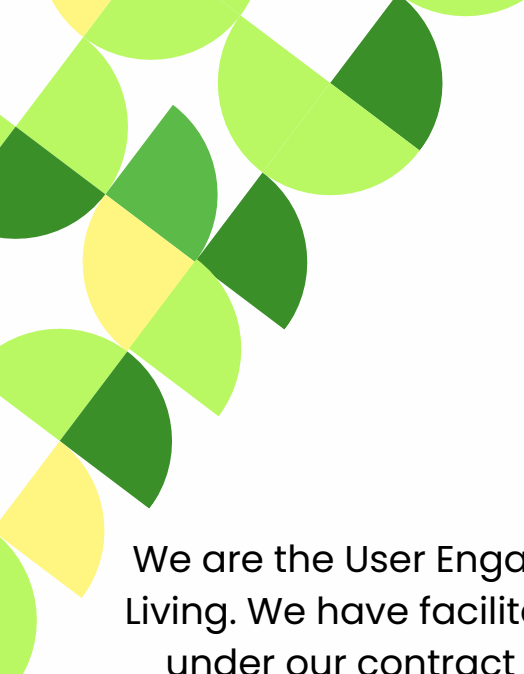




SUMMER 2023

DIRECT PAYMENT GUIDANCE

**Understanding what information
people need and how they need it on
their Direct Payment journey**



We are the User Engagement Team at Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living. We have facilitated and produced this report for Wiltshire Council under our contract to provide a Wiltshire User Engagement Service.

We work alongside people with lived experience of health and social care services to support, encourage and facilitate them to have their say. We aim to ensure their voices are heard and that they are able to contribute to and influence how services are shaped and developed.

We use creative and interactive ways of engaging with people, co-producing each piece of work uniquely, to value the authentic voice of all service users.

This report has been created from the voices of disabled, autistic and older people in Wiltshire. Thank you to everyone who attended our knowledge cafés and took the time to share their thoughts, ideas and experiences.

**A particular thank you to:
Direct Payment users
Wiltshire Pioneers
Harnham Day Centre
Able Hands Together (CIC)**






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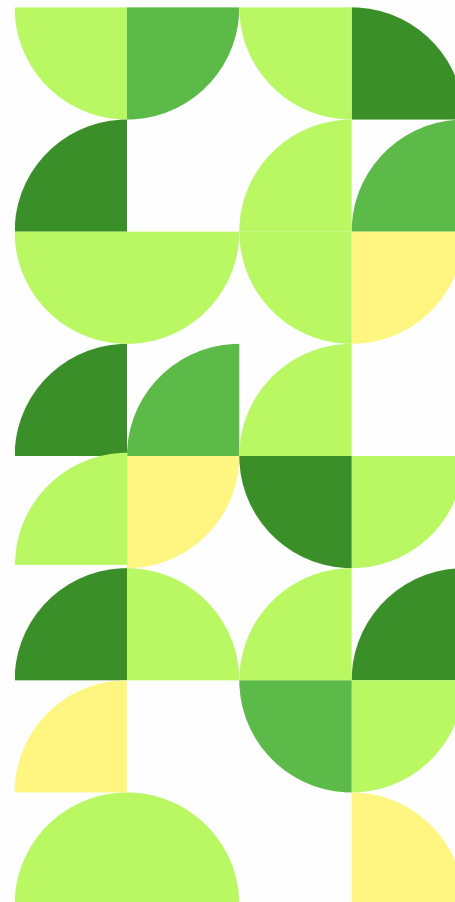
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Key Messages

People need information in a variety of formats to meet their individual needs and preferences. This should include printed information, online information and short films giving information about Direct Payments.

People need to have contact information and the opportunity to speak to someone who can support them with questions about Direct Payments, by phone, in person or by email.

People want information about how they can use a Direct Payment creatively to meet their assessed needs, including pooled budgets and buying equipment.

All published information about Direct Payments, regardless of format should be co-produced with disabled people.

Methodology

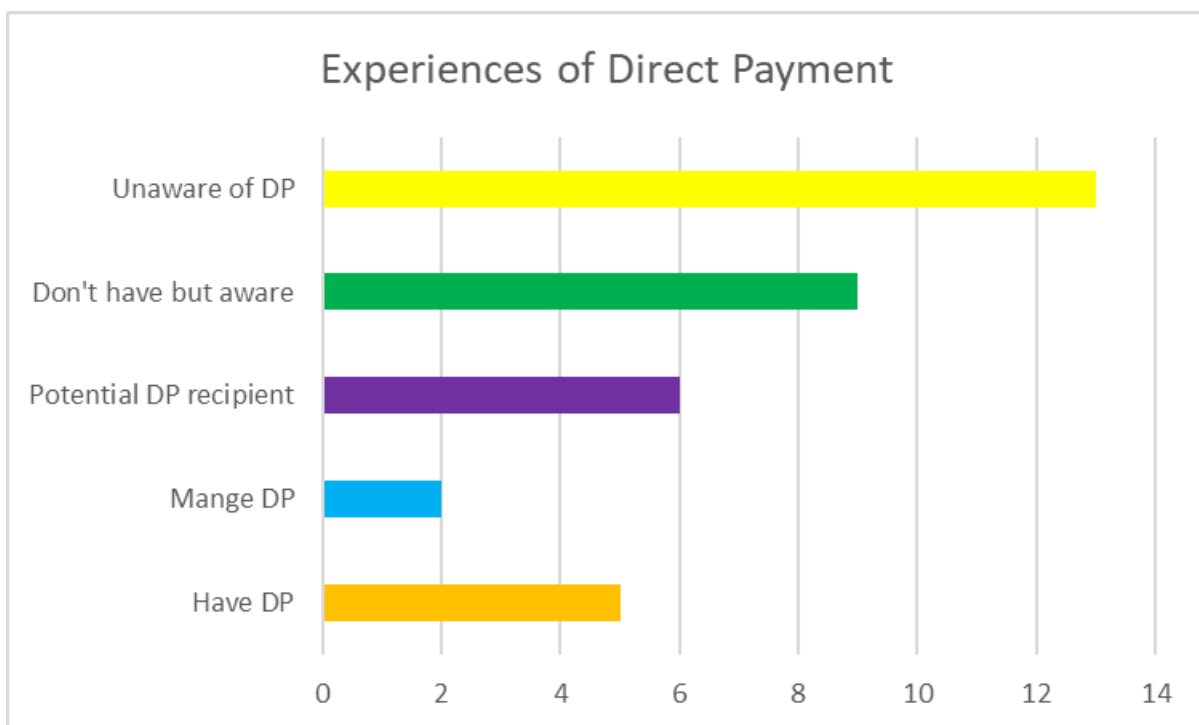
We hosted 5 interactive workshops, for people who receive a Direct Payment, prospective Direct Payment recipients, or a nominated person for someone receiving a Direct Payment. Workshops took place in a variety of settings including day centres, community meeting rooms, our own training room and at a community care farm. Each workshop was relaxed and informal, with ample opportunity for discussion.

We also hosted an online workshop during the evening for people unable to attend in person and we also ran a short online survey.

Alongside some questions specific to Direct Payments we presented information in different formats and talked about what works for people and why.

Demographics

We engaged with 35 people during the course of this work. All had different experience and knowledge of Direct Payments (DP).



Where people look for information

Where people go for information



■ Online ■ Family / friend ■ Council ■ Library ■ Citizens Advice

Not surprisingly going online is a popular way for people to look for information, as are advice services, libraries, personal contacts and (to a lesser extent) the Council. However, people sought information in very specific places, highlighting the need for it to be widely available.

"I look in the Salisbury Journal newspaper"

People also expressed the importance of being able to talk to someone by phone or in person to get information.

"If I can't get someone face to face or on the phone I wouldn't bother"

"Prefer to speak to someone in person to get information as can get eye contact"

Direct Payment information

We asked people to tell us what topics they wanted information on to help with running and managing a Direct Payment. All options were chosen, showing the need for a range of different information to be available to support people.



- Recruiting Personal Assistants
- Payroll, Tax and National Insurance
- Being an employer
- Employers Liability Insurance
- Bank accounts
- Personal Assistant management
- Using a care agency

Direct Payment written information

During the workshops we presented a range of different information formats and asked people to tell us what worked for them, why and to suggest any improvements that would make the information more accessible.

Direct Payments Guidance

April 2021

Wiltshire Council DP Guidance contains a lot of detailed information, including a glossary of terms. It is aimed at anyone receiving a DP, thinking of taking a DP and staff working with people who may have care and support needs. For a few (3) people this was felt to be a great guide.

"Seems like it's got everything so something you should have and if you're going to have a DP and need the detail"
"I would want this as it seems to have everything"

Some people found the document inaccessible due to how it is formatted.

"Very small print – many of us have problems with our eyesight"

"Couldn't read it – too much text"

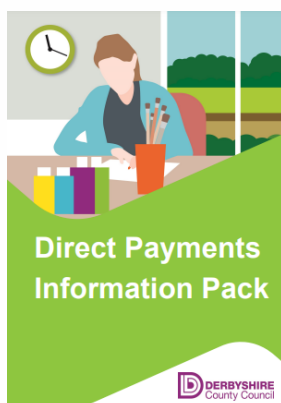
"It's not very user-friendly"

There were a lot of ideas of how this guide could be improved;

"Have all the information but break it down into chunks"

"Better to have a bit of writing then a picture "

"Should include some contact details"



Similar To Wiltshire Council's guide, Derbyshire's contains in depth information on different areas of Direct Payments. As a general rule it was felt to be more accessible.

"Don't mind it being longer as it's useful information and is friendly, approachable and spaced out"

Direct Payment written information

People commented on the difference having some colour and contact information made to written information;

"I like it. It is easier to read – like the pictures"

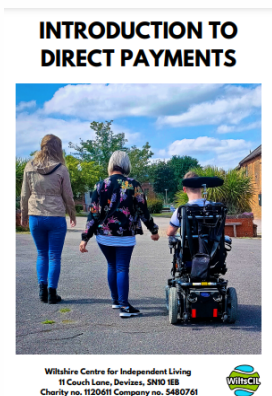
"This is quite nice, it's nicely explained"

"Good to have contact numbers"

However, this guide was not to everyone's preference;

"If I want a particular thing and I've gone looking for it, it doesn't matter what colour it is as long as it's got the information it needs"

"Shouldn't use shiny paper"



Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living has a short leaflet that gives a basic introduction to DPs. It has a number for people to call if they want more information.

"For an introduction this works well"

"The contact information is the most useful information as I'd prefer to phone somebody"

Direct Payment online information

In addition to looking at examples of written information about Direct Payments we also looked at some online resources available. Since going online was the preferred starting point for many to find information, access to good information online can make the DP journey start more smoothly.



Your care Your support Wiltshire has information about the adult care process in Wiltshire and lists of services to help people remain independent.

Whilst information about Direct Payments was relatively easy to find people struggled with navigating the site using the links and how information was presented.

Direct Payment online information

"Clickable links seem to lead to random places"

"No accessibility buttons"

"Pages are difficult to navigate and filled with jargon"

"Does the job I suppose"

"Misleading as it makes it seem like you can (self) refer to Wiltshire CIL."

"Boring, but never been a fun colourful website"

Direct Payment information films



The final resource we looked at was a series of short films about Direct Payments. These can be viewed online and alongside is a downloadable document with the same content. Whilst these were generally felt to be helpful, some ways in which they could be made more accessible to meet their individual needs were discussed.

"Very good and clear"

"It is OK to read but possibly a bit quick"

"I find it useful especially as they are broken into sections"

"handy for some people but could be more simple wording to make it more understandable."

Ideas for getting information and support

During the workshops people shared other ideas about how information about Direct Payments and support using them could be shared.

"Stories can be a good way of explaining things as they feature real people"

"Good to have somewhere you can share experiences and get advice and support about all things DP and PA. Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living need to promote their Facebook Employer and PA forums"

"Talk to someone who has similar experiences and has been through it themselves"

What information people need about Direct Payments

We asked people taking part in the workshops if there were any specific areas they wanted information about relating to Direct Payments. We also asked if there were any things they felt people should be aware of, either before or during their direct Payment journey.

Responses ranged from general information about Direct Payments to specific needs at certain stages of the Direct Payment journey.

"Need to get everything written down. (before assessment of needs) Might not get it all, but important to have it recorded"

"That you can use your Direct Payment creatively to meet your needs"

"Advice around what software and systems to use. Calendar systems, recording hours (for Personal Assistants) Doesn't have to totally explain how, but guidance of where to look."

"transition between children and adult services can be a difficult time. Maybe have a longer period the allocated worker stays with the family to ease this"

"Really important that people know when DP ends they contact Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living, as there are many things that need to be done. Need step by step information. Wiltshire Council guide has this, which is good. Really important that people know to return funds as it's public money"

Conclusion

There is a vast amount of information regarding Direct Payments available. Much of this information by necessity is detailed. However, it is vital that people have access to this information to enable them to make an informed decision at all stages of their Direct Payment journey.

Having information in different formats to meet individual needs can support choice, control and independence. It is important that this information is co-produced with those receiving, or thinking of receiving a Direct Payment.

People also need the opportunity to talk to people who can give advice and support around Direct Payments at all stages of their journey.

"if people have the correct information it can enable them to have choice and control over the way they want to live their life"
(Direct Payment recipient)

Resource Links

Direct Payments Guidance

April 2021

<https://adults.wiltshire.gov.uk/Documents/Download/141/Direct-Payments-Guid>



<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/site-elements/documents/pdf/social-health/adult-care-and-wellbeing/how-to-access-care-and-support/personal-budgets-and-direct-payments/direct-payments/direct-payment-information-pack.pdf>

INTRODUCTION TO DIRECT PAYMENTS



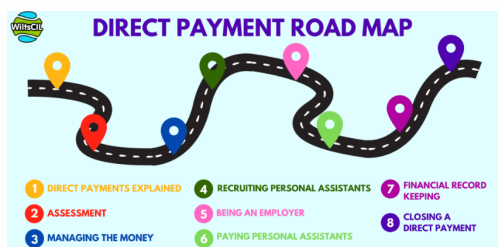
Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living
11 Church Lane, Devizes, SN9 5BB
Charity no. 1120411 Company no. 5480761



<https://www.wiltshirecil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/DPs-Oct-2022-A4.pdf>



<https://adults.wiltshire.gov.uk/>



<https://www.wiltshirecil.org.uk/direct-payments-personal-budgets/>



Produced by Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living, User Engagement Team

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0300 1233 442



userengagement
[@wiltshirecil.org.uk](mailto:userengagement@wiltshirecil.org.uk)