



CARERS FACT SHEET 6e

Direct Payments

As a result of the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000, you are now entitled to receive Direct Payments yourself to purchase help if services are agreed following your carers assessment, and the option is also available to the parents of children with special needs up to the age of 18.

The Guide to Residential Care and the Guide to Care at Home both contain much more information about paying for care services for adults.

Direct Payments is a scheme, run by the Local Authority, whereby the person you care for is paid an agreed amount of money to buy their own care. This only applies once they have had an assessment and it is clear that they qualify for help from Social Services.

The scheme does allow greater flexibility in finding and paying for the right kind of care, which may include breaks for you as a carer. Receiving Direct Payments means that the person is able to choose who provides them with services, but they have to make the arrangements themselves. Services can be purchased from a close relative living nearby or in the same household if the local authority is satisfied that this meets the clients need for that service.

Direct Payments are not taken into account for the purpose of assessing for social security benefits and are not liable for tax.

Direct Payments cannot be used to purchase long term residential care or direct services provided by the Social Care Department, but they can be used to purchase short stays in care homes (but for no more than 4 weeks in any 12 month period).

Services directly provided by social care departments cannot be purchased using Direct Payments but can be accessed if you have part Direct Payments and part direct services.

The most important thing to remember is that it costs absolutely nothing to enquire about help and support. If you don't ask, you will never know the range of options available to you. For more information contact any of the following:

Carers Together in Hampshire 01794 519495

Carers Together Southampton 023 8051 0492

Health and Social Care Department 023 8083 4567

Southampton Centre for Independent Living 023 8033 0982