

Accessing Self-directed Support as a carer



Do you provide care for someone?



You may be a parent, a partner, a son or daughter, a sister or brother or friend to someone who needs support as a result of their illness (physical or mental illness and substance misuse), condition or disability. If you provide them with help and support to manage their life – you are a carer.

What is Self-directed Support?

Self-directed Support is the way that social care and support is organised in Scotland. Self-directed Support aims to give you choice and control at the level you want. There are 4 options:

1. **Direct payment** – you receive the funds to buy support yourself
2. **Individual service fund** – you choose the support you would like and it is arranged for you
3. **Traditional services** – your local health and social care partnership arrange support on your behalf
4. **A mixture of 1,2 and/or 3** – you can combine the options in the way that suits you best

The person you care for may already be accessing Self-directed Support. As a carer you may also be able to access Self-directed Support for your own support needs

When would I be offered Self-directed Support?

All carers are entitled to an adult carer support plan or young carer statement and this is the first step to accessing Self-directed Support. You can find out how to request one from your local carer centre or social work department.

The Carers Act

As a result of the Act, all carers have the right to an adult carer support plan or young carer statement.

You can find out more in our leaflet 'What to expect when you make an adult carer support plan.'

In addition, Local Authorities have duties to support carers including:

- A duty to provide information to carers
- A duty to support carers who have needs that meet the local eligibility criteria.

When carers meet the local eligibility criteria they are able to access Self-directed Support to meet their identified needs and outcomes.

Outcomes are a way of describing what is important to you and what your aims and hopes are.

An adult carer support plan or young carer statement starts as a conversation with a worker about the things that are important to you in your life. These are described as outcomes. Some examples of outcomes are:

- I want to improve my health and be as well as I can be
- I want to feel valued and listened to
- I want to spend more time with my friends and grandchildren

Eligibility criteria

The adult carer support plan or young carer statement is used to make a decision about whether you meet the local eligibility criteria. These are rules to decide what support you might be entitled to. If you meet the threshold, the local authority has a duty to meet your needs and will offer Self-directed Support options to you.

How do I decide which Self-directed Support option will work best for me?

It is important to think about what support you need to access and how much choice and control you want, as different levels of choice and control mean different levels of responsibility.

It can help to write a list of pros and cons of each option or to talk them through with your worker. Many areas have Self-directed Support advisors and services to help you manage your budget. Don't worry if things change or if you decide it's not right for you, you can request a review and discuss different options.

What can Self-directed Support be used for?

This will depend on what is agreed on in your adult carer support plan or young carer statement and what could help you to achieve your outcomes. Some examples of how carers have used Self-directed Support include:

- A cleaner to do housework
- A washing machine and tumble drier
- A short break
- Replacement care to attend a leisure activity

Are there any charges?

The person you care for may be charged for some of the services they receive to support them. However the law in Scotland is clear that carers must not be charged for services they receive to directly support them in their caring role. This includes any support you receive following an adult carer support plan or young carer statement, no matter which of the Self-directed Support options you choose.

Where can I find out more about accessing Self-directed Support?

Each area has their own arrangements for accessing an adult carer support plan or a young carer statement. You can find out more by contacting your local carer support organisation. Further information about Self-directed Support is available on the SDS Scotland website: www.sdsinfo.org.uk

Local Health Boards also have a duty to involve carers when the person they care for is being discharged from hospital. You can find out more in our leaflet 'What to expect when the person you care for is being discharged from hospital'.



“
Self-directed Support felt complicated but it was okay because someone from the local carer centre talked me through it.
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Thanks to the carers and staff at Angus Carers Centre and SDS Scotland for their contribution to the development of this leaflet.