



Direct Payments

Direct payments help you, or someone you care for, cover the cost of the care needs, so you can gain more choice and control over how and when you receive your support. The payments intend to give you more freedom whilst empowering you to be independent, by helping you tailor the care to your individual needs.

Who Qualifies for Direct Payments?

- Disabled adults (over 16 years) with short or long-term needs
- Disabled parents who require children's services
- Carers aged 16 or over - this includes people with parental responsibility for a disabled child
- Elderly people who need community care services

How do I apply?

Before applying for Direct Payments, you must have a needs assessment to see if you are eligible for support for Adult Social Care or Children's Social Care.

For an Adult Social Care assessment, please call 01226 773300 to have a chat with Barnsley Council to see if you might benefit from this.

A Children's Social Care assessment - also known as a 'Barnsley single assessment' - is a longer process with assessments lasting from 20 to 45 days. Please call 01226 772423 to begin this process.

During these calls, you'll be asked:

- Any support you currently have in place
- What additional support you feel you need to help you achieve your goals, which could be from your local community, family or friends, or other services

What if I already have Adult Social Care or Children's Social Care?



You can discuss getting Direct Payments with your EHC coordinator, or contact Barnsley Council's Self-Directed Support Team on:

Phone: 01226 772425

Email: SDS@barnsley.gov.uk.

How is it assessed?

A Social Care assessment will usually take place at your home. If you already have someone who cares for you, such as a family member, friend or advocate, you're welcome to have them join.

During the assessment, similarly to the initial call with Barnsley Council, the social worker will ask questions about the support you already receive and any additional help you may need to achieve your goals. After the assessment, you can discuss your personal budget and how you'll receive your Direct Payment, based on whether you have the mental capacity to manage payments and make decisions.

How much will my Direct Payment be?

Your Direct Payments are unique to your current needs and situation. The amount you get will depend on the outcome of your support plan. This will be different for each individual, so it's hard to say how much you'll receive. You may have all your costs covered, or you may have to cover extra expenses yourself.

What can I spend my Direct Payment on?

After your plan is finalised, you'll arrange the relevant care and support. The services and support funded by a Direct Payments should meet the same standards as those arranged by Barnsley Council. You can ask your social worker more questions about this throughout the process.

You can use Direct Payments to:

- Employ a personal assistant yourself, so you can hire someone you know and trust
- Purchase care equipment
- Travel to appointments



- Arrange your own care services from an agency
- Support an already unpaid carer (family or friend or associate)
- Attend social, leisure or educational activities, such as relevant training or volunteering to help aid your needs, or community groups to improve your support

You can't use your Direct Payments to:

- Paying for private healthcare services that have not been agreed upon with your social worker
- Pay for your household bills
- Pay for major adaptations to your home
- Cover extra expenses your Personal Assistant asks for without checking with your social worker first
- Pay for illegal activities, gambling and alcohol
- Purchase food
- Purchase clothes
- Pay for anything that's not been agreed as part of your care and support plan

Hiring a Personal Assistant:

You could become your own employer for a Personal Assistant (PA) to provide personal and domestic support, helping you to lead an independent life. However, there is a lot of responsibility with this. You'll have to carry out responsibilities of hiring:

- Recruiting the PA, including interviews and providing employment contracts
- Outlining holidays, notice periods, dismissal and pension responsibilities in the contract
- Handling payroll

You also have to monitor your direct payments through Barnsley Council's audit and monitoring service, which includes:

- Bank statements every three months



- Proof of liability insurance and payroll service
- Provide invoices for care and support services or receipts for purchases made using payment funds

Because of this, you may opt to choose services that are provided by Barnsley Council instead. You may choose a mixture of Direct Payments and services from Barnsley Council. You can also use your direct payment to pay a family member to provide care and support, but they must not live at your address. Barnsley Council will make sure this is safe and appropriate decision during your care and support plan assessment.

Frequently Asked Questions

Question	Answer
Will this affect other benefits?	No, Direct Payments are not a benefit and are not counted as income for any benefits you may receive.

How We Can Help

If you live in the Barnsley borough and would like some advice on Direct Payments, you can:

- Email us at first.contact@dialbarnsley.org.uk
- Or call our Advice Line on 01226 240273