



Social Care Support: assessment, support planning and personal budgets

This guide will explain how we assess people for ongoing social care support and the process which leads to a personal budget. It also explains the different ways of having a personal budget.

If you would like any further details, please contact your assessment worker.

Contents	Page
Section 1. Assessment	2 – 3
- Eligibility	
- Indicative personal budget	
- Will I have to pay?	
- What happens if I am not eligible for social care support?	
- What happens if I am eligible for social care support?	
- What about help for carers	
- Sharing information	
- Identity cards	
Section 2. Support Plan	4 – 5
- What is a support plan?	
- What help can I get with making my support plan?	
- What does a support plan cover?	
- What can my personal budget be used for?	
Section 3. Paying towards your personal budget	6 – 8
- Who has to pay towards their personal budget?	
- How we work out how much you have to pay	
- When and how to make payments	
Section 4. Different ways of having a personal budget	9 - 11
- Having a personal budget as a direct payment	
- Having a personal budget as a managed personal budget	
- Having a personal budget as a mixed personal budget	
Section 5. Personal budgets: Review	12
Contact Information, What if I am not happy?, Workers details	13



Section 1 Assessment

What is an assessment?

An assessment is when we discuss with you:

- what you find difficult
- how you manage your situation
- what you can do for yourself
- the health and wellbeing of anyone caring for you
- the caring responsibilities that you might have for someone else
- what you would like to be able to do – your goals in life

We will look, for example, at how you manage practical tasks, such as washing, dressing, cleaning essential areas, and getting about inside and outside your home, as well as activities you do, or want to do, during the day.

We will talk to you and, with your permission, to anyone else who helps you, such as a carer, family or doctor. We will only ask them about information that is relevant to the help you need.

Following an assessment, most people who are eligible for long-term social care support from Nottinghamshire County Council will be given a personal budget.

A personal budget is an allocation of money that people use to fund the care

and support they need. It gives people as much choice and control as possible over how their needs are met. For more information see sections 3 and 4.

Eligibility

A decision about your eligibility for ongoing social care support will be based on national government guidelines called Eligibility Criteria for Adult Social Care, England 2010. If the assessment shows that you have needs that pose a **critical** or **substantial** risk to your independence you will be offered a personal budget.

Indicative personal budget

If you have eligible needs, your assessment will identify an amount of money which we call an **indicative personal budget**.

The actual amount of money in your budget could go up or down and is finalised after **support planning** – see section 2.

Will I have to pay?

You will not have to pay for the assessment. You will need to have a **financial assessment** to see how much, if anything, you will have to contribute towards the cost of any support you get – see section 3.

What happens if I am not eligible for social care support?

If you are not eligible for social care support, our staff can still give you:

- advice and guidance about other local activities and support to help you to carry on living at home. You will need to pay for this support yourself
- advice and information about moving into a care home if you can no longer live in your own home and you are paying the cost of the placement yourself

Important: if you are planning to pay the whole cost of a care home placement yourself, we advise you to read our factsheet **Living in a care home – a guide to funding your own care**, before you accept a place. Find it on our website www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/caring/adultsocialcare/somewheretolive/care-homes/payingforacarehome/ or phone 0300 500 80 80.

What happens if I am eligible for social care support?

If you are eligible for social care support you will be offered a choice about how you want to receive your personal budget. You can have:

- a direct payment so that you can buy the support yourself
- a managed personal budget which means that the Council will arrange your support for you
- a mixture of the two

The different ways of having a personal budget are explained more fully in section 4.

What about help for carers?

Anyone caring for you may also be eligible for support. We offer all unpaid carers a carer's assessment and eligible carers can receive a carer's personal budget. Visit our website:

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/caring/adultsocialcare/whoneedssupport/carers/

Phone 0300 500 80 80 or ask the worker who visits you for a copy of **Do you look after someone?**

Sharing information?

We have a duty to keep your personal information secure. The information you give us will usually only be shared with our staff. Sometimes we have to share information with other agencies, for example the NHS. You will be asked to give your permission for us to do this. It is possible for the information to be shared without your permission, however, this will only happen if it is necessary to protect you or someone else from harm.

Identity cards

All our staff have an identity card with their photograph on it. Before you let anyone in they should hand their card to you, tell you who they are and why they have come but if you are worried contact us on 0300 500 80 80 and a service advisor will tell you whether the person works for us or not. Do not let anyone into your home if you are not sure who they are.



Section 2

Support plan

What is a support plan?

Following your assessment, we develop your support plan, which tells us how you want to use your personal budget to meet your needs and live your life your way.

What help can I get with making my support plan?

One of our social care workers will be available to help you with completing your support plan. If you have chosen to have some or all of your support arranged by the council, the care provider identified to support you will help you to support plan.

What does a support plan cover?

We need to make sure, before your support plan is agreed, that it clearly shows the following:

- what is important to you and how best to support you
- what you want to change or achieve (your outcomes)
- the costs of all the support that you need to meet your outcomes
- how you will manage your support
- a contingency plan to deal with emergencies or circumstances when your regular support is not available

- the support plan has a section that helps to identify any risks and provides an opportunity to plan how to manage these.

What can my personal budget be used for?

Everyone is different and how you choose to meet your outcomes will be individual to you. However, Nottinghamshire County Council provides guidelines for decisions on what your personal budget can be used for.

The support, services or activities that you choose to spend your personal budget on **MUST**:

- meet the social care outcomes agreed in your support plan
- be affordable and sustainable
- be legal
- be a proper use of social care funding.

When commissioning services for people, we will place greater emphasis on the achievement of outcomes and value for money over the level of choice available.

We will always aim to maximise people's independence and take their preferences into account, but the funding made available to support an individual will be determined by the most cost effective care package, based on the local care market, the availability of local care providers and the cost of community based and residential care. All situations will have to be assessed and considered on an individual basis.



Section 3

Paying towards your personal budget

This information explains:

- who has to pay towards their personal budget
- how we work out how much you have to pay
- when and how to make payments.

Paying towards your personal budget

When we assess what support you need we also arrange a financial assessment to see whether you will have to pay towards your personal budget and the support you receive.

Who has to pay towards their personal budget?

You will **not** have to pay towards your personal budget if **any** of the following applies:

- you are receiving after care services provided under section 117 of the Mental Health Act 1983
- you have Creutzfeldt Jacob Disease (CJD)
- you are receiving services funded by the Independent Living Fund (ILF)
- if all of your needs are met through funding from the NHS.

Everyone else has to have a financial assessment to see how much they can

afford to pay towards their personal budget. If you do not want to have a financial assessment, you will have to pay the full amount of your personal budget. You will be asked to complete a form to say that you agree to pay the full amount.

How we work out how much you might have to pay

We complete a financial assessment – we will either send you a form or visit you. We will ask for information on income, outgoings and savings.

If you have a partner we will also ask for details of their income and savings, even if they do not need a service. Your partner does not have to give this information, but if they do we will advise you whether you will be better off assessed as part of a couple or as a 'single person'.

Income

We will want to know about all your income:

- earnings
- pension credit (savings credit element only)

- disability allowance (mobility component)
- disability allowance (night time element)
- tax credits
- interest from savings and investments.

If we calculate you are entitled to claim any more benefits from the Department for Work and Pensions, we will tell you. If you decide not to claim for benefits we say you may be entitled to, we will still take them into account when assessing your contribution.

Savings

If you have over a certain amount in savings and investments you will have to pay the full amount of your personal budget.

If you have under a certain amount you will not have to pay anything towards your personal budget from your savings - **you may still have to contribute based on your income.**

If you have between the upper and lower limits of savings we will calculate the amount you need to pay from your savings.

You may also have to contribute based on your income.

Allowances

When we look at your income and outgoings we allow for money to cover your day to day expenses, plus extra to cover rent, mortgage or council tax.

You may be entitled to additional allowances if you are a carer or have a child.

We also make an allowance to cover costs that you may have because of your disability e.g. higher heating bills or additional laundry costs. We only make this allowance if you are receiving Disability Living Allowance - Care component or Attendance Allowance. If you think that this allowance does not cover the additional costs you have, please discuss this with your social care worker during your community care assessment.

If the care you receive costs less than the maximum amount you are assessed as being able to pay, you only have to pay what your care costs.

Paying the full cost of your support

If we assess that you can pay the full cost of your support, or if the amount you can afford to pay is more than what your support costs, we will send you an invoice (bill) every 4 weeks for the total amount of your support costs, even if you have sometimes cancelled, or not received your support. Every 3 months, we will compare what invoices we have sent you with what hours of support you have actually had, and we will adjust the difference. If you have received invoices for more support than you have received we will send you a Credit Note and a personal budget statement which details all the costs.

Paying towards your support, but not the full cost

If we assess that you can pay towards your support but cannot afford to pay the full cost, we will send you an invoice (bill) every 4 weeks for the total amount of your support costs, even if you have sometimes cancelled, or not received your support. Every 6 months, we will compare what invoices we have sent you with what hours of support you have actually had, and we will check that over the 6 months you have not paid more than the support you received actually cost. If you have received invoices for more support than you have received we will send you a Credit Note and a personal budget statement which details all the costs. If we find you have not overpaid we will not send a personal budget statement to you.

When and how you pay

You will not have to pay towards your support until you have had a financial assessment. If you have provided financial information to us before, you may not need to have a new financial assessment. However, if we have arranged to visit you to complete a financial assessment and you cancel the appointment we will backdate what we charge to the date of the original appointment.

You will have to pay towards your personal budget unless you go into hospital or short term care (sometimes called respite or planned short breaks). If this is the case you can call us and we will deduct those charges straightaway. If you are in short term care you will be

sent a bill for this separately. Even if you do not have to pay towards your personal budget, you will probably have to pay towards your short term care.

We will send you an invoice every four weeks and you can choose how you want to pay.

The easiest way to pay is by direct debit, but other payment methods are listed on the back of the invoice that we send you. If you want to discuss payment options please contact the Debt Recovery Team – contact details are at the end of this factsheet.

Attending a day service

If you use your personal budget to attend a day service run by the council, and you have a meal there, you will be expected to pay for this. You will also have to pay towards transport if this is provided by the council, unless you are exempt – please see our factsheet 'Day services' for details. If you travel to more than one place, you will be charged for each return journey. Your support costs, and meals and transport costs will be on the same invoice.

Section 4

Different ways of having a personal budget

Having a personal budget as a direct payment

A direct payment is:

- money from Nottinghamshire County Council to help you meet your social care needs rather than having your services arranged by the Council
- paid direct to you or someone acting on your behalf.

What are the advantages of having a direct payment?

- a direct payment is the most flexible way to meet your eligible social care needs.

How can I use my direct payment?

It **must** be used to help you to meet the outcomes identified in your support plan – see section 2. For example, this could be getting support or services to:

- help with washing, showering, dressing, toileting and getting in and out of bed
- support to access your local community.

You can use your payment to pay a care home. See the factsheet Direct

payments in residential care – An introduction for more information.

The money **must not** be used for:

- services provided by Nottinghamshire County Council
- accommodation/housing costs (excluding paying to live in a care home)
- services for your health care needs
- employing your husband, wife, partner or a close relative who lives with you (except in exceptional circumstances which you would need to discuss with your social care worker).

What am I responsible for?

- opening a separate bank account or using a pre-payment debit card (see separate guide to using a direct payment pre-payment debit card)
- arranging the support you need
- buying any equipment agreed
- sorting out any problems with the support you get
- recording and showing the way you use the money
- if you have a contract with an agency, they will be accountable to you, not to Nottinghamshire County Council

- If you need help arranging your support the social care worker will be able to help you.

Employing staff

The money can be used to employ your own staff to meet your needs:

- you have the legal responsibilities of an employer
- the staff you employ will report directly to you
- if you are going to employ staff, you will be expected to accept advice from a direct payments support service in respect of becoming an employer
- see resources at the back of the booklet for further sources of information and advice
- there is a list of people who want to work as personal assistants on our **Choose my Support** website. These people have had some training and all have provided references and have had an enhanced DBS check.
www.choosemysupport.org.uk

Direct Payment to a suitable person

The Council has a duty to make direct payments to people lacking mental capacity provided there is a suitable person willing to take on responsibility.

If the service user is believed to be unable to make the decision themselves about having a direct payment, this should be confirmed with a mental capacity assessment. The social care worker should then lead the best-interests decision about the most

suitable option. It must not be assumed that this will be the local authority managing the person's care and support. If the service user lacks the mental capacity to manage a direct payment themselves, it may be paid to a suitable person who can be:

- someone with Lasting Power of Attorney
- deputy appointed by the Court of Protection
- a friend, carer or family member.

The suitable person must be available and willing to make support decisions and manage the direct payment on the person's behalf.

This includes taking on the full legal responsibilities of having the direct payment and being the employer if the direct payment is to be used to directly employ a personal assistant.

Example: payment of a direct payment to a suitable person.

Brian is a 65 year old man with dementia which severely affects his short-term memory and ability to judge risks. Brian finds it hard to recognise that he needs support. He is close to his daughter Susan, who is supportive to him and visits regularly. After assessing his capacity to manage a direct payment, the Local Authority decided it was in his best interests to have a direct payment managed by Susan, who is able and willing to act as a suitable person. Prior to the onset of dementia, Brian used to enjoy tinkering with cars and motorbikes. Susan uses the direct payment to employ a Personal assistant who has helped him to reconnect with his interests.

Can I get help managing my direct payments?

If you need help managing your direct payments, we can give you contact details of **Direct Payment Support Services** who can support you with

- payroll services
- recruitment
- employment advice
- managing the direct payment account.

The cost of the direct payment support service is included in your personal budget.

Who does the money belong to?

The money you have received as a direct payment belongs to Nottinghamshire County Council and you will have agreed what you are going to spend it on as part of your support plan - see section 2.

What if I want to change some of the arrangements?

You can make minor changes that still meet your outcomes and do not affect your overall personal budget. For example, what time you need someone to come to support you. Major changes should be discussed with your social care worker. If in doubt, please contact your social care worker.

Having a personal budget as a managed personal budget

A managed personal budget means we will arrange care and support services

to meet your needs. If you choose to have a managed personal budget we will look after the money.

How much choice and control will I get?

You will have less choice and control with a managed personal budget than if you have a direct payment. This is because we are managing the budget on your behalf and we can only organise your care and support with the organisations we contract with.

Having a personal budget as a mixed personal budget

This option gives you choice and flexibility, but how much depends on you.

You may decide that you want us to organise some of your support (managed personal budget), whilst also taking some of your personal budget as a direct payment to give you more choice and control.



Section 5

Personal budgets: review

We have a duty to review everyone who receives a personal budget.

The review is a chance to check how things are going for you and to see if any changes are needed to your support.

It is an opportunity to check whether:

- the outcomes in your support plan are being met and whether the support is working for you
- your needs have changed/or the needs of your carer
- you are satisfied with your support
- you wish to change the way your personal budget is managed
- you are still eligible for long term social care
- any new outcomes have been identified.

Frequency

Your first review will take place up to 3 months from the date when your services and support were put in place.

Following this, you can expect to have a review every 12 months.

There may be an earlier review and/or more frequent reviews if:

- there is a change to your needs or your circumstances
- you have complex needs
- you are considered to be at risk.

The review can take place:

- over the telephone or
- face to face.

The assessment worker will discuss the date and type of annual review with you following your first review.

Your personal budget:

Please let us know if your needs or circumstances have changed as soon as possible as it may be that your personal budget will also need to change.

A personal budget can go up, go down, stay the same or be stopped if you no longer need our support.

Contact Information

For information on community care assessments

Customer Services Centre

Phone: 0300 500 80 80
Monday to Friday: 8am to 8pm
Saturday: 8am to 12 noon
Email: enquiries@nottsc.gov.uk
Website: www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk
Minicom: 01623 434993

For information on financial assessments

Adult Care Financial Services

Phone: (0115) 977 5760 (Option 3)
Monday to Thursday: 8.30am to 5pm
Friday: 8.30am to 4.30pm

Email: acfs.community-assessments@nottsc.gov.uk

For information on ways to pay

Debt Recovery Team (Option

Phone: (0115) 977 2727 (Option 2, option 1, option 1)
Monday to Thursday: 8.30am to 5.00pm
Friday: 8.30am to 4.30pm

Email: debtrecovery@nottsc.gov.uk

Emergency Duty Team: 0300 456

4546
Mon – Thurs: 5pm – 8.30am
Operates 24 hours at weekends from 4.30pm on Fridays to 8.30am on Mondays.

Operates 24 hours during all public holidays.

What if I am not happy?

Talk to your social care worker. If you are still not happy you can make a complaint to our Customer Relations Service.

Tel no: 0300 500 80 80

Web:

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/thecouncil/contact/comments/adult-social-care/

Phone 0300 500 80 80 if you need the information in a different language or format.

Your workers details
Name:
Position:
Contact Details: