



Direct Payments Explained



What is a direct payment?

If you or someone in your care is entitled to free care services, you can apply for Direct Payments. These let you choose and buy the services you need yourself, instead of the council arranging them for you.

- To access any support funded by the local authority (including Direct Payments) you first need to contact your local authority and request a community care assessment. This will identify your needs, establish whether you are eligible for funding and allocate a budget if you are eligible.
- Once your needs have been identified you may ask your social worker to identify the services for you or you may decide to have the money yourself and use it to buy your own services. This second option is called a Direct Payment.
- Having a Direct Payment will not affect any other benefits you may receive.
- **What if you can't manage a direct payment yourself?** In the development of Direct Payments the government has been very keen to stress that they should be available to everyone who is eligible for a service. Where you do not have the capacity to manage your own direct payment this can be managed for you by a suitable person.
- **What can you spend your Direct Payment on?** You need to spend your Direct Payment on the support needs that have been identified in your community care assessment. You can either buy a service from a provider or employ your own staff.
- **What can Herefordshire Headway provide?** All the services provided by Hereford Headway can be directly purchased by people using their direct payment. You may wish to join an existing service or ask us to employ someone to provide a tailored service to meet your assessed needs.
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