

Direct Payments

A way to give you the
choice, control and flexibility
to manage your own care arrangements.

What is a Direct Payment?



A direct payment is money given directly to you by Social Services to purchase your own care or to employ Personal Assistants.

Direct Payments enable you to purchase services to meet your assessed needs instead of social services arranging services for you. This can mean greater freedom and control over the services that you require.

Will I be able to get Direct Payments?

Direct Payments are for:

- Older people with community care needs
- People who are physically disabled or have a sensory impairment
- People who have a learning disability
- People who are experiencing mental ill-health (but there may be some restrictions)
- People aged 16/17 with any of the above disabilities
- Parents of disabled children
- Carers, from age 16 upwards, of people with community care needs

You must also meet ALL of the following criteria:

- need help and support to lead an independent life, for example, help with your personal care or day to day living activities;
- have an assessment called a 'Community Care Assessment' carried out by Social Services, to see how much support you need.
- be able to manage your own affairs, or have someone who can help you to manage.

What can I buy with this money?

You can use the money to buy any of the following:

- an agency that provides support in your home;
- a day care service, other than that provided by Social Services;
- a person or people to support you in your own home or to do activities outside of your home; If you are looking to employ a Personal Assistant go to www.cheshire-pa.org for details on how to register
- independent respite care for up to 4 weeks in a year;
- in some cases you can buy equipment that would otherwise be provided by Social Services.



You can buy any of the above services provided that they are in your Care Plan agreed with the Social Worker. The money you get will help you to buy the support you need.

Who can I pay with my Direct Payments money?

You can't:

- usually pay relatives or people who live with you.
- buy services from the Social Services Department,

You can:

- have a mixed support package – for example you can go to a Social Services Day Centre but also pay helpers to assist you at home.

How can I apply?

The first person to contact is your Social Worker, who will assess your needs with you. The Social Worker will go through everything with you and help you apply for Direct Payments. You will then be referred to the Direct Payments Support Service at Age Concern Cheshire.

If you don't already have a Social Worker you should contact your local Social Services office.

A start date will be discussed with you to enable you to make arrangements for your own care.

You will need to sign a contract with Cheshire County Council Social Services <http://www.cheshire.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/> agreeing to the Community Care Direct Payments Scheme.

You will also need to have a separate bank account, to have the money paid into and to be able to show where and how you spend the Direct Payments money.

Do I have to do this on my own?



Age Concern Cheshire is the support agency for Direct Payments in Cheshire for people aged 65 and over.

We are here to help with all aspects of Direct Payments by providing you with as much support and advice as you need.

For your security - all the staff in our Direct Payments team are employed by Age Concern Cheshire and are trained in Direct Payments issues so they can provide the advice and support to help you.

They will never call at your house unannounced and will always book an appointment with you in advance. All of our visitors carry identification badges with them which you may ask to see at any time.

For more information about Direct Payments please contact the Direct Payments Co-ordinator at:

Age Concern Cheshire
314 Chester Road
Hartford
Northwich
CW8 2AB

Telephone - 01606 881660

Email – direct.payments@ageconcerncheshire.org.uk