



## WHAT ARE DIRECT PAYMENTS?

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**What are Direct Payments?** - Direct Payments are an alternative to traditional social care services. You can have a combination of Direct Payments and services provided by the county council. They are simply payments of money made by the county council to people so they can arrange their own care when they need it.

**What do Direct Payments mean for you?** - Direct Payments offer you choice and control over the care and support that you need. This means you can choose who provides your care; when the person comes to assist you; where they go; and what care they provide. Direct Payments offer you more flexibility and independence.

This also means that you have control over your own life and you can make your own decisions. Direct Payments do not affect any benefits or pensions that you may be receiving.

### **Direct Payments can be used for:**

- Personal care and assistance to help you to live in your own home
- Short breaks and respite care
- Support to access community, social and leisure activities
- Transport
- Support for carers
- Items of agreed equipment

### **Direct Payments cannot be used for:**

- Services directly provided by the county council
- Long term residential or nursing care
- Housing services such as rent
- Health services such as physiotherapy
- Household bills

**Will it cost me anything to use Direct Payments?** - You will be given enough money to meet your needs as agreed in your assessment. The services you buy with Direct Payments must not cost more than they would if they were provided directly by the county council.

The county council may ask you to contribute towards the cost of community care services. The same charge applies whether you use Direct Payments or if the county council provides the service. A financial assessment will identify any contribution you may be asked to make towards your care and can also give you advice and information about benefits you may be entitled to claim.

**What does Direct Payments involve?** - With support and information, most people can manage Direct Payments. You need a bank account just for Direct Payments and you will also need to keep records and receipts to show how you have spent your Direct Payments. You will then have the freedom to arrange your own care that best meets your needs.