

Kent County Council

Direct Payments Factsheet for Carers #1a

What are Direct Payments?

1. Who is this factsheet for?

This factsheet is an introduction to direct payments for carers and is produced by Adult Social Care and Health. If it does not give you all the information you need, please contact KCC. Our details are at the end of this factsheet

2. What is a Direct Payment?

Direct payments are local council payments for people who have been assessed as needing ongoing support from adult social care, and who would like to arrange and pay for their own support services instead of receiving them directly from the local council. Having a direct payment gives you choice and control over how you organise, buy and manage your support.

3. How you can use Direct Payments

A person must have been assessed as eligible to receive a direct payment and the payment must be used to purchase the support that the person is assessed as needing. You will need to show within a support plan how the direct payment will be used to meet your assessed needs (there is a factsheet on support plans).

Depending on your carer's assessment and what is agreed in your support plan, you might use direct payments for the following:

- To participate in a relaxation class
- To go towards the cost of adult learning

A person may wish to use their direct payment to employ a Personal Assistant/s (PA) to help them with meeting their needs. If you would like more information about Personal Assistants and Self-Employed Personal Assistants you can contact the Direct Payment Support Team. The Direct Payment Support Team can provide information on becoming an employer and can help you with recruiting a PA.

4. How do I get a Direct Payment?

You will have a carer's assessment to determine if you are eligible for support from KCC. If you are eligible for ongoing support, you will be given a personal budget; you will need to show how you intend to spend the budget within a support plan which will need to be agreed with KCC. You can choose to receive your personal budget as a direct payment.

Your direct payment method will be by the **Kent Card**: this is the adult social care preferred method for providing a direct payment. The Kent Card is a CHIP and PIN Mastercard card. The direct payment is loaded onto your Kent Card. You manage this money and use it to purchase your support. You can use the card on the internet, the telephone or face to face. It is like a debit card so you cannot run up a debt on it. You can view your statements online or can choose to receive monthly statements to help you manage your direct payment. You can also have your direct payment sent to a bank account.

5. What does Direct Payments Involve?

With support and information, most people can manage direct payments. You need to keep records and receipts to show how you have spent your direct payments at regularly planned reviews. You will then have the freedom to arrange your own support so that it best meets your needs.

6. More Information

Information online: Social care: <http://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/care-and-support>

Direct Payments: www.kentdp.co.uk

Direct Payment Support Team:

Kent's Direct Payment Support Team can provide information on all aspects of accessing and using direct payments. The team can provide support for people who have chosen to recruit and employ a Personal Assistant. This can include help with:

- Recruiting and employing a Personal Assistant
- Information on Self Employed Personal Assistant
- Information on Direct Payments

7. What to do next

If you want more information on direct payments, you can contact your local carers' organisation or contact the Direct Payment Support Team on:

Telephone: 03000 413 600

Email: direct.payments@kent.gov.uk