Personal Budgets Survey March 2011

The Results

There remains an ongoing debate about the correct number of people in the 'eligible' group to receive personal budgets. However, as things stand the target group is those people with ongoing (English) council funded care and support in a community setting (i.e. excluding care homes). Our survey indicates that at any one time this eligible group is around 1 million people.

- Total number of personal budgets delivered by Councils across England has doubled in the last year to 338,000 in March 2011. In March 2010 168,000 were being delivered and in March 2009, 93,000.

- One third of approximately 1 million eligible people supported in community settings by English Councils therefore now receive a personal budget, and half of these people are over 65 years of age.

- The rate of increase in personal budget delivery was much faster in the 2nd half of the 2010/11 (rising by 100k) than the first (70k increase), showing that the move to personal budgets is picking up speed.

- Nearly all of the increase has been in ‘managed' personal budgets, with no significant increase in direct payments numbers in the last year.

- Of the 132 councils responding to the survey, the majority (83) are now delivering personal budgets to a third or more of their eligible users, and 27 of these councils give personal budgets to over half of their eligible users.

- However a significant minority of councils (at least 19) are delivering personal budgets to less than a fifth of potentially eligible users.

- The total amount of money allocated in personal budgets overall has now passed the £1.5bn mark, representing almost £1 in every £7 spent by councils directly on care and support services.

- A fifth of personal budgets have a value of less than £1k per annum, but a quarter are for £10k or more.

- Whilst only a third of personal budgets are delivered via a direct payment, almost half of all personal budget funding is allocated in these payments, suggesting that the people offered larger funds are choosing direct payments as their preferred delivery method.