

Effect on other benefits

Direct Payments do not affect any other benefits you receive.

How to apply for Direct Payments locally

If you already receive services from your local council, ask them about Direct Payments. If you are applying for services for the first time, your council should discuss the Direct Payments option with you when they assess your needs.

To find out more about Direct Payments or to apply online, please visit www.gloucestershire.gov.uk or www.direct.gov.uk.

What if my circumstances change?

If the needs of the person you care for change – for better or worse, in the long or short term – contact your local council as soon as possible so they can reassess the level of payments you require.

Councils can review Direct Payments as the needs of children and families change over time.

For more information, contact Gloucestershire County Council on 01452 425000, Jobcentre Plus on 01452 366000 or the Benefits Agency.

Managing Your Affairs and Lasting Power of Attorney

It is important to organise your legal and financial affairs while you can still do so. You can choose one or more people to manage your affairs through a Lasting Power of Attorney. For more information, contact the Office of the Public Guardian on 0845 3302900.

For more information, please see separate leaflet: Mental Health and the Law.

If you would like further information, additional copies or would like to receive this leaflet in another language, large print or audio format please contact the Trust Communications Team at Trust Headquarters, Rikenel, Montpellier, Gloucester GL1 1LY. You can email us at 2gether.comms@glos.nhs.uk or call us on 01452 891604.

2gether NHS Foundation Trust, Rikenel, Montpellier, Gloucester GL1 1LY
www.2gether.nhs.uk

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Information for carers

Carers' Rights

2gether
Making life better

Carer's Assessment

All carers have the right to an assessment of their needs.

A Carer's Assessment is not a test of your ability to care. It simply recognises your crucial role and means you can receive the support you need. See our separate leaflet on Carers' Assessments for more information on how to get an assessment and how it can help.

Employment Rights

You have a statutory right to ask your employer for flexible working arrangements if you are:

- A parent of a disabled child under the age of 18
- Caring for an adult who is either a relative or lives at the same address as you

Carers also have the right to take unpaid time off work in emergencies.

Returning to work can affect your rights and benefits as a carer depending on the number of hours you work, your earnings and your savings.

Carer's Allowance – for you

Carer's Allowance is a taxable benefit paid to people who spend at least 35 hours per week providing care for a relative, friend or neighbour.

To claim Carer's Allowance, the person you care for must receive a benefit such as Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance.

Attendance Allowance – for the person you look after

Attendance Allowance is a tax-free benefit for people aged 65 or over who have an illness or disability and need help with personal care. Your level of savings or income does not usually affect your entitlement to Attendance Allowance.

Disability Living Allowance – for the person you look after

Disability Living Allowance is a tax-free benefit for children and adults under 65 who need help getting around and/or looking after themselves because they are ill, terminally ill or severely disabled.

Support for people on a low income

If you are on a low income, you could be eligible for financial help for yourself or the person you care for.

Community Care Grants

The person you care for may qualify for a Community Care Grant if they need help to live independently in the community or to ease exceptional pressure on you. You do not have to pay back a Community Care Grant.

Direct Payments

Direct Payments are sums of money paid by social services to enable an individual to buy services or equipment to meet assessed needs. This is instead of receiving those services direct from your local council. Carers aged 17 or over can receive Direct Payments.

Please note: Direct Payments have nothing to do with getting your pension or benefits paid directly into your bank account.

What can I use Direct Payments for?

Carers can use Direct Payments to buy services from an organisation or they can use them to employ somebody to provide support. This includes support that might help to maintain the carer's health and wellbeing – for example, driving lessons or a holiday.

Carers assessed as needing domestic help can use a Direct Payment to buy support services they need. Carers cannot use Direct Payments to buy services for the person they care for. They can only spend them on meeting their assessed needs as a carer. They cannot use Direct Payments to pay for a service from their spouse or civil partner, close relative or anyone who lives in the same household – unless they have specifically recruited that person as a live-in employee.

Your council can tell you more about circumstances when Direct Payments are not given. You can sometimes agree exceptional circumstances with your council.

How much can I receive?

The amount you receive in Direct Payments will depend on the assessment of your needs. Direct Payments are paid directly into a bank, building society, Post Office or National Savings account.