

# Self-directed support

## Where do I start?

This fact sheet tells you how you can get started with self-directed support.

It gives links to other fact sheets and resources with more detailed information.



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contact In Control.  
Tel: 01564 821 650  
**Email In Control**  
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Find more fact sheets at:  
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## The basic facts

**Self-directed support is the new system of social care. In Control developed it and now it's government policy.**

Self-directed support puts the person who needs support in control. With the old system you didn't have that much say about your support.

Each local authority should have someone who is taking a lead to make sure self-directed support happens.

Councils and health authorities across England are working with In Control to help make self-directed support happen. (In Control is also working with other countries around the world.)

## More information about self-directed support – getting started

### 1. My money – finding out how much

First, contact your local authority. They can tell you if you are eligible for support. They use government guidance called **Fair Access to Care** to decide. If you are eligible, they will help you fill out a short assessment questionnaire.

Soon after, you should find out how much your social care personal budget will be.

Your local authority can help you check if you are getting all the benefits you are entitled to and if you can get any other funding.

They may want to do a 'financial assessment'. This means they will check how much money you have, to see if you can pay something towards your support.

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## 2. Making my plan

Next, you make a support plan. You need to say how you will spend the money. Your local authority can help you with this.

**There's no fixed way to make your support plan. You can make it:**

- yourself
- with family and friends
- with the help of someone you pay – someone who knows about support planning. Your local authority can tell you about people who can help you to plan.

Your plan can say what you want to change or keep the same in your life. You also need to say how you will use your personal budget to make this happen.

## 3. Getting my plan agreed

Your local authority has to agree your support plan before you get the money.

Local authorities use a checklist to make sure your plan is really about you and that you have thought carefully about your support.

## 4. Organising my money

When your plan is agreed you can get your personal budget.

You can decide how you want to manage the money. You can look after it yourself – have a direct payment.

**Or you can choose someone else to look after the money:**

- a family member or friend
- a broker – someone you pay to help you
- a Trust – a group of people
- a service provider or organisation
- a care manager or social worker.

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## 5. Organising my support

You don't have to just choose from professional services. You can choose support that is flexible and works for you. The support that will help you to get on with your life and stay in control. Many people employ their own personal assistants. Some people buy a gym membership as a way of keeping healthy; there are lots of different ways of getting the life you want.

The only right way is what works for you and people close to you.

## 6. Living life

This is probably the most important step. You can live your life with more choice and control.

**There are things most people want in life – things like:**

- a nice place to live
- feeling safe
- having fun in your spare time
- a job or something interesting to do in the day
- being part of your community
- friends
- having a holiday.

A personal budget lets you organise your support to get the life you want.

## 7. Seeing how it worked

From time to time you need to meet with your care manager or social worker to see how things are going.

**This is a time to:**

- show how you are using your money
- show what you have learned
- talk about what has worked well and what hasn't worked so well
- talk about changes you want to make for the future.

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# An example

## Barry and Sally Slugg

**Barry Slugg, a man in his 50s who lives in West Sussex, used to work on a farm. He had to give up his job three years ago when he was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Now he needs assistance with all aspects of care, 24 hours a day.**

Barry's wife, Sally, has always provided that care. But when she hurt her back, social services bought in some domiciliary care for Barry. The couple found this support too restricting and preferred to manage without it. Social services also provided two weeks' respite care a year but the process for getting it approved took so long that the place they wanted to go to was already booked up.

Then they got a personal budget of £316 a week. Barry and Sally were amazed at the change at social services. They used to have to fight to get two weeks' respite a year. Suddenly, they were able to spend a whole budget in a way they chose – and it only took three months to arrange.

The couple decided that Sally would carry on providing Barry's care. They could then spend the budget on things that would make life better. Barry can have regular breaks and they can take some holidays together. They recently had a Vitalise holiday in Nottingham. Barry's son was able to visit them there. That was important because Barry's son's house isn't accessible.

They are also arranging for an agency to help with showering and they are getting help with the garden. The budget has also funded adaptations to their vehicle and to the controls of Barry's wheelchair. And there's still something left to pay for shiatsu and hydrotherapy, both of which help Barry maintain his health as much as possible.

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**There is a lot of information about self-directed support on In Control's website:**  
[www.in-control.org.uk](http://www.in-control.org.uk)

**Here is a selection of things that tell you more:**

Free to download from [www.in-control.org.uk](http://www.in-control.org.uk)

0006 Easy English booklet

0006a Easy English poster

These are also available in Urdu, Welsh and Spanish

0180 7 Steps Booklet – What is Self-Directed Support?

**Free to download or you can buy a copy from:**

In Control Support Centre, Carillon House, Chapel Lane, Wythall, B47 6JX or [www.in-control.org.uk/shop](http://www.in-control.org.uk/shop)

A report on In Control's First Phase 2003-2005

A Report on In Control's Second Phase: evaluation and learning 2005-2007

**Printed publications for sale at:**

In Control Support Centre, Carillon House, Chapel Lane, Wythall, B47 6JX or [www.in-control.org.uk/shop](http://www.in-control.org.uk/shop)

**The Essential Family Guide: how to help your family member be in control** Caroline Tomlinson

**Keys to Citizenship: a guide to getting good support for people with learning disabilities** Simon Duffy

#### About the **In Control and Me** project

A three-year project to produce accessible information for everyone who wants to direct their own support, funded by the National Lottery through the BIG Lottery Fund. You can find out more at [www.mencap.org.uk/incontrol](http://www.mencap.org.uk/incontrol) or [www.in-control.org.uk/icandme](http://www.in-control.org.uk/icandme)

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