

# Self-directed support

## Money – resource allocation

This fact sheet tells you how a local authority decides how much money you can get for support.

The local authority uses a system that is usually called the Resource Allocation System – **RAS** for short.



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## The basic facts

In Control made the first Resource Allocation System so local authorities could quickly tell people how much money was available for their support.

Self-directed support is Government policy now. So every local authority should have a RAS. Some local authorities may not call their system RAS, though.

### The Resource Allocation System should make sure:

- you know quickly how much money you are entitled to
- explain what outcomes the local authority expects you to achieve with the money.

### The local authority should also be clear:

- about how long the money will be available
- what the money can and can't be spent on
- how they will give you the money. Is it weekly, monthly or quarterly?
- what guidance and support they can give to help you manage the money.

## More information about resource allocation

The first stage is to fill out a self-assessment questionnaire. (There is another In Control fact sheet called 'Money – finding out how much I will get'.)

The Resource Allocation System works out an indicative sum of money from the self-assessment questionnaire. This gives you an idea of what the money is likely to be. It is an indication of what is fair and reasonable.

When you know the indicative amount, you need to make a support plan that shows how you intend to use the money. (There is another In Control fact sheet called 'How to make a Support Plan'.)

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A care manager or social worker at the local authority looks at your support plan. They will either agree or disagree with it. (There's another In Control fact sheet called 'Getting your plan agreed'.)

If the local authority doesn't agree your plan, or they allocate a sum of money you don't agree with, you can ask for a complaint form. (There's another In Control fact sheet 'What if I disagree with the Resource Allocation?')

Once it's decided how much money you will get, you can receive the money in different ways. You can manage the money yourself. But you could get someone else to manage it for you. Or you can manage part of the money and get someone else to do the rest.

You will need a separate bank account to hold the money. (There's another In Control factsheet called 'Opening a bank account'.)

## More detail – personal budgets

The money you get for your support is called a personal budget or individual budget.

A personal budget is social services' money. An individual budget is made up of money from different places. (People sometimes define these two things differently or get them mixed up – there's another In Control fact sheet called 'Personal budgets, individual budgets and direct payments'.)

### A personal budget or individual budget should be:

- transparent – you know how much money you have to spend
- controllable – you are able to control how your money is spent
- flexible – you can spend the money on the widest range of options possible
- uniformly monitored
- outcomes-focused – what you achieve with the money is more important than what you spend it on.

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## An example

**Caroline Tomlinson, whose son, Joseph, was the first person to get an individual budget, says:**

‘We went through a self-assessment process. That is where you are given a questionnaire which is very much like a magazine type of questionnaire. You fill in the questions and you are awarded points for answers.

It didn’t take us very long to do this. We went through the questionnaire which really tried to identify Joseph’s needs. After we had completed that, the social worker added up the points. Each point was worth so many pounds and then we were given this as how much money we would be entitled to.

In our situation, we looked at how much money we were entitled to and we did have further discussion of whether we believed that would actually meet Joseph’s needs.

So you don’t have to take the first amount as the firm bottom-line answer. There should be a process to challenge the answer if you think that it isn’t appropriate and you want maybe to look at further support monies – if you can clearly demonstrate that the money wouldn’t actually meet the person’s needs.’



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There is a lot of information about self-directed support on In Control's website:  
[www.in-control.org.uk](http://www.in-control.org.uk)

Example self-assessment questionnaires – look for:

0091\_Self\_AssessQuestion\_1.doc

0092\_SAQ\_1\_Scoresheet.doc

0093\_Self\_Assess\_Quest\_2.doc

0094\_SAQ\_2\_Scoresheet.doc

Free to download or you can buy a copy from:

In Control Support Centre, Carillon House  
 Chapel Lane, Wythall, B47 6JX

or [www.in-control.org.uk/shop](http://www.in-control.org.uk/shop)

**How to be in control**, DVD

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#### About the **In Control and Me** project

A three-year project to produce accessible information for everyone who wants to direct their own support, funded by the National Lottery through the BIG Lottery Fund. You can find out more at [www.mencap.org.uk/incontrol](http://www.mencap.org.uk/incontrol) or [www.in-control.org.uk/icandme](http://www.in-control.org.uk/icandme)

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