

The relationship between the employer and their Personal Assistant



1. Who is this factsheet for?

This factsheet is for people who have direct payments.

It is about the relationship between an employer and their Personal Assistant (PA).

2. The relationship between an employer and their PA



The relationship between an employer and their Personal Assistant (PA) is very special.

The PA spends many hours doing all the jobs that you would normally expect to do for yourself.

Keeping the balance within this employer/employee relationship can be difficult.

It is easy to get confused about the difference between a friend and a PA.

Sometimes friends are temporary PAs and sometimes employed assistants become good friends.

Some people have had better experiences when they have let their PAs become friends. They do not find it difficult to keep control of the employer/employee relationship.



Others have found success when the arrangement is formal.

It is important you always feel comfortable asking your PA to do the things you need.



This should be:

- when you want
- how you want
- involving who you want.

When a PA has more control than you do, this can become an abusive situation.



When we think of abuse, we often hear about sexual or physical abuse.

But, emotional and financial abuse can be just as harmful.

If some of the things listed below are happening - contact your Case Manager or Direct Payment Support Worker.

- Your PA tells you to do things or feel a certain way because they know what's best for you.
- Your PA is controlling when you see friends and family.
- Your PA discourages you and does more for you than you have asked.
- Your PA seems unaware of how they make you feel (upset, worried, scared to ask things, unhappy).
- Your PA does not respond or change their way of working when you talk to them about issues.
- Your PA is always saying things like, "I'm going to be about half an hour late tomorrow... and will have to leave early." A PA should always be punctual and should not be telling you their work times if you have a proper contract for work hours.
- You feel you can't approach your PA about any problems because they would take it out on you later by refusing to do something, or behaving around you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable.



3. Points to consider



Training: In order to get the best from your PA you will need to instruct them in the most appropriate ways to assist you.

They will need to be familiar with your bathroom / bedroom / household routines and your preferred ways of jobs being done.



Disability Equality Training: It is useful if your PA has some knowledge of Disability Equality issues.



Feedback: It is useful to regularly assess a PA's performance, suitability, commitment etc.



If you have any concerns or questions you can contact your Case Manager, Direct Payment Support Worker, or the Direct Payment Support Team:

Telephone: 03000 413 600 or email:

direct.payments@kent.gov.uk

Or you can find more information on: www.kentdp.co.uk