

## Using direct payments to buy services

All our information sheets are available on the **My Care North Tyneside** website – [mycare.northtyneside.gov.uk](http://mycare.northtyneside.gov.uk) – or you can ask your social care worker to give you a copy.

A direct payment gives you a lot of choice about how to meet your needs for care and support. Some people use a direct payment to buy goods or services from businesses or charities, e.g. a care agency, respite care, or a day centre.

If you use a business or charity to support you with toileting, washing, dressing, or with your medication, they must be registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). You can check their registration and their inspection rating on the CQC website: [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

If you are going to get support with things other than personal care or medication, you can use any provider. You might decide to look online for reviews, and/or ask family, friends and neighbours for recommendations.

### Tips for finding services to suit you:

- Be clear what support you are looking for. Look at your support plan and the tasks that you can ask for support with.
- Think about how much support you can afford – when do you want it, how often, and what is important to you about the way the tasks are done?
- Ask people you trust for recommendations, and check out the companies online – look for reputable review websites, or check the Care Quality Commission website if the organisation provides personal care.



North  
Tyneside  
Council



[mycare.northtyneside.gov.uk](http://mycare.northtyneside.gov.uk)

- When you make contact with organisations, go through what you are looking for. Always contact more than one before committing.
- You may want to discuss staff training, their policy on Disclosure and Barring (criminal records) checks and safeguarding. It is also important that you know about their complaints procedure.
- Get a written agreement for the services you will get. This should include:
  - Details of the service to be provided, and the costs
  - Start date of the service
  - How to contact them
  - Details of notice for cancellation of the service by both you and the agency
  - How much notice you have to give if you do not want to use the service, and what the charges would be
  - How the agency wants payments to be made, how often, and where they will send invoices.

### **How to pay for services**

The business or charity will give you details about how to pay.

- For some services, they will send an invoice with payment details.
- If they have an online payment system, you can go to their website and pay using your direct payment prepaid account card.
- If you need to pay using a BACS transfer, log on to your direct payment prepaid account and set this up.
- You should keep copies of invoices and proof of payment for audit purposes. This can be as paper copies or electronically.

## **More information**

- Direct payments for carers: <https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/practical-support/arranging-care-and-support-for-someone/direct-payments/>

## **Alternative formats**

If you need us to do anything differently (reasonable adjustments) to help you access our services, including providing this information in another language or format, please contact the Social Care Contact Centre on 0191 643 2777, or email: [childrenandadultscontactcentre@northtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:childrenandadultscontactcentre@northtyneside.gov.uk)

Document last reviewed: July 2024