



Self directed support

with personal budgets



Personal Budgets for Mental Health have started!

The phased introduction of self directed support with personal budgets in Cumbria's mental health services has started with the Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIP) team. The first few personal budgets have been confirmed with service users.

The EIP team are using interim IT arrangements while more robust arrangements are being developed for the continued use of personal budgets across all mental health social care services in the future.

New procedures for mental health

The project has an Operations Group who are developing procedures for use from April. These will build on those currently used for other service user groups but will be adapted for mental health work and the need to implement the Care Programme Approach. The Operations Group are also learning from the experiences of the EIP team as they start to offer personal budgets.

Training

The EIP team have received training and further training is being arranged for the wider group of people involved in mental health. This training includes four one day courses on 'essential preparation for personalisation' which will focus on support planning. Invites for these training days have been sent out. In addition a day on use of Fair Access to Care Services eligibility criteria has been organised which, although not directly linked to personal budgets, is essential for understanding who is eligible for social care support

Leads, champions and buddies

Further support to staff in mental health services is being provided by a network of Leads (who attend the Operations Group) and Champions (who work within mental health teams). We are also looking for 'buddies' from teams already providing personal budgets to other client groups to support staff in mental health services. Please contact Catherine Morley on 01228 227104 if you are interested in becoming a buddy.

February 2011

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Target: Wellbeing Day

**Penrith Methodist Church
on Wednesday 20 April
9.30am-3.30pm.**

Target: Wellbeing in Cumbria is a programme for Older People delivered through four projects, designed to improve the quality of life for those receiving care

The Target: Wellbeing Day will showcase Target: Wellbeing activity in Cumbria. The day will include presentations and practical sessions to show the project's progression.

For more information and to attend, please email:

claire.melton@ageukwestcumbria.org.uk

Your questions answered

At the recent round of service user and carer meetings, we found that some areas were consistently resulting in concern and confusion. Similar areas also emerged as issues in the early results from the self directed support survey. Here some of these areas are discussed.

What are Fair Access to Care Services eligibility criteria?

The [Government's Fair Access to Care Services \(FACS\) guidance](#) sets out the criteria which all councils must follow when assessing new and existing service users aged 18 and over. This helps us to ensure that those in greatest need and at the highest risk, receive services and that everyone who requests a service is dealt with fairly. The FACS eligibility criteria are used to establish the level of risk to an individual's independence in these four areas:

- Health, safety and freedom from harm, abuse and neglect.
- Autonomy and freedom to make choices.
- The ability to manage personal and other daily routines.
- Involvement in family and wider community life, including hobbies, leisure, unpaid and paid work, learning and volunteering.

We will also take into account:

- Help from carers and other agencies.
- Any assistive equipment used to support independence.
- Risks faced by others such as family carers.
- Which risks are acceptable as a natural part of independent living.

We consider the level of risk to an individual's independence in the four main areas listed above and determine which of the following eligibility bands apply: Critical; Substantial; Moderate and Low.

Cumbria County Council's policy is that we will provide services to meet needs falling into the critical or substantial criteria. While needs falling within the moderate or low bands will not qualify for services from us, we will provide information and advice about other organisations who may be able to help.

To find out more, including details of the criteria, see our [factsheet](#).

How are direct payments and personal budgets related?

A **direct payment** is money given to an individual to enable them to arrange their own services to meet their assessed needs. Direct payments have been available since 1996 and will continue to be available after personal budgets are introduced. An individual's **personal budget** is the total cost to the council of the services an individual receives to meet their eligible needs. An individual can choose to receive none, part or all of their personal budget as a direct payment.

A common misunderstanding is that self directed support with personal budgets means individuals have to have direct payments. This is not the case. They can ask their practitioner to arrange the services they need if they prefer. Personal budgets enable an individual to see 'up front' approximately how much money the council will make available to meet their assessed eligible needs and to be involved in deciding how this money can be used.

More of your questions answered

What are personal health budgets?

Cumbria's implementation of personal budgets is for social care services. Personal budgets for health care services will not be made available as part of this implementation. Personal health budgets are being developed as part of [national pilot programme](#).

How do financial assessments work?

Adult Social Care makes a charge for some of the social care services it provides. The way we work out how much service users have to pay for the community services they receive is based on national '[Fairer Charging](#)' and '[Fairer Contributions](#)' guidance set by the Government. Different arrangements apply to people living in residential and nursing homes.

The charge or contribution an individual has to pay is based on an assessment of their finances. These assessments are carried out by Finance Assessment Officers who also offer benefits advice to make sure individuals are receiving all the benefits they are entitled to. The financial assessment will be carried out as soon as possible after an individual's assessment of need although the amount of the contribution cannot be confirmed until their personal budget is agreed.

Keeping personal budgets personal

'Keeping personal budgets personal' is a new Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) report on personal budgets for people with mental health issues.

social care
institute for excellence



In the report, people with mental health problems share their experiences of what makes personal budgets work for them. Access to clear information is key. Staff who support people with personal budgets need know the options, risks and processes. Most people with mental health problems are able to manage their budgets, but many would welcome peer support. Support planning could be simplified – for example by introducing a 'fast track' option from assessment to support plan for low risk cases.

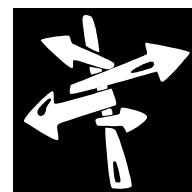
'Keeping personal budgets personal' can help commissioners, providers, user-led organisations and information providers to improve their practice. The full report covers people with mental health problems and older people. We have also published a summary of the experiences of people with mental health problems. A further briefing on older people's experiences will be published in March.

For more information:

- [Read the first SCIE blog: Sarah Carr talks about mental health and personal budgets](#)
- [Check out Keeping personal budgets personal digital report, learning from the experiences of older people and people with mental health problems](#)
- [Read Keeping personal budgets personal At a glance, learning from the experiences of people with mental health problems](#)

Cumbria User Involvement Consortium

User engagement for the Self Directed Support Programme by the consortium started in 2009 with the appointment of Liam Ryan and Cathy Stubbs. They developed consultation across the county in a number of ways. Service users and carers were not only consulted on the implementation of self directed support in Cumbria. They were actively engaged and involved in its development, and latterly with other Adult Social Care services too.



The project's success lay in its uniqueness. They successfully sought to identify and engage with the 'seldom heard' people who were more isolated geographically and socially, often by the very nature of their illnesses and disabilities. They worked to offer people the chance to have their say through forums called 'Expert Panel' meetings, at which users and carers could speak directly with representatives from Adult Social Care. In all, more than 1500 users and carers have been involved in the project, and 18 Expert Panels and workshops were held throughout Cumbria.

Of the Expert Panels, service users said:

- "Meetings were informative and interesting and I appreciated the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the process. I found the senior Adult Social Care representatives to be not only well informed but down to earth. They very much seemed to enjoy working directly with the service users."
- "I have been involved with an Expert Panel for about two years, and enjoyed the discussions with Adult Social Care members when they were present."



Findings from the consultation, including all comments and queries have been given directly to Adult Social Care management.

Booklets and information on self directed support were produced by Adult Social Care with the direct involvement and input of Expert Panel members. Some people's experiences being included in them as case studies. Service users and carers were also greatly involved in the development of the Adult Social Care and Health Website. People were asked what they wished to see on the pages *before* they were changed and their ideas and views are reflected in the newly designed website. People were given the opportunity to view and further comment on drafts of the proposed new pages before they were finalised.

Of this part of the consultation, some of the service users and carers said:

- "I have spent some time viewing the website and like the new front page. I find it more welcoming, and to me it seems reasonably easy to navigate ... this is a vast improvement." (Carer).
- "Although I do not go online too often due to how painful it is for me, I am happy with what they have done." (Service user).

Many service users and carers were consulted about their experience of receiving care and support services. Five 'standards' were produced as a result and these can be used as a benchmark for service delivery. A booklet of the five standard is being developed for use across Cumbria.

Liam, Cathy and the consortium members, would like to thank all 1500 service users and carers who have been involved in the consultation.