



Your Life Your Choice

care and support designed with you



Direct Payments update

As 2016 draws to a close, the Direct Payments Service would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

In this edition we give you details of our holiday opening hours, information on transferring to a Direct Payments Card, a reminder about auditing your Direct Payments and lots of other useful information.

Don't forget if there is something you would like us to feature in the next issue please contact us on **03000 268 200** or email directpayments@durham.gov.uk

Holiday opening hours

The Direct Payments office will be closed over the holiday period, closing from 4.30pm on Friday 23 December 2016 and re-opening on Tuesday 3 January 2017. If you need to contact us you can email us or call us and leave a message on our answerphone and we will pick it up on our return.

Please remember **Social Care Direct** and **First Contact** provide an out of hours **EMERGENCY** service, available by calling **03000 26 79 79**.

Sensory impairment

Do you have poor eyesight or hearing loss? If so, you may benefit from advice and support from Durham County Council's Sensory Support Team who can help people living in County Durham.

The Sensory Support Team provide a high quality service to adults with a sensory loss in County Durham, offering a person-centred approach to helping people who experience sight or hearing loss and those who are deaf.

For more information visit www.durham.gov.uk/sensorysupportteam or speak to your social worker or care coordinator.





Direct Payments Cards

Did you know that 240 people are now using Direct Payments Cards to manage their Direct Payments? This is a fast and flexible way to manage Direct Payments. If you are interested in changing to a Direct Payments Card or just want to find out more email us on **directpayments@durham.gov.uk** or call **03000 268 200**.

The Direct Payments team will support you throughout the change to a Direct Payments Card.

Mailing the Direct Payments team

Please remember that we are now based in County Hall, Durham. Please destroy any old pre-paid envelopes you may have with the Priory House address as mail is no longer being redirected. Information should be posted to **Direct Payments, Durham County Council, Room G 83/88, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UG**

Postage costs can be reclaimed from your Direct Payments account, please retain the receipt for audit purposes.

Disclosure and Barring Service

We strongly recommend that you carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check on Personal Assistants before they begin working for you. We have staff available to support you with the process. Your social worker can complete a risk assessment for an adult case if they wish a Personal Assistant to start without DBS clearance however you must never employ a Personal Assistant for a child until the DBS check is completed.

Hate crime

A hate crime is a criminal offence where the victim is targeted because of their race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability or gender identity. Hate crimes and hate incidents can be committed against a person or property and can include harassment, bullying, threats, damage to property, physical violence and assault.

Research shows that disabled people are at specific risk of hate crimes and hate incidents. Often hate crimes are not reported.

If you have been a victim or have witnessed a hate crime or hate incident it is important that you report it by calling Durham Constabulary on 101, however small it may appear to you.

To talk to someone anonymously and in confidence for advice and support without reporting the incident call **101** and ask to speak to a **Durham Constabulary Community Cohesion Officer** or call the victim care and advice service on Freephone: **0303 0401 099**.

You can also find more information about hate crime at **www.durham.gov.uk/hatecrime**

Supporting carers in County Durham

There are thousands of unpaid carers in County Durham providing care or support to a relative, neighbour or friend. Most people who are carers don't see themselves as carers, but as husbands, wives, partners, parents, sons, daughters, siblings or friends. For information on the support available for carers visit **www.durham.gov.uk/carers** or call Durham County Carers Support on **0300 005 1213**.

Locating care and support

Locate is Durham County Council's online resource for care and support information and advice.



Locate has some fantastic features to make finding the information you want easier and quicker.

Whether it is a quick search to find details of leisure and community activities or if you'd like to take your time to browse for new products and services to help you to live as independently as possible, Locate gives you choice and control to find the right care and support services for you.

Visit www.durhamlocate.org.uk and try Locate today. You can also access Locate on the Elephant Kiosk in your local GP surgery.

Personal Assistants

Is your Personal Assistant looking for additional hours?

Why not encourage them to register on Locate? For more information or to get a PA registration form visit www.durhamlocate.org.uk contact the Direct Payments team on **03000 268 200** or email Locate@durham.gov.uk

Personal Assistants who work with children or young people can also register on Families Information Service.

Email fis@durham.gov.uk for a registration form.

Please add 'PA registration' in the subject line.



Auditing your Direct Payments



Don't forget to keep details of account expenditure including receipts and invoices for your Direct Payments audit. You do not need to keep BACS remittance advice letters.

Stay well this winter

The **Stay Well This Winter** campaign is a joint initiative from NHS England and Public Health England, to help people with long-term health conditions and those over 65 prepare for winter and ward off common winter illnesses.

Winter can be seriously bad for the health of these people, increasing the risk of blood pressure, heart attacks and strokes. There are a number of things you can do to prepare against the cold weather:

- At the first sign of a cough or cold, get immediate advice from your pharmacist before it gets more serious.
- Speak to your pharmacist about medicines you should have in stock over winter.
- Pick up prescription medications before the Christmas holidays start as many GPs and pharmacies will close over the holidays.
- It is important to keep warm in winter, so heat your home to at least 18°C (65°F), if you can. You might prefer your living room to be slightly warmer.
- Make sure you get your flu jab.
- If you need help over the holiday period when your GP surgery or pharmacy is closed, call **NHS 111** or visit www.nhs.uk

The Stay Well This Winter campaign can help you and your family prepare for winter. Visit www.nhs.uk/staywell for more information.



National Fraud Initiative 2016/17

The National Fraud Initiative (NFI) is the Cabinet Office's data matching exercise that runs every two years and is designed to identify possible cases of fraud and to detect and correct under or overpayments from the public purse. Durham County Council was required to submit personal data for all Direct Payments held in the system in October 2016 to the NFI exercise. Submission of the data does not require the consent of the individuals concerned under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Further information relating to the NFI exercise, including the Cabinet Office's legal powers and reasons why it matches particular information, is available on the Durham County Council and Cabinet Office's websites on the following pages:

<http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/2535/>
National-Fraud-Initiative

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taking-part-in-national-fraud-initiative>

Durham County Council also carries out internal cross system data matching exercises that may also include the use of personal data for all Direct Payments, for the detection and prevention of crime and to identify and correct errors.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please email

Steven Graham, Corporate Fraud Officer
steven.graham@durham.gov.uk
or telephone **03000 320 776**.



Be fraud aware

Scams are schemes to con you out of your money. They can arrive by post, phone call, text message or email or a scammer may turn up at your home.

One in ten people have fallen victim to financial scams losing hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of pounds.

By following some simple steps you can minimise the risk of becoming a victim of fraud.

- Keep personal information confidential
- Make sure your computer has anti-virus protection
- Never let unexpected callers into your home without checking their credentials
- Watch out for secret deals, get rich quick schemes, claims, and inheritance notifications

For more information on how to avoid fraud or how to report it visit www.thinkjessica.com

To find out more

For more information about Direct Payments you can contact the Direct Payments team on **03000 268 200**.

You can access detailed information about Direct Payments by visiting www.durham.gov.uk/directpayments

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.



Braille



Audio



Large print

directpayments@durham.gov.uk
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