# Policy Control Sheet

A completed copy of this policy control sheet must be attached to all new policies and procedures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Title of Policy</strong></th>
<th>Carers Direct Payments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Version number</strong></td>
<td>Version 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of Policy</strong></td>
<td>To inform operational staff about Carers Direct Payments, including eligibility criteria, application process and usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Policy</strong></td>
<td>Operational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Audience</strong></td>
<td>Operational staff in Adult Care Teams and Community Mental Health Teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implementation Date</strong></td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; April 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>This policy supersedes:</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy Author/s</strong></td>
<td>Rhian Bennett, Programme Lead - Carers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approved by</strong></td>
<td>Self Directed Support Reference Group Policy Steering Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approval date</strong></td>
<td>25&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; February 2010 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; March 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implementation lead</strong></td>
<td>Rhian Bennett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monitoring &amp; Review Lead</strong></td>
<td>Rhian Bennett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First year Review Date</strong></td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; April 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subsequent Review dates</strong></td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intranet link</strong></td>
<td>tbc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Effective as at 1st April 2010

Carers Direct Payments

Introduction

1. Carers Direct Payments allow carers to purchase the services that they are assessed as needing, not only to support them in their caring role but also to maintain their own health and wellbeing and improve their opportunities in relation to work, education, training and leisure. They are provided to a carer in their own right and are completely separate from any provision for the person they care for.

Assessment of carers’ needs

2. If a carer is providing, or intends to provide, a substantial amount of care on a regular basis, then they are entitled to an assessment of their carer’s needs. There is no set definition of substantial and it will vary between carers, but can be seen as an amount of care that is having a marked impact on their life.

3. Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 places a duty on social services authorities to inform carers of their rights to an assessment of their carer’s needs. This is a proactive duty so we have to be telling carers about this and not just waiting until they ask.

4. The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 entitles carers to an assessment even when the cared for person refuses an assessment.

Accessing a Carers Direct Payment

5. In order to be eligible for a carer’s service the carer must be caring for someone who is eligible for social care services, but does not necessarily have to be in receipt of those services. The cared for person may or may not meet financial criteria.

6. A carer’s assessment must be completed to determine eligibility for a carers’ service and to identify appropriate support that the carer requires. This could be provided through a Carers Direct Payment or by commissioning “Carers” services through the carers’ spot purchasing budget. Carers should be encouraged to take on a direct payment as it puts them in control of their own lifestyle, but they still have the option of a direct service if they would prefer not to receive a direct payment.

7. If a joint assessment identifies the need for a carer to receive a service in their own right, then a separate carer’s assessment should be completed. It should also be noted that Carers have the right to their own individual assessment and should be asked whether they would prefer a joint or separate assessment.
8. The table below consists of some prompts that will assist the care manager in determining whether or not a Carers Direct Payment is applicable. As a general guide, if the answer to all (or most) questions is 'yes' then the request should be allowed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROMPTS FOR DP ELIGIBILITY</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the cared for person eligible for Community Care Services including AWP services (even if not in receipt)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This must be ‘yes’ to progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the carer providing regular and substantial amounts of care?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This must be ‘yes’ to progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is carer ill themselves or under a particular great deal of stress?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has it been demonstrated that caring role is very likely to break down without a direct payment/service?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does carer have other roles, which need to be performed? E.g. employment, parenting etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there other family members supporting e.g. young carers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long has it been since carer had a real break from caring?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Process for a Carers Direct Payment

10. Undertake a carer’s assessment highlighting the needs and outcomes that are required to be met with a DP. Determine if eligible to receive a direct payment.

11. For all single direct payments, including a holiday grant, complete a Single Payment Application Form (Carers Grant), costing in full the total amount required, and then present for authorisation. The paperwork should include the CareFirst number of the service user that the carer cares for. Please note that the start date for the DP should be realistic i.e. it should be in the future at the point when the agreement can be signed by the carer. If you are unsure please contact the Direct Payment Finance Team (contact details at end).

12. Once agreed, send all forms, including the paperwork to indicate that the panel has agreed the DP and the start date, to the Direct Payment Finance Team who will complete the agreement and return to the care manager to obtain the carer’s signature.

13. If the Direct Payment is for the Sitting Service or is ongoing, a referral should be made by the operational team to the Wiltshire Direct Payment Support Service.
Effective as at 1st April 2010

14. Discussion between care manager and carer about care plan. The agreement should be signed by the carer and the care manager and then forwarded to the Direct Payment Finance Team, who will arrange for payment to be made.

Charging

15. There is NO charge for services to carers and no financial assessment should be undertaken.

Using Carers Direct Payments

16. Direct Payments are a flexible way to provide services to Carers, but it is important that they are used appropriately.

17. Clarification and agreement should be gained by both the care manager and carer from the start of the DP process as to the use of the DP.

18. They should always be used for legal activities only.

19. Sitting Service Direct Payments and the Holiday Grant should only be used as their names indicate (detail is stated in the next section).

20. Ongoing and Single Direct Payments can be used flexibly for a range of different purposes, as long as it is to support the carer in their caring role.

21. Carers direct payments should be used to achieve an outcome for a carer. These may include:

   - Promoting social inclusion through greater opportunities for carers to actively participate in family and community life.
   - Greater opportunities for the personal development of a carer
   - Promotion of a carer’s health, well-being and coping skills
   - More responsive, timely and consistent methods of providing support, with greater opportunities for creativity
   - Providing a carer with the ability to have a life outside of their caring role
   - Ensuring the carer is able to maintain their caring role, if they wish to do so.

22. They should not be used for purposes that can be covered by Benefits that the Carer is in receipt of e.g. income support. Items, such as clothing or food, which you would have to buy whether you are a Carer
or not should not be purchased with a Direct Payment. However, there may be certain items, which may be perceived as a standard requirement for some people, but can be considered if there is evidence to indicate that they would help the carer in their caring role. For example, a washing machine if the carer’s only free time is spent at the laundry and this is placing additional pressure on them. However, this should only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Other means to pay for such services and support should be thoroughly investigated first and the needs of the carer will need to be thoroughly evidenced.

23. DPs should be used to pay for services/support which are covered by a social care remit. Consideration can also be given to any needs that are identified with regards to whether the carer is working or wishes to work and is, or wishes to undertake education, training or leisure activities. However, this should all be seen in the context of the individual’s needs and role as a carer.

24. If the Direct Payment is to be used to employ someone then the care manager should provide the carer with information about keeping safe.

25. The Direct Payment should be reviewed as per paragraphs 63 and 64.
Effective as at 1st April 2010

Types of Carers Direct Payments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Holiday Grant</th>
<th>Sitting Service</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Ongoing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use</td>
<td>Break / Holiday</td>
<td>Short break from caring role</td>
<td>Support carer in caring role - flexible</td>
<td>Support carer in caring role – flexible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount in one year</td>
<td>£300 (once every two years)</td>
<td>£1569.60</td>
<td>£300 unless needs are evidenced as above this</td>
<td>Discretionary limit (PA and agency guidelines)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment frequency</td>
<td>One off</td>
<td>6 monthly</td>
<td>One off</td>
<td>If under £1400/yr - once every 6 months. If over £1400/yr - monthly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate bank account</td>
<td>No (unless total DPs are above £2000/financial yr)</td>
<td>No (unless total DPs are above £2000/financial yr)</td>
<td>No (unless total DPs are above £2000/financial yr)</td>
<td>No (unless total DPs are above £2000/financial yr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returns</td>
<td>Confirmation once holiday taken</td>
<td>Once every 6 months</td>
<td>Confirmation once spent</td>
<td>If under £1400/yr - once every 6 months. If over £1400/yr - monthly until stable, then once every 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral to WDPSS</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26. In order to support as many carers as possible, priority may be given to those carers who have not received a Carers direct payment within the last year.

27. A carer may receive more than one type of Direct Payment. However, if a carer receives over £2000 through Direct Payments within a financial year, then they will be required to open a separate bank account. This should be made clear to the carer from the start of
Effective as at 1st April 2010

**the DP process.** If there are any uncertainties then the decision will be at the discretion of the Direct Payment Team.

28. Please note that the budget for supporting carers is limited and so it is important to support as many carers as possible in the most appropriate and equitable manner. Therefore, £2000 should not be seen as a standard amount for all carers – the amount should be defined by what is needed to achieve their outcomes.

29. If a carer is to be employing either an individual or paying an organisation to provide a service on more than one occasion (other than the Sitting Service) then this should normally be done using an Ongoing Direct Payment. Examples may include relaxation therapy and help with domestic tasks. If there are any uncertainties then the decision will be at the discretion of the Direct Payment Team.

30. Where a direct payment is to provide a service for the cared for person, in order to support the carer, this will be agreed on an individual basis in consultation with the cared for person. Depending on the nature of the service being looked at, an assessment of the service user may be required and if it is to deliver care of a personal nature then the service or DP should be given directly to the service user (or if they lack capacity to the Suitable Person for DPs) i.e. a Carers DP is not applicable.

**Holiday Grant**

31. This is a payment that a carer can receive to put **towards a holiday or break** for themselves as a carer.

32. In most cases this can only be received once every two years by a Carer.

33. This break or holiday may be with or without the person they care for. It should be used in circumstances where the Carer would not otherwise be able to take a break, given their financial situation and caring responsibilities.

**Sitting Service**

**What is it?**

34. This should normally only be provided where the Carer is unable to safely leave the cared for person alone and is unable to take a break from caring.

35. The Sitting Service Direct Payment is provided to give the carer a short break from caring.
Effective as at 1st April 2010

36. It is to provide someone to be with the cared for person so that the carer can have some time away from caring, but not to provide intimate care to the cared for person, unless unavoidable or in exceptional circumstances.

37. This is to be used in place of a direct service being arranged for the Carer, either through spot purchasing or through the Alzheimer’s Sitting Service, which is funded through the Carers Budget. Generally, Carers should be receiving 8 hours sitting service in total per month, whether that be a direct service or a Direct Payment.

38. This cannot be provided for Carers when the cared for person is in receipt of Continuing Health Care and requires personal/medical care whilst the carer is having a break. This should be covered by the NHS Wiltshire.

The payment

39. The carer can use the payment to buy the service from wherever they like, e.g. family friend, domiciliary care agency etc:

- They can pay an agency to provide a Sitting Service. They should not have to pay for liability insurance or tax, as this is arranged by the agency and not them. They can choose more than one agency if this is best for them.

- Or they can pay someone they know to provide a Sitting Service. This may be a friend, neighbour or relative (although they are not allowed to pay someone who lives in the same household unless in exceptional circumstances). This will mean that they will have to arrange liability insurance and possibly tax and national insurance for the person they employ. However, Wiltshire Council will pay for the liability insurance and the Wiltshire Direct Payment Support Service can help them with the tax and national insurance so this should not put them off as there is lots of help available.

40. Eligible carers will receive a payment based on 8 hours per month at £16.35 for 2009/10.

41. It is paid in a block of months - normally six months running from April to September and October to March, unless started part-way through these periods. Therefore a payment for six months is £784.80.

42. Payments are based on an allocation of approximately eight hours a month. Money can be used flexibly within these payment blocks. So a carer could transfer hours between months or take breaks of varying lengths e.g. 2 hours or 8 hours. However, hours should not be transferred between payment block periods e.g. if not used by end of September they should not be taken into October.
43. If the service they buy is cheaper than £16.35 per hour they can buy more than eight hours per month of Sitting Service. However, if it is more expensive they will not be able to buy eight hours. The choice is theirs.

44. Carers will be asked to complete a simple monitoring form twice a year so we know that the money has been spent on a Sitting Service.

45. If the Carer has not spent all of the money by the end of the six month block, they will be asked to state how much they have left on the monitoring form. This amount will then be deducted from their next payment so that they have the full allocation for the next six months.

46. If the Carer chooses to receive a Sitting Service Direct Payment, but after a while decide that they do not want to manage the payments anymore, they can choose to have the service arranged for them.

**Single Direct Payments**

47. These are payments that are paid to carers to help them continue in their caring role and are described as a ‘one-off’ payment.

48. As long as the payment will help the carer continue caring, these payments can be used flexibly.

49. It is the Single Direct Payment which is to be used in most cases to help meet the needs of the carer, unless they specifically require a sitting service or holiday grant (see above) or the support they require is ongoing.

50. Under most circumstances an amount of up to £300 should be seen as an appropriate payment for a Single Direct Payment, unless the assessment identifies outcomes that can only be met with a higher amount and evidence of this can be demonstrated.

51. A Single Direct Payment to a carer is not to be used to purchase care for the person they care for and it is not a payment for the care they provide.

52. Some examples of Single Direct Payments:

- Purchase of communication equipment (e.g. mobile phones) which help carers to stay in touch with the person they care for
- Purchase, installation and repair of equipment: items and supportive technology that are relevant to the caring role
Learning equipment (e.g. computers) which enable carers to maintain their own studies and interests independently in ways which promote their caring roles.

Ongoing Direct Payments

53. These are payments that are paid to carers to help them continue in their caring role.

54. As long as the payment will help the carer continue caring, these payments can be used flexibly.

55. Ongoing Direct Payments should be used where the service/support is going to be provided over a period of time on a regular basis.

56. If the Ongoing Direct Payment is under £1400 per financial year then it will be paid and monitored on the same basis as the Sitting Service i.e. paid once every six months, with returns once every six months and payments will be topped up based on amounts remaining from the previous 6 months period. Within payment blocks, money can be used flexibly over the period as per the Sitting Service (see Types of Direct Payments section).

57. If the Ongoing Direct Payment is over £1400 per financial year then payment will be monthly. Monitoring will be monthly until stable and then reduce to once every six months. Once moved over to six month monitoring periods, money can be used flexibly over the period as per the Sitting Service (see Types of Direct Payments section).

58. Some examples of Ongoing Direct Payments:

- Relaxation, stress management and holistic therapies to enable carers time off from their caring role
- Hobby, leisure and interests - where the benefits of these off-set the stress of caring
- Travel costs relating to caring roles (including driving lessons)
- Domestic help e.g. gardening and housework
- Education, training and purchase of learning equipment to develop skills and understanding to help with the caring role. Personal attendance on courses, or distance learning, can both be considered
- Course fees which enable carers to maintain their own studies and interests independently in ways which promote their caring roles.
Effective as at 1st April 2010

**Carers Direct Payments cannot be used for the following:**

59. To purchase community care or other services to meet the assessed needs of the person they care for:
   - To purchase permanent residential care.
   - To secure services from a close relative living in the same household (unless in exceptional circumstances).
   - To circumvent a chargeable service.
   - To deliver services of an intimate nature to the person being cared for unless there are prescribed or unforeseen circumstances.

60. Once services of an intimate nature are delivered in prescribed circumstances, the local authority should treat this as a change in circumstances. The person being cared for should be approached by the local authority and asked if they are now willing to be assessed and/or receive services in their own right. Therefore **Carers Direct Payments should not be used in order to provide respite care, which includes personal/intimate care, for the cared for person in order to give the carer a break.** A Direct Payment to the service user should be considered in these circumstances.

61. Services of an **intimate nature** are defined as undertaking or assisting the cared for person with the following:
   - Lifting, washing, grooming, eating, dressing, bathing, toileting, administering medicines or otherwise having a physical contact with the person cared for; or
   - Supervising the cared for person whilst they are dressing or bathing.

62. Prescribed circumstances are intimate services delivered to the cared for person in the following circumstances:
   - The cared for person changes their mind and asks for help with the intimate task, or
   - In an emergency an intimate service is delivered because the cared for person is likely to suffer serious personal harm unless a service of an intimate nature is provided.
Effective as at 1st April 2010

Reviews

63. All Carers should receive a review every 12 months following their initial assessment or sooner if there are changes to their caring role and circumstances. Changes to the caring role could include having to care for an additional family member or the health of the person they care for or their own health deteriorating.

64. When a carer who has been receiving a Direct Payment has a review, they should have both a Direct Payment Review and a Carer's Review (based upon their carers’ assessment) and both of these should be recorded appropriately on CareFirst.

Contact details

DACSDirectPayments@wiltshire.gov.uk

West  01225 771668
South  01225 718544
North  01225 713899
East  01225 718210