



Your Life Your Choice

care and support designed with you

Direct Payments update

As 2018 draws to a close, the Direct Payments Service would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

In this edition, we give you details of our holiday opening hours, resources on how to stay well this winter, information about new data protection regulations, and lots of other useful information.

If you'd like to ask us about anything featured in this issue, please contact us on **03000 268 200** or email **directpayments@durham.gov.uk**

Holiday opening hours

The Direct Payments office will be closed from Friday 21 December 2018 and will re-open on Wednesday 2 January 2019. If you need to contact us during this time, you can leave us a message via email or answerphone and we will follow up your query on our return.

Please remember **Social Care Direct** provide an out of hours **EMERGENCY** service, available by calling **03000 267 979**.

Direct Payments Cards

The majority of people who use Direct Payments are now using a Direct Payments Card to manage their payments. Feedback for this service has been positive, with people finding them easy to use, allowing them to continue to arrange the care and support they need in a fast and flexible way.

If you are interested in transferring to a Direct Payments Card, or require support with your current card, our team are always happy to help. Contact us on the details opposite for more information.

You can also now find a number of useful factsheets about Direct Payments online. These help to answer any questions you may have about setting up a Direct Payments Card, hiring a personal assistant, transitioning from children/young people's services to adult care, and much more. Visit www.durham.gov.uk/directpayments to download and view them anytime.



Auditing your Direct Payments

Please remember, there is a legal requirement for you to keep all invoices, receipts and paperwork relating to how you spend your Direct Payments. These documents have to be saved for six years, in addition to the current financial year. We may ask you to produce them as part of your audit.



GDPR

You may be aware that The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was introduced on 25 May 2018. This Act is a regulation on data protection and privacy.



This sets out the legal guidelines for the types of information that we can collect about you, how we can use it, and how long we can keep this information for.

To find out how we will store and use data about you, visit

www.durham.gov.uk/dataprivacy and click the link to read our Direct Payments Privacy Notice.

If you employ someone using your Direct Payments, it is important that you are also GDPR compliant.

Our GDPR and Direct Payments factsheet can help you understand how you should handle your employee's data, such as job applications or personal details. You can download this from our website, www.durham.gov.uk/directpayments The Skills for Care website also offers lots of useful advice on how to be a good employer at www.skillsforcare.org.uk

Employment responsibilities and reminders

Disclosure and Barring Service

If you employ your own personal assistants via your Direct Payments, please remember that your employee's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check needs to be renewed by Durham County Council after five years. It is your responsibility to ensure any staff you employ have DBS clearance before they are able to work with a child under 18 years of age. Please contact the Direct Payments team for advice and guidance if you need your employee's DBS renewing.

Liability Insurance

Please ensure that you have valid liability insurance in place. If your account is managed by a payroll provider, they may hold the policy for you. In this case, please contact your payroll provider if you are unsure if your policy is still in-date.

Employees' annual leave

As the 2018-19 financial year will end on 31 March 2019, please ensure that your employees have taken all of their allocated annual leave. This cannot be carried forward into the following year.



Timesheets

Timesheets must be forwarded every four weeks to your payroll company as per the payments schedule. Please ensure that both yourself and your employee have signed their timesheet. As an employer, it is your responsibility to check that the hours noted on timesheets are correct. If you require a payment schedule, please contact us on **03000 268 200** or directpayments@durham.gov.uk

Looking after someone aged 0-25 with special needs or disabilities?

County Durham Families Information Service



The **Families Information Service** is a free and impartial information service that supports families with children and young people in all aspects of family life. You can use the website to search for information and services such as childcare, leisure activities, and education.

The **Local Offer** section of the website makes it



For 0-25 year olds with special educational needs and disabilities.

easier to find everything you need to know for 0-25 year olds with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). You can search for things such as personal assistants, independent living accommodation, and local activity groups in your area. Visit www.countydurhamfamilies.info to start your search today.



Is your personal assistant looking for additional hours? If they work with children or young people, they can email fis@durham.gov.uk to register their services online. Please add 'PA registration' in the subject line.

Locating care and support



Care and support in County Durham

Locate is Durham County Council's online resource for adult 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 near you, or if you're keen to discover products and services to help you to live independently, 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.

Pre-Paid Financial Services (PFS)

Our Direct Payments Card provider, Pre-Paid Financial Services (PFS), will be closed to customers on bank holidays over the Christmas period. They will operate 8am-4pm on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. If you have any issues with your card during this time, you can fill out a cardholder enquiry form on their website, www.prepaidfinancialservices.com/en/contact-us



Changes to your care arrangements

Please remember to notify us of any changes to your care arrangements. This could include any long stays in hospital that have affected your care, changes to your address, or changes to details of anyone registered as supporting you with your Direct Payments.

Any new employees you pay for via your Direct Payments need to be registered with a payroll company for HMRC purposes. Likewise, any employees leaving their roles need to have their final wages calculated and taken off your records.



Stay well this winter

The Help Us Help You 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 aged over 65 prepare for winter and prevent 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 this period.
- It is important to keep warm in winter, so heat your home to at least 18°C, if you can. You might prefer your living room to be slightly warmer.
- Ask your GP if you are eligible for a free flu vaccine.
- 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 Help Us Help You Stay Well This Winter campaign can help you and your family prepare for winter. Visit www.nhs.uk/staywell for more information.

The Durham County Council website also has more tips and advice to stay warm and safe this winter at www.durham.gov.uk/warmandwell

Contact us

For more information about Direct Payments contact the Direct Payments team at

directpayments@durham.gov.uk

03000 268 200

Direct Payments, Room G 83/88, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UG

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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