Dorset County Council's
Adult and Community Services factsheet

Self Directed Support

What is Self Directed Support?
Supported assessments and Self Directed Support let you control your care arrangements and provide you with a Personal Budget to pay for the services.

Who gets Self Directed Support?
To make sure that services are provided fairly we use guidelines and we assess people's needs individually to find out if their level of need qualifies for a service and at what level of importance.

What are the advantages of Self Directed Support?

- You tell us about your own care needs and what is important to you.
- You identify what you want
- You know how much money is available for you to spend.
- You decide how you spend the money.
- You have choice and control over the support you have.

How does it work?
You will fill in a supported assessment form. This is like a questionnaire. You can do this on your own or with help from another person. You have to decide what is really important for you and then you work out the steps to make it happen.

How is the money worked out?
The questions you answer in the supported assessment help us work out your Personal Budget. You will also have benefits advice and a financial assessment so we can work out what you will pay for your care costs. The amount of money you get in your Personal Budget will be minus what you have to pay.

How is the money paid?
You can choose how the money is paid, it could be:-

- As a Direct Payment; where we make cash payments to you.
- Into a holding account so someone else can manage your money for you.
- We can manage the money for you and arrange the services you want.
- Or as a combination of any of the above.

Will anyone check how I spend my money?

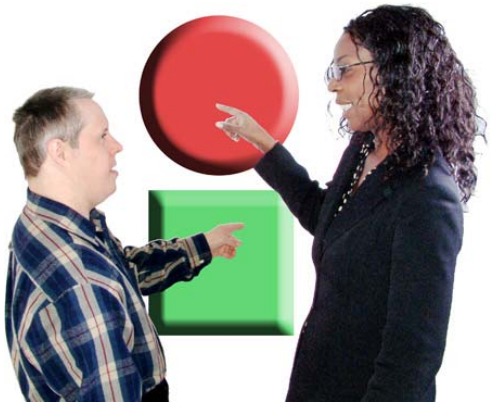
Yes what you buy must be what you have agreed with us and must be within your Personal Budget. You must return any unused money to Dorset County Council.
You will need to keep receipts for what you spend.
If you employ a personal assistant you will have the responsibilities of an employer. This includes keeping wage records, paying tax and national insurance but we can help with this.

What if things change?

You can tell us at any time if there are changes in your life and you need to change your plans.

What if I am not able to make decisions for myself?

If you are not able to make your own decisions we will work in your best interests.
We will discuss your needs with anyone who is legally allowed to make decisions for you or to act on your behalf.



Who will help me decide how to spend the money?

You might know how you want to spend the money or you can ask for help from:

- A family member or a friend.
- A social worker.
- An independent support organisation, funded by Dorset County Council.

How will I be able to spend the money I am given?

You can use your Personal Budget to buy services directly from Dorset County Council or other sources; you cannot use it to buy health care or long term residential care.

Some people use their money to buy care or support; help with every day tasks such as washing or getting dressed, from agencies or organisations, or employ a personal assistant.

Your outcomes may have identified other areas of life; for example leisure and social activities and in this case you may wish to purchase day care or recreational pursuits.

Where do I go for more information?
Other factsheets ‘Fair Access to Care Services’ and ‘Direct Payments’ may provide useful information.

Contact the Adult Access Team (AAT) telephone 01305 221016.

Compliments and complaints
Adult and Community Services staff in Dorset are committed to providing quality services to our service users, their carers and families. We welcome comments from our service users as this helps us to understand what aspects of our service people like.

If you are unhappy about the service you have received and want to make a complaint, our factsheet ‘How to complain’ describes the procedure. Our Complaints Officer can give you advice on the process and can be contacted on 01305 224322.

Diversity statement
Diversity is not about treating everyone in the same way, but about recognising and valuing difference, as well as recognising and addressing inequalities and disadvantage.

As an employer and service provider, Dorset County Council seeks to promote an environment that accepts and actively supports diversity in age, gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religious belief, disability, culture, work style and the many other ways in which people differ from each other.