



Annibyniaeth  
Dewis  
Cefnogaeth

Independence  
Choice  
Support

# Welcome to Direct Payments

## Contents

| Title   | Page No. |
|---|----------|
| Getting Started                                 | 2        |
| Ceredigion Direct Payments Support Service      | 3        |
| Who can get a Direct Payment                    | 4        |
| Managing a Direct Payment                       | 4        |
| Using your Direct Payments Creatively           | 5        |
| How do I find a Personal Assistant              | 5        |
| Buying Support from a Care Agency               | 5        |
| Monitoring how your Direct Payments are Working | 6        |
| Abuse   | 6        |
| Compliments and Complaints                      | 7        |
| Documents Template List                         | 8        |
| Useful Contacts                                 | 9        |

## Getting Started

This guide will help you to understand how you can use your direct payments to meet your bespoke needs. It explains your options, your responsibilities and the support that is available to help you set up, manage and maintain your direct payments.

Direct Payments are money from Ceredigion Social Services made available to you to arrange support and solutions that help you meet your needs, achieve your agreed outcomes and improve the way you live your life.

Direct Payments can offer greater flexibility, choice and control than support being arranged for you by the local authority, for example you may want to employ your own Personal Assistant, providing you with the support at the times you want. Or you may decide you want to use money to buy support from a care agency, or find an alternative to the types of respite support the local authority could arrange for you.

There are very few limits to the types of solutions you could fund. However, you need to make sure that you spend the money on things that have been agreed with Ceredigion Social Services.

As long as your solutions are safe and legal Direct Payments can be used in a variety of creative and innovative ways. The most important thing is that you are able to meet your assessed needs in the ways that you choose, helping you to get on and live your life.

Local Authorities in Wales have legislative duties to provide direct payments and support to manage them. These are described within the following Code of Practice:

<http://gov.wales/docs/phhs/publications/160106pt4en.pdf>

## The Ceredigion Direct Payments Support Service

Ceredigion County Council has developed an in-house direct payments support service. The purpose of the service is to work alongside people who receive a direct payment to help them develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to manage their Direct Payments and employer responsibilities effectively. We want you to get the best possible outcomes from the funding that is available.

With the relevant information some people who receive a Direct Payment will be able to manage their responsibilities with very little involvement from the support service, some people may require a small amount of support, or time limited support and some people will need ongoing support and reassurance.

We will make sure that the support we provide you is proportionate to your needs and abilities, but will always encourage and support you to be as self-managing as appropriate. Some of the key things that the service aims to do is:

- Arrange an initial appointment with a trained Direct Payments Support Officer either at one of the CCC Council Offices or, if appropriate, a home visit.
- Provide you with accessible information about direct payments
- Help you consider how you will use your direct payment to gain maximum benefit from the funding.
- Develop a support agreement with you that explains how we will support you. This will include setting things up, employment, managing the money and reviewing how things are going.
- Help you to understand how to use a Pre-payment Card.
- Support you to register with HMRC as an employer.
- Provide information, and appropriate support with the recruitment of Personal Assistants and being an employer.
- Complete a DBS Check with your PA.
- Support you to arrange appropriate insurance.
- Provide templates for the recruitment process and support you to complete these where necessary.
- Provide a secure place to interview.
- Provide information about where to access employment law specialists and mediation services.

- Information about where to find and how to fund training.
- Support you to access advocacy or other services that can assist with conflict resolution
- Signpost you to wider sources of support to meet your needs where appropriate.

## Who can get a Direct Payment?

If you are assessed as having care and support needs and are eligible for financial help from the local authority, you can request to have a direct payment. This means that you can receive the allocated budget directly and arrange how your own care and support needs are met. If you already receive council-managed care and support, you can request to move onto a direct payment.

Carers can also receive a direct payment.

Choosing to arrange your care and support through a direct payment does not mean that you have to do everything on your own. The Direct Payments Support Service will support you to get the best outcomes from your funding.

## Managing a Direct Payment

When you begin to use direct payments you need to know how you will receive your money, make payments for the services you use, pay your Personal Assistant(s) and pay any associated costs such as payroll, or HMRC bills.

Your direct payment support officer will explain the options in more detail and help you set things up, so please don't worry.

## Using your Direct Payments Creatively

We want you to get the very best outcomes from using your direct payments.

To help you use your direct payments effectively we will work with you to explore ways you might use your funding in different ways. This will always be to help you achieve the agreed outcomes that are important to you. This might be to buy equipment, or technology that could help you, arrange an activity, pool funding with other people, or create an opportunity to develop skills etc. The list of possibilities is endless.

## How do I find a Personal Assistant (PA)

The Ceredigion Direct Payments Support Service will support you to find a PA that is right for you. We may already have someone on our database who would be suitable and/or we will help you to recruit. We also use online jobsites such as Indeed.

You may already know someone, like a family member, friend, or neighbour who would like to be your Personal Assistant. Depending on your circumstances you may even be able choose to employ a family member whom you live with.

## Buying Support from a Care Agency

For more information on Care Agencies visit the Care Quality Commission website <https://careinspectorate.wales/> or ask your Social Worker for a list of local agencies included on their Framework. We can provide a list of Care Agencies but this may include agencies not on the Council's Framework.

## Monitoring how your Direct Payments are working

A direct payment must be used in ways that meet your needs as assessed in the Care and Support Plan you agreed with your Social Worker. The local authority is required to check that you spend the direct payment as it was intended. Audits of your account are proportionate and should reduce in regularity over time. If there are any issues FCC will discuss these with you and discuss ways in which they might be resolved.

As a last resort the local authority may consider suspending, or even terminating your direct payment and moving you to a council-managed service or setting up a managed bank account.

It is important that you speak to the Direct Payment Support Service about any problems you are having with managing your direct payment. We are here to help and support you.

## Being Abused

If you are being abused or neglected by your PA, or anyone else you must report this immediately.

**Please call Adult Social Care on....., ring the Police or talk to us.**

We have a Safeguarding Policy that you can request.

## Compliments and Complaints

The Ceredigion Direct Payments Support Service aims to provide a consistently high quality service to Ceredigion Direct Payments users. We are continually striving to improve the services we provide so please let us know what we are doing well and how we might improve. If you are unhappy with the service you have received we will listen to your complaint or concern and aim to deal with it swiftly, openly, fairly and honestly, you will be able to fully express your concerns and will not be discriminated against.

If you require assistance and/or support to make a complaint or express concerns we can provide you with an Advocate who works independently from the service you receive.

If you wish to compliment a member of the team, make a complaint or express concerns about the Direct Payments Support Service, in the first instance you may contact the **Support Services Manager** on

.....  
For a full copy of the CCC Complaints Procedure please speak with one of the team.  
From time to time we may contact you to ask you about the service you have received, this is in order for us to maintain high standards, make improvements and ensure you are receiving good outcomes.



## Document / Template List

Please note: Ceredigion Direct Payments Support Service is not the employer and therefore any documents/templates that are personalised for your own use must be checked thoroughly as correct by yourself as the employer.

Ceredigion County Council does not take any responsibility for any incorrect information contained within any personalised documents/templates.

- Job Description template
- Person Specification template
- Application Form template
- Covering letter (Application Form)
- Recruitment Advert template
- Interview sample questions
- Invite for interview letter template
- Offer of job template
- Turning down an applicant template
- Reference Request template
- Contract of Employment template
- DBS – What to Expect
- Personal Assistant Handbook
- Health and Safety Checklist
- Employee Absence Record
- PA Code of Conduct

## Useful Contacts

### **Direct Payments Support Team**

**Telephone:** 01545 572289

**Email:** [tu\\_dp@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:tu_dp@ceredigion.gov.uk)

**Post:** Direct Payment Support Service  
Ceredigion County Council  
Canolfan Rheidol  
Rhodfa Padarn  
Llanbadarn Fawr  
Aberystwyth  
Ceredigion  
SY23 3UE

### **Financial Assessment and Charging Team**

**Email:** [dss.assessments@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:dss.assessments@ceredigion.gov.uk)

### **Comments, complaints and compliments**

**Telephone:** 01545 574151

**Email:** [complaints@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@ceredigion.gov.uk)

### **Ceredigion Social Services – Porth Gofal**

**Telephone:** 01545 574000

**Post:** Social Care & Wellbeing  
Canolfan Rheidol  
Rhodfa Padarn  
Llanbadarn Fawr  
Aberystwyth  
Ceredigion  
SY23 3UE