you have been assessed as needing and are eligible for.

You can only use your Direct Payment money to buy care and support to meet your assessed needs as set out in your Care & Support Plan. You are not allowed to use your Direct Payment for anything else.

7. How much will I get?

If you directly employ personal assistants, your care manager will be able to tell you the rate that we will give you. These will be one of the following:

- Standard rate
- Enhanced rate
- Exceptional rate
- Respite sleepover

You may be able to get the enhanced rate if you have complex needs and the exceptional rate for very complex needs.

If you employ your own personal assistants, you will also receive a sum of money so that you can pay Employer's National Insurance contributions. We also pay you an extra 18% of your total weekly costs on top of this. This is to cover extra costs such as your personal assistant's annual leave and sickness absence cover. You will also get 'start-up' money to cover the cost of recruiting personal assistants.

If you want to use staff from an agency, we will agree a rate with you.

You may have to help pay for some services. This will be worked out by a financial assessment.

8. How are Direct Payments paid to me?

Your Direct Payment is paid every 3 months in advance (or more frequently if this is appropriate) into a bank account that is separate from your personal bank account.

Every 3 months you will be expected to provide accounts of how you have used your Direct Payment. We will provide a form and advice on how to fill it in.

9. What if my needs change?

Every year, your allocated worker will meet with you and other people relevant to your support to go over your Care & Support Plan and to make sure that you are meeting your assessed needs using your Direct Payment.

At any time, if your needs change, you should contact your allocated worker who will review your Care & Support Plan with you.

10. Getting help and support

If you are thinking about a Direct Payment, your allocated worker will explain the scheme to you and give you step by step information. They will also give guidance on how to complete forms and how to provide financial accounts.
You will also be offered ongoing support from Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living, an independent organisation who can give direct help and training so that you can become a good employer.

10. Getting help and support ….. (continued)

You can also get advice from SPAEN (Scottish Personal Assistant Employers Network).

As you can have as much help as you need to manage a Direct Payment, you may want to ask a family member, carer or friend to help you carry out some of the tasks of managing a Direct Payment. Anyone helping you in this way will also be offered training and support.

11. Suggestions and complaints

If you use services, are eligible for services, or act on behalf of someone who is, then your views are very important to us. Please let us know how we can improve the service. Please talk, in the first instance, to a member of staff. If you want to make a written suggestion or complaint about any social work service, you can write to the Head of Social Policy at this address:

West Lothian Civic Centre, Howden South Road, Livingston, EH54 6FF.
Tel. 01506 777000 for assistance.

12. Links to other helpful services

Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living (Main Office)	Norton Park, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh, EH7 5QY. Tel./Minicom: 0131 475 2350 Fax: 0131 475 2392
Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living (West Lothian Office)	c/o Disability West Lothian, Ability Centre, Carmondean Centre Road, Livingston, EH54 8PT. Tel. 01506 774030 Email: Kirsty@lothiancil.demon.co.uk Website: www.lothiancil.org.uk
SPAEN - Scottish Personal Assistant Employers Network	Suite G4, Dalziel Building, 7 Scott Street, Motherwell, ML1 1PN, Tel. 01698 250280 Email: info@spaen.co.uk Website: www.spaen.co.uk