

Workshop: What could a new Direct Payment Support Service (DPSS) look like?

27th January 2021

The following slides have been collated as a result of the feedback we received within the workshop

National Co-Production Group (NCAG) discussion about DPSS' in their area:

Peer support helped me steer through the stages of the DP process which had originally been very difficult to manage on my own

I've been able to put together a special care plan during the Coronavirus pandemic. This has allowed me to put contingency plans in place should any changes occur during this time

With regards to my DP I have had to largely fight for the flexibilities and increase in budget myself. Whilst it has been personal journey I can use my DP flexibly and it has improved my life

Peer support has also worked well for PA's and or carers providing support to the DP holder. Helped to discuss health and wellbeing and undertake specific training

Disabled led organisation set up a Payroll service for my PA's. They have been brilliant. Experts in this field, however, I need to go elsewhere when needing personnel advice

When a DPSS is contracted out to an organisation by the council it sometimes feels that they act on behalf of the council rather than supporting you in the best way possible

Different ways support is provided to Direct Payment recipients in England

- Across England support for DP recipients varies from one area to another. In the session we looked at a number of ways of how this is being delivered and the benefits that can come with it.
- We looked at Direct Payment support from the following:
 - By the Council
 - By social workers
 - By independent brokers
 - Peer Support
 - Unpaid carers
 - By disabled people's led organisations
 - By specialist direct payment support organisations
 - A mixture of some or all of the above
- We looked at who commissions it and what do they commission?

By the Council

Functions can be changed through internal agreement
Know how other departments work – e.g. finance, financial assessments, audit
Don't always provide range of functions necessary – e.g. payroll, insurance

Good Example(s) of where this is working:

- Medway Council

Things to consider:

Can feel as if it is the will of the Council rather than championing Direct Payment recipients

By Independent Brokers

Very person centred
Work with individuals as much or as little as needed
Will help with complete range of functions required

Good examples of where this is working:

- National Brokerage Network/
Imagineer [Click here to be taken to their website](#)

Things to consider:

There is a cost for their service, usually paid by the direct payment recipient, sometimes this needs negotiating with the Council to ensure it's in the personal budget

By Social Workers

Excellent navigation support
Well placed to help with continuity of support – fewer handoffs

Good example(s) of where this is working:

Thurrock Council

Things to consider:

Level of detailed knowledge needed
Different 'pulls' on social work

By Disabled Peoples Led Organisations

Very person centred and live Co-Production

Brings together many peer and carer supporters

Deep knowledge of rights, entitlements, local systems policies and processes

Can cut through these processes with application of lived experience

Will always seek to secure best value for direct payment recipients

Good examples of where this works:

- Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living [Link to Wiltshire CIL](#)
- REAL – Tower Hamlets [Link to Real](#)

Through Peer Support

Evidence shows this approach works best out of all the models

People share what has worked for them and point out pitfalls to avoid

A high degree of reciprocity – giving and getting natural support

Good examples of where this works:

- NCAG [Link to NCAG](#)
- London SDS Forum [Link to London SDS Forum](#)
- Bringing Us Together [Link to Bringing Us Together](#)
- Spinal Injuries Association [Link to Spinal Injury Association](#)

Things to consider:

Works best when allowed to flourish naturally, uses informal networks and channels

Through Unpaid Carers

Similar to peer support

Evidence shows same household 'teams' very efficient and effective

Sharing what works and what doesn't work

Highly responsive support

Good example(s) of where this works:

- Carers Leeds [Link to Carers Leeds](#)

Things to consider:

How to value this kind of peer support

How not to stifle it

By Specialist Direct Payment Support Organisations

Range of organisational forms

Expert knowledge

Often specialise in operating financial processes – payroll, managed accounts, banking facilities

Other examples of DPSS organisations who currently do not operate in Essex:

- Penderels Trust – Nationwide
[Click here to be taken to their website](#)

Things to consider:

Often can/will only provide support they are contracted to provide

Often seen as Councils ‘instrument’ in oversight of direct payments

A mixture of some or all that have been mentioned

Better availability of a variety of types of support

People more likely to be able to get exactly what they are looking for

Enables choice to be maximised

Creates a competitive market

Good example(s) of where this works:

- West Sussex – Independent Lives
[Click here to be taken to their website](#)

Who Commissions it and what do they Commission?

Council contracting options:

Contract out to a provider/organisation to deliver on all key functions

Contract out to a number of providers/organisations to ensure that key functions are available such as payroll and managed accounts

Individuals using direct payments to tailor their own best support from a market of providers/organisations

Good examples of where this works:

Contracted:

- Hammersmith and Fulham [Link to H&F DP website](#)
- Wiltshire CIL [Link to Wiltshire CIL](#)

Market:

- 'Connecttosupport' Yorks & Humber [Link to Organisation](#)



The above is a summary of what residents said good direct payment support should look like in Hammersmith and Fulham

1st Breakout Session: **What do you want DPSS to do?**

The purpose of this breakout session was to identify the **FUNCTIONS** people would like a direct payment support service to undertake.

- Support with HR & Personnel issues
- Support with Accounts & Payroll
- Provide informed Information, Advice & Guidance which should be easily accessible (one stop shop would be desirable)
- Support you through the whole Direct Payment process
- Staff who have either lived experience/work experience of DP's
- All-age approach/offer
- Online blog/community where DP recipients can discuss and ask questions specific to DP's (similar platform to 'Mumsnet')
- To allow flexibility in DP support plan's
- Offer genuine choice & control to DP recipients
- Platform for Peer support
- Provide informed Employment Advice
- Provide an up to date PA job board and help with recruiting PA's
- Provide Training to both DP recipients and PA's
- Embed contingency plans in support planning
- Service to provide a joined up approach including Carers DP's, MH DP's, etc...
- Clear processes from start to end
- Frequent and timely reviews that will pick up on any issues

2nd Breakout session: **How do you think they should do this?**

The purpose of this session was to identify the **PRINCIPLES/VALUES** people would like to see and feel in the way direct payment support is offered and provided.

- Co-Production involved throughout e.g. design of service through to the continuity of service
- Decision-making to be transparent
- Promote genuine Choice & Control
- Embedded values & principles which doesn't allow processes or culture to override this
- Honest and upfront
- Embed the Care Act
- Realise and respect the expertise of those with Lived Experiences
- People should know about Direct Payment's before they need them
- Have clear boundaries in place between Local Authority, Direct Payment Support Service and DP recipient
- 'Enabling' rather than 'Policing'
- More trust in people who use DP's
- Person-centred approach

What next?

- In our next workshop we will turn the focus to PA's. This was a key priority highlighted by the group.
- The workshop is titled 'How Do We Develop The Market For Personal Assistants (PA's)?' and you can sign up to the workshop by [clicking here to register onto Eventbrite](#). This will be taking place on the 17th March from 1pm-4pm. A zoom meeting invite will be sent to you nearer to the event date
- If you have any ideas or points you would like discuss in this workshop please do let us know as soon as possible as we are still in the design phase of the session
- Co-Production is central to the DP and Personalisation re-design and the workshops so far are a great example of how well this concept works.
- However, Co-Production doesn't stop there and we will embed this into the commissioning and delivery phase of the re-design work. We look forward to having further conversations with you to identify how we can make this work