

## Self-directed support

### Where do I start?

This fact sheet tells you how you can get started with self-directed support.

It gives links to other fact sheets and resources with more detailed information.



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contact In Control  
Tel: 0121 474 5900**

Email:  
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# Self-directed support

## The basic facts

**Self-directed support is a way of having social care support. In Control developed it and it is now government policy.**



Self-directed support puts the person who needs support in control. With the old system you didn't have that much say about your support.

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Councils and health authorities across England are working with In Control to help make self-directed support happen. In Control is also working with other countries around the world.



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# Self-directed support

## More information about self-directed support: getting started

### 1. My money – finding out how much



First, contact your local authority (social services department of the council). They can tell you if you are eligible for support. They use eligibility regulations from the Care Act.



They will assess you to see if you are eligible. This is usually a meeting where a social worker will ask questions about what you need.



Soon after, you should find out how much your social care personal budget will be. This is the amount of money to spend on your support.



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Your local authority can help you check if you are getting all the benefits you are entitled to and if you can get any other funding.



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They will want to do a 'financial assessment'. This means they will check how much money you have, to see if you can pay something towards your support.



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Next, you make a support plan. You need to say how you will spend the money. You can get help to do this.



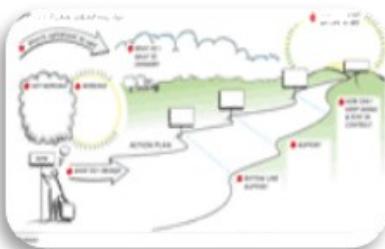
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## Self-directed support

There's no fixed way to make your support plan. You can make it:

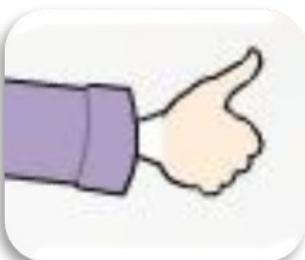


- Yourself
- With family and friends
- With the help of someone else who knows about support planning. In Control or your local authority can tell you about people who can help you to plan.

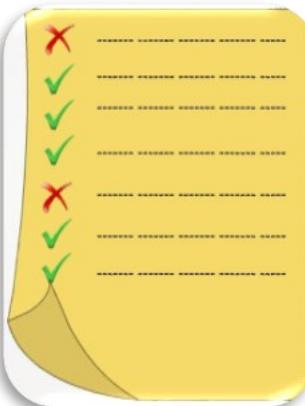


Your plan can say what you want to change or keep the same in your life. You also need to say how you will use your personal budget to make this happen.

### 3. Getting my plan



Your local authority has to agree your support plan before you get the money.



Many local authorities have rules that say what plans they agree. Ask to see these.



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### 4. Organising my money



When your plan is agreed, you can get your personal budget.

You can decide how you want to manage the money. You can look after it yourself – have a personal budget via a direct payment. (This is cash in lieu of service.)

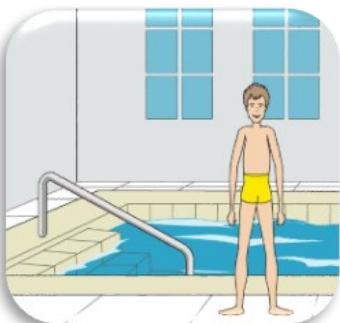
Or you can choose someone else to look after the money:



- A family member or friend.
- A broker – someone you pay to help you.
- A trust – a group of people.
- A service provider or organisation.
- A care manager or social worker.
- Some local authorities use pre-payment cards.

It is up to you how your budget is held.

### 5. Organising my support



You don't just have to choose from professional services. You can choose support that is flexible and works for you. The support that will help you to get on with your life and stay in control. Many people employ their own personal assistants. Some people buy a gym membership as a way of keeping healthy.

There are lots of different ways of getting the life you want. The only right way is what works for you and people close to you.



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# Self-directed support

## 6. Living life



This is probably the most important step. You can live your life with more choice and control.



**There are things most people want in life. Things like:**

- A nice place to live.
- Feeling safe.
- Having fun in your spare time.
- A job or something interesting to do in the day.
- Being part of your community.
- Friends.
- Having a holiday.



A personal budget lets you organise your support to get the life you want.

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### 7. Seeing how it worked



The council have a duty to review and check how it is working every year.



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# Self-directed support

## An Example

### Barry and Sally Fenton

**Barry Fenton, a man in his 50s who lives in West Sussex, used to work on a farm. He had to give up his job three years ago when he was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Now he needs assistance with all aspects of care, 24 hours a day.**



Barry's wife, Sally, has always provided that care. But when she hurt her back, social services bought in some domiciliary homecare for Barry. The couple found this support too restricting and preferred to manage without it. Social services also provided two weeks respite care a year but the process for getting it approved took so long that the place they wanted to go to was already booked up.



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Then they got a personal budget of £316 a week. Barry and Sally were amazed at the change at social services. They used to have to fight to get two weeks' respite a year. Suddenly, they were able to spend a whole budget in a way they chose – and it only took three months to arrange.

The couple decided that Sally would carry on providing Barry's care. They could then spend the budget on things that would make life better. Barry can have regular breaks and they can take some holidays together. They recently had a Vitalise holiday in Nottingham. Barry's son was able to visit them there. That was important because Barry's son's house isn't accessible.

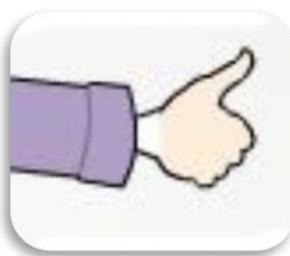
They are also arranging for an agency to help with showering and they are getting help with the garden. The budget has also funded adaptations to their home and to the controls of lights, doors and curtains. And there's still something left to pay for shiatsu and hydrotherapy, both of which help Barry maintain his health as much as possible.



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