

Questions about Personalisation from the Learning Disability Partnership Board Meeting on 23rd July 2010

Question

How have carers been involved in developing systems for personalisation?

Answer given in advance of meeting

In our consultation process during September to December 2009 we talked to a lot of people about how we were going to offer Personal Budgets in Northamptonshire, this included Carers. Also during the evaluation of Personal Budgets we talked to people including Carers

Additional discussion

What have parent carers said?

Everything that was said by parent carers is in the consultation document on the Northamptonshire County Council website. Most parent carers like the ideas of choice and control, some have said the system needs improving and there are concerns about where people can get services from.

Question

What is happening locally about personal budgets for carers?

Answer given in advance of meeting

Last year we ran a pilot offering personal budgets to carers. We are looking at what was learnt from that to decide if and how personal budgets to carers will be offered again. We want to offer the best support to all carers with the money that we have.

In addition Sarahlee Richards has been recently released on a secondment where she will be considering the issue of Personal Budgets for Carers.

Additional discussion

Is a carer's pension part of a personal budget?

No, money for a personal budget is released from the funding of a social care service (this means instead of receiving a service, you receive money). A carer's personal budget is not a pension or a benefit.

Question

Are family carers being asked to do more because of personalisation?

Answer given in advance of meeting

Many family carers want to support their family member with having more choice and control and are happy to assist with support planning and managing a budget. For families that are unable to do this there is help so that they don't have to take on more work.

Additional discussion

What about a back up plan if things go wrong?

We will work with families and look at how to do that and help older carers step back from the role. People can talk to their care managers.

I don't want to be an accountant, is there help available to manage the budget and who pays for it?

People don't have to take a cash payment, care managers can organise the service. There are 3rd party organisations that can support you to manage a budget but you would need pay for this service.

The new advocacy provider will start at the beginning of August (Total Voice Northamptonshire) and Lisa will send out information.

If I pay someone to look after the budget does that mean I will have less money for the money available in my budget?

Yes, people need to make the choice about what is important to them. You can use a local care provider to receive an individual service fund.

Where can we get more information now that Parents in Partnership has been cut?

Parents in Partnership are continuing, parts of the service will exist but they are not sure what form this will take at the moment. They will work alongside the new provider.

The Daventry Local Partnership Group said that Parent Carers need to know what a Personal Budget can and can't be spent on for example, a yes not list about what people can do with their budget.

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There is a document about what people can spend their budget on, the Partnership Board can send this out to local groups and care managers can give you a copy.

Is it correct that you can appoint people you know to be a personal assistant but you cannot appoint a family member?

You can appoint a family member if you have a particular need and that person is best for you; we would look at the case individually. A family member cannot be a paid personal assistant if they are the person looking after the budget.

Other comments and questions

How long does it take for a person to get a personal budget?

This depends on each individual case; we need to identify people's needs and what their life choices are. There is no exact timescale.

People worry it can take a long time, once there is a support plan there should be timescales to work to.

This is down to the capacity within the team to process the information; we try to do this as quick as possible but staff availability and time can impact on that.

A person centred plan can make the process quicker as a lot of the work for the support plan has already been done

There is a 28 day target for assessments to be completed but this does not take into account the new system and support planning.

Is there a link between a Person Centred Plan and a personal budget?

If a person centred plan is done properly, it can show what will be delivered and it assists the first part of the budget process. A person centred plan is not used to generate a budget. The assessment process and calculations are used to get the personal budget amount, a support plan is also done at this time. A support plan shows how you will achieve your outcomes with the money you have been allocated.

How can Adults Services assist young people with their transition?

This is very difficult and Pete Sidgwick offers to help Maria Faller work on this.

How can you get more people into social care work and provide high quality staff?

In your support plan, you can describe the type of person you want to support you and go to an agency to choose a person. You could choose a family member or friend if you like. Personal Assistants can access training and support.

Who pays for their sickness benefits for a Personal Assistant?

When the person is employed, their hourly rate includes sick pay and annual leave etc.

Can a person use their budget to pay for a service that is not in Northamptonshire?

Yes, a person can pay to go out of county. If you have found this is not that case, please discuss this with Sarah Cunningham

Some people don't get a choice who supports them.

We encourage people to choose whoever they want to support them, if there are people that want too much money to support you; the team have details of other support agencies who are more affordable.

An agency is not giving people a choice about the person that supports them.

You should go to the agency and tell them to give you the person you want to support you or use another agency.

How can people who have high levels of support complain if things go wrong?

The Customer Feedback Team at the County Council can be used to look at the complaint and contact the right person for you.

With Personal Budgets, if there is not staff to process the paperwork, there is inequality because there are families that can do things and there are others who can't as they do not have their budget. The resources need to be there so everyone has the same opportunities.

If a person wants to sack their personal assistant, how can they find out about employment rights and do this correctly?

The Centres for Independent Living are able to advise on employment rights

If your support is not Care Quality Commission registered, how are they monitored?

If you use a personal assistant that is not registered with the Care Quality Commission, there is no one monitoring that person, you can talk to Centres for Independent Living about this.

If you employ the person you are in control and can choose when to take action.

If you buy your support from an organisation Northamptonshire County Council have a contract with, the Contract Monitoring Officers can support you with this. Northamptonshire LiNK are also able to monitor services that customers and family carers use.

What if there is not enough money to pay for a personal assistant?

Your budget should be enough, if it is not contact your care manager.

If English is not your first language, how is information and support available?

Translation is available on request.

Answers to questions left on Post-it notes

We did not have time to answer everyone's questions at the meeting. These questions were put on post it notes and the answers are written down here

How can people move from a direct payment to a personal budget? Not sure that this question has been answered?? So does this inflate the real figures for people having a personal budget?

People with a direct payment are already counted as having a personal budget. Having a direct payment does mean that a person has more choice and control over how their needs are met, this is why we count them

If a person with complex needs is not being treated well by an agency, what extra checks are in place as these people may only see that agency and have no other means of support?

If any customers are not treated well by an agency they are able to complain to the council or the agency. How you decide what support provider you will have is talked about when your support plan is agreed. At this point different options can be discussed. If the way a person is being treated could be considered to be abusive the council can use the safeguarding of vulnerable adults rules to make sure this is looked into by the most appropriate person. Also the Care Quality Commission and County Council check whether registered services are doing things how they should be, this includes talking to people who use services and their support network.

Introduction to Personalisation.

Personalisation is mainly about people who use services having more choice and control in how their needs are met. One way of getting more choice and control is to use the money the council gives to people to meet their needs in a different way. This can be through a managed account (the council arrange and pay for services), a direct payment (a cash amount) or an individual service fund (a provider is given the money to manage for the customer) or a mixture of any of these. Please note that individual service funds are just being developed and aren't available to all customers at the moment.

Are brokers and support planners up to date with local and available services?

Yes they should be.

How long can we expect a response after sending off a return?

When you send receipts showing how a direct payment has been spent you should normally have a response within three weeks. However, at the moment this may take longer because of staffing issues.

Can someone with a PCP/support plan/budget access a course e.g. bee keeping, cake decorating or college?

You can spend you personal budget flexibly as long as it is detailed in your support plan, meets your eligible needs and is agreed by the Council.

More information on Personal Budgets

What is a personal budget?

A Personal Budget is money from Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) that you spend on support and services. This is instead of a traditional adult social care package – you might need to explain what a traditional adult social care package is – i.e. someone in the Council organising and paying for your support and services. Personal Budgets give you control and choice of what support is best for you.

With a Personal Budget, your money can be spent more creatively if it meets your support plan outcomes, allowing you to live your life to full. Creatively means using your own ideas to do things in a way that suits you. You are in control of how your money is spent; you can get help and support from whoever you choose – family, friends, a social worker or care manager or an independent broker.

Who can have a Personal Budget?

Anyone who is over the age of 18 and who has been assessed as being eligible for social services support can have a personal budget. Eligible means that you have met the rules and are able to have something.

To request an assessment which will help you to find out if you meet the rules, please contact our Adult Care Team on 0845 124 4500 or email adultcare@northamptonshire.gov.uk. This includes customers who already receive support from us.

How much do you get?

The amount you receive will depend on what your social care assessment says you need support with.

How is it paid?

You have a choice of how you would like to receive your Personal Budget. Some people look after it on their own, but other people need someone else to look after it. The choices include:

- The money goes straight to your bank account, building society, Post Office or National Savings account in the form of a direct payment
- The money goes to your Agent, who is someone who agrees to act on your behalf.
- A Trust Fund is set up to act for you. This is a commitment made by two or more people (who are called Trustees) to support someone who finds it difficult to arrange their own care or manage their own money. Trustees have legal duties and responsibilities. They will receive your Personal Budget money into the Trust Fund, and use it to buy services and supports for you that meet your eligible needs.
- You have an independent service fund. This means that a Service Provider will manage your money for you.
- The Council may manage your budget and purchase services on your behalf.

What can you use a Personal Budget for?

You can use your Personal Budget on anything which helps you get to your goals as agreed in your support plan as long as it is safe, legal and healthy

For more information go to

<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/asc/pay/pb/pages/default.aspx>



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