Direct Payments

Increasing the Take Up

Presented by: Frances Hasler
On behalf of Disability Rights UK
• Government policy on personal budgets confirmed in the Bill in Queen’s Speech on 8th May
• Confirmed also that government wants to see a significant proportion of PBs as direct payments
• Though there has been a significant increase in DPs since Putting People First in 2007, the great majority of the increase in PBs in recent years been via council managed personal budgets
• There is a very large amount of variation from council to council on DPs suggesting that some have developed much more effective strategies over time and this extends to groups where the numbers are generally smaller, especially older people
• This suggests that good local strategies can mean more can realise the potential of DPs
• TLAP has therefore commissioned Disability Rights UK to review current effective approaches and share their findings
• A workshop was held in April for regional council representatives to share positive practice and we asked these representatives to share back in their regions
• We are now running this and additional webinars to share with a wider audience
• A report will follow in a few weeks on the TLAP web-site
Aims

- To share examples of what people are doing to support the take up of direct payments
- To share what we know on what works - summarising the research and recent experience
- To get your feedback on what you are trying locally
Key themes

Right support
- brokerage, managed accounts, age-specific support, third party support, peer support

Right tools
- online collaboration, online shops, PA register, smart cards

Right systems
- easier assessment
- simpler monitoring
- integral part of personalisation

Right attitude
- training for staff
- flexibility
The research

Barriers for users
- Information – especially for the most excluded
- Recruiting
- Complexity
- Inadequate funds
- Confusion about self assessment

Barriers for staff
- Low awareness about direct payments
- Lack of training
- Restrictive attitudes about capability and fears people will not be able to manage
- Reluctance to refer to ULOs
The research

Structural barriers

- Lack of support services
- Lack of funding for user-led schemes
- Over-bureaucratic paperwork and monitoring
- Lack of infrastructure and investment in direct payments
- Culture of risk aversion and conservatism

What helps take up

- Effective Direct Payments support schemes
- Access to peer support and advocacy
- Training and support for care managers and front-line staff
- Streamlining local bureaucracy
- Linking direct payments to overall commissioning strategies for personalisation
Right support
External support plans

- **Sheffield** - people choose direct payments more frequently if they use an external support planning organisation.

- All support plans are signed off by a council office, so every single plan is quality assured, and support planners audited.

- People choose their own planner. Plans take around 10 hours, some longer. Costs between £15 - £25 per hour

The impact of external support planning on choice of direct payment option:

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Council managed service</th>
<th>Self managed service</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan by internal staff</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan by external planner</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>91%</td>
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Managed accounts

- LA makes the direct payment into a “managed account”
- Supports with paperwork
- Helps people who have difficulties in opening a bank account due to poor credit or lack of suitable paperwork
- Charged-for service; various costs
- The DP recipient is still the employer/contractor

Equal Lives (Norfolk Coalition of Disabled People)
Manages over 2000 accounts from DP Recipients in Norfolk & Suffolk
£20 million turnover
Tailored support for specific groups

Manages over 200 accounts from DP recipients in Sheffield (majority of whom are people who use mental health services) (referrals around 12 per month)
Payments are only made in accordance with the support plan or CM authorisation
Agreements in place
Charges £300 per year + £15
PA registers

- Makes recruitment process easier; no expensive advertising
- Searching by availability, skills, knowledge, experience, geographical area and personal profile of personal assistants.
- Added value of lots of associated information including forums for individual employers
Peer support

Peer Support Darlington Association on Disability (DAD)

- Stronger Voices...Strong Support (3 years project to improve choice & control, DH Innovation Excellence & Strategic Development Fund)
- Trained Advisors & Trained Support Planning Partners
- 3 levels of support - workshops, drop ins, training
- Culture change - citizenship & participation
Right Systems
Systems supporting personalisation....

• Making it ‘business as usual’
• Getting the RAS right
• Aligning aims of personalisation and record-keeping
• Leading use of IT to speed up process

• Encouraging innovation
• Encouraging micro enterprise
• Supporting flexibility
• “Team managers need to be as committed to achieving outcomes as they are to meeting budget”
Right systems

Hull City Council - establish eligibility then assessment to determine indicative personal budget.

- Use of lap tops, dongles, blackberries to empower teams to assess people’s requirements quickly and let them know almost immediately potential budgets.

- Staff are encouraged (and supported) to work remotely

- Resulting in year on year increase in direct payment - from 230 in 2010 to 600 in 2013
Training

For users and PAs

- Cheshire Centre for Independent Living
- partnership with Cheshire West and Chester Council - facilitating a tailor-made Learning Service
- 'to improve the skills, knowledge, experience and employability of individual employers and personal assistants'.

Refreshing the training of assessors (Brighton)

- Direct Payments are part of personal budgets now, so to boost them we need to make personal budgets work better. We are training social work team leaders, giving them confidence to go beyond the usual menu of options for older people.
Tailoring the approach

Engage carers to boost take-up

• “For over-80 year-olds, take-up was only likely to happen with the involvement of a family member or friend to take on administrative responsibilities”
• “Our children were going to the same places. By sharing resources we could get more out of our budgets.”

Using peers to boost take-up

• “Service users and carers who have used Direct Payments are often the best at convincing others of the benefits. We made a short film highlighting about five case studies and showed this to carer groups and service users. Concrete examples, based close to home are very powerful at convincing others.”
Open-minded approach

Integrated approach
Carers payment prescription (Surrey)
Partnership with Independent Living Council and Action for Carers - LA and health commissioners have collaborated to support carers. GPs can write a direct payment ‘prescription’ for support for carers.

Supporting pooled budget arrangements

• Trust 23 (Derbyshire)
• Parent-led trust, pooling DPs and ILF
• Shared tenancy between four young adults

• “Trust parents to work things out between themselves - not try to micro manage the transactions”
Targeted approaches

“Community development workers have been successful at encouraging BME (Bangladeshi) community to access DPs - no history of accessing commissioned services”

- Using community development workers to link more isolated people - e.g. Cambridgeshire Community Navigators

- I found it was important to talk to community mental health teams about the benefits of Direct Payments as they often gate keep and may have prejudiced views on DPs and Personal Budgets. This improved take up significantly.
Putting it into action

- Getting the right mix - confidence, helpful systems, choice of support...

- Questions?

- Ideas?
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