

www.forwardmid.org.uk

Forward

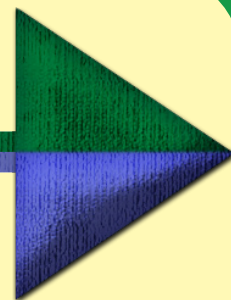
Midlothian

Dis**able**d People

Equality - Diversity - Inclusion

Forward

Mid



A Guide to Self-Directed Support Midlothian



I Need Support

Self Directed Support lets you take more control over the money available to meet your agreed care and support needs. It allows you to make choices about your support based on the things that are important.

- To you, and to goals you want to achieve
- To help you stay safe and well

Our aim is that we can inform people, clearly, about the choices they have in arranging the type of care and support they want.

Forward Mid can provide you with general information about SDS: for detailed information, LCIL offer expert advice and support. Or you could visit Cafe Connect, held on



the last Tuesday of each month at the Welfare Hall in Dalkeith, for an informal chat about this with people who use SDS, the Cafe's relaxed, welcoming atmosphere is a perfect starting point. Forward Mid hope you enjoy learning more about this empowering approach, that can offer greater control over how your support and care is provided.

“Self Directed Support is the biggest change to Social Care in a generation.”

“Greater opportunity for everyone to have a greater control over how their care is provided.”

“Fundamental change in the locus of control - no longer from those who provided the assessment or who design and plan services but the locus of control shifts to those who need the services to be able to make the informed decision about the care and support that meets the needs.”

“So if a decision in the past was made that a carer comes in at 7:30 to get you up and will be back at 7:30 at night to put you to

bed. Now if that doesn't suit, you have the choice to be able to design a care package that does reflect the time you want to get up, what you want to do, where you want to go to and when you want to go to bed."

"It's these small practical differences that are absolutely key in delivering what everyone would want to aspire to for themselves and that is to be able to lead an independent life in a way that best suits their personal circumstances."

Giving people choice and control over their care packages is now a legal requirement which allows them to live an independent life.



Self-Directed Support – the basics

Self-directed support is a tool which enables people to have greater choice and control over their support.

Since 1 April 2014 – the commencement date of the Social Care (Self Directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 – all local authorities have a statutory duty to give people who are eligible for social care more choice about how they receive support – they must offer self-directed support.

The Act is one part of the Scottish Government's 10 year self-directed support strategy. The core values of this strategy are: respect, fairness, independence, freedom and safety.

The statutory principles which underpin the Act are:

Participation and dignity	Supported people should have the same freedom, choice, dignity and control as other citizens at home, at work and in the community.
Involvement	Supported people must have as much involvement as they wish in assessment and the provision of their support.
Informed choice	Supported people must be given reasonable assistance to enable them to express their views and make choices.
Collaboration	Professionals must collaborate in an equal partnership with supported people in relation to assessment and provision of support.

Local authorities should consider these values and principles as part of their social care strategy, policies and practice.

In practical terms self-directed support means a person requiring support will:

- Have their needs assessed in terms of outcomes – what they want to achieve with their support. This should be done as a conversation and exploration, rather than a form-filling exercise.
- Be told the overall amount of money (in £s, rather than hours of support) available for their support. This amount is called an Individual Budget. The budget will be based on the support needed to fulfil the person's outcomes.
- Be offered four options on how their support and budget are managed, and by whom
- Be helped to make a plan on how and what to organise as a support package within their budget so that they can achieve their outcomes

The four options

Option 1 – The person receives a direct payment and arranges the support themselves, often with the support of an advice and support organisation

Option 2 – The person chooses how their individual budget is spent while the local authority or a third party (such as a support organisation or service provider) manages the money and arranges the support on their behalf

Option 3 – The person asks the local authority to decide and arrange the services and support they receive

Option 4 – A combination two or all of options 1, 2 and 3. For example, the person may choose to use part of the budget as a direct payment to employ a personal assistant and another part to receive a service decided and organised by their council

Everyone who is eligible for social care support should have access to independent information and support when considering, choosing or managing any of the four the options.

Examples of how some people have used each of the 4 options.

Example 1, **Option 1**: a direct payment (Jeff)

I chose Option 1, and use a direct payment to employ personal assistants. For me, this was the only option that could give me full control of how I want the support I need to be delivered. Employing PAs gives me the freedom and choice to go where I want to, do what I want to when I want to. The benefits of this option are: I know who is coming in each day, they know exactly what I need and how I like things done which gives me a reassuring continuity, which I don't think any of the other 3 options would.

Example 2, **Option 2** (Fiona)

Option 2 was the best option for me. I use the budget to buy services from an agency for my personal care needs, but I also

use it for social and leisure activities such as a gym membership and art class. I knew I wanted to have some control over how my services were arranged, but I didn't want to have to manage the money. It benefits me because I still feel I have control and I can make my own decisions, but I have someone else helping me with the finances and paperwork.

Example 3, **Option 3**: a direct service (Mary)

I choose a direct service for my daily care needs because I didn't want the hassle of making my own arrangements or having to decide how to best spend my money. I felt my social worker had a good idea of what I needed. This works for me because I don't have to think about it and I know I can just go back to my social worker if there is a problem.

Example 4, **Option 4**: a mixture of options (Robert)

I first received a service from the local authority a number of years ago. As my condition changed, so did my needs. The service on offer didn't suit me so I asked for a direct payment to give me more flexibility. I use this to employ PAs in the evenings. The direct service is used in the mornings and the afternoons. I have regular workers from this service that I get on well with and I trust and I don't have to worry about arranging cover for their holidays and sickness.

Questions to Midlothian Council on their Self-Directed Support Strategy

We have encountered that people across Scotland have a lot of the same questions and concerns about self-directed support so we have put these questions to Midlothian Council's lead officer on SDS, Graham Kilpatrick.



1. Is SDS a cost-cutting exercise?

SDS is not as a cost-cutting exercise. It is being introduced to

provide more choice and control around how social care services are provided. It also gives people the opportunity to be more creative so that people can make better use and get more for the money that's available.

2. Will I pay more towards my care if I choose different options?

Currently, some people who receive a service are financially assessed and pay a contribution towards their care. Under SDS, the council will charge you in the same way that it charges these people. Therefore, the amount you are assessed to pay will be the same whichever option you choose.

3. I am happy with the support I have. Do I have to take SDS?

SDS is all about people choosing the way they want their support provided. You do not have to take control of your own budget if you don't want to.

4. What can and can't I spend my individual budget on?

When someone is eligible for a service an assessment will be carried out to identify the outcomes they wish to achieve. There is a lot of flexibility on what the individual budget can be spent on providing your agreed outcomes are met. Your local authority will need to agree that what you propose to spend your budget on will meet your outcomes.

5. What if I want to change my option?

If you wish to change the option you should discuss this at the next review of your current care package.

6. Can I get help to decide?

There are local support organisations which can help you with a range of issues which will allow you to make an informed decision.

7. What if I want to use option 1 to employ a PA, but I don't feel

confident to manage the money myself?

In some circumstances, extra support can be provided to help individuals manage the money associated with direct payments. If you think you would need help with this you should discuss this when your assessment or review is being undertaken.

To recap, SDS is the only way any social care is now provided. In the past, the Council would have decided what support you should get and arrange it for you. You wouldn't have had much say over who supported you or the kind of support you got. SDS is about their individual making an informed choice in deciding how much ongoing control they wish to have.

First Contact

if you think you need support in your daily life then you may want to contact Midlothian social work services talk about this You can call yourself; a family member, a friend, someone from a support organisation, your doctor, an advocate, or anyone else you know.

If you already have an allocated worker, you can speak to them about your support. If you don't have a social worker or care manager, you could phone or e-mail the social work department at Midlothian council to make a referral to apply for SDS

Assessing your needs

A social care assessment will be carried out to identify if an individual is eligible for a social care service.

Midlothian Council prioritises assessments based on the:

- Urgency of the situation,
- Level of risk the client is at,
- Nature of the referral.

All clients should be assessed before receiving a service.

Social Work Enquiries: Tel:  0131 271 3900

www.midlothian.gov.uk

Elegibility & Assessment

When you make this first contact you will be asked about your situation, then, if it is considered you may need support, you will be referred to a social work practitioner (Occupational Therapist, Social Worker or Community Care Assistant). Once a referral has been received arrangements will be made for a Self-Directed Support assessment to be completed with you. Urgent Self-Directed Support assessments are done first so there may be a wait for your Self-Directed Support assessment. If you are waiting and your circumstances change, it is important you let the Council know, as they may wish to complete your Self-Directed Support assessment sooner.

Self-Directed Support Assessment

Once you have been allocated a social work practitioner they will usually speak to you on the phone first to find out a bit more about you and your circumstances. Then you will agree a time for them to visit you and begin your Self-Directed Support assessment conversation. Your appointment should give you enough notice to allow you time to prepare, although sometimes, your situation may require a quick response.

During your Self-Directed Support assessment, the Practitioner will work with you to find out what your personal 'outcomes' are. Outcomes are the things in your life that matter to you. It is important that you are supported to decide which things matter in your life so that any support you arrange doesn't get in the way of these things. You should be involved in the making decisions about your support in line with the Self Directed Support Legislation. The practitioner will also work with you to determine whether your needs are eligible for social work funding.

You should be encouraged to decide: what is important to you in your life, why these things are important, how to go about doing or getting these things and who will be involved in your life and support.

The thing that matters most to you might be changing the way you feel. It may be:

“I feel better about myself so I can get out and about again.”

or

“My health is better so I am as well as I can be.”

Maybe keeping something in your life going even if your circumstances are changing:

“I am able to keep in touch with my nieces even though my health is getting worse.”

or

“I am able to go to keep my job even though I have good days and bad days.”

Maybe the thing that matters most is being involved in making decisions about your support:

“My social worker and my support workers listen to me.”

Questions to help you identify what matters to you:

- 1.1 If you could change your life what would you do first?
- 1.2 Then what would you do?
- 1.3 Then what?
- 2.1 What difference would that make to you?
- 2.2 To others?
3. Where would you be doing this?
4. What sorts of things did you really enjoy doing?
5. What would help you to do these things again?

Your answers to these questions will define what your personal ‘outcomes’ are. and will help you to identify the kind of support that you need to make these things happen.

Depending on your situation the assessment may be completed in one visit or you may have several conversations over several

visits and phone conversations. During this time the Social Work Practitioner will work with you to help you identify your outcomes and decide on an action plan to help you achieve them. All of this will be recorded in your assessment and once complete you should receive a copy of this document.

Once your outcomes have been agreed the professional will help you consider what support may be needed to help you meet these outcomes. If eligible for Social Work funding they will also explain the Self Directed Support options which give you choice about how this support is provided.

Midlothian Council's eligibility criteria for providing support are related to the level of risk you are at. Currently, Midlothian Council will normally only provide support where the risks are assessed to be substantial or critical.

There are 4 kinds of risk:

Critical Risk:	There are lots of risks to your independent living or health if you do not get care and support.
Substantial Risk:	There are quite a lot of risks to your independence or health if you do not get care and support.
Moderate Risk:	You may need some care and support now or you may be able to manage by yourself or with some help from family and friends
Low Risk:	You are not likely to need care and support services now but may need some information and advice

Preparing for your Self-Directed Support assessment

Preparing in advance can greatly improve your assessment experience. There are a number of things that can be helpful to think about before your assessment, write your answers on a separate piece of paper and have them present at the assessment:

- What is important to you?
- What is working well for you and what isn't working so well?
- What could be improved in your life?
- The personal outcomes you want to achieve,
- Who supports you at the moment (friends/family/neighbours)?
- Who could help support you in the future?
- Think about what support you need and who you would want to provide that support,
- Think about what questions you might want to ask and write them down,
- Is there anything that worries you about the assessment?

You might also want to think about the key people in your life and if you want them to be there for your assessment conversations. They may be able to support you by being there or helping you to prepare.

Who can I involve in my Self-Directed Support assessment?

Your Self-Directed Support assessment doesn't have to be a talk between you and the professional working with you only. You can involve other people who can help you by giving you information and advice. Remember you can ask your family members or a friend to help you at this stage.

You can also get support from a local support organisation
Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living: www.lothiancil.org.uk

An independent advocate can help you to have a stronger voice. Find an advocate in your area at www.siaa.org.uk/find-advocate

Every Self-Directed Support assessment will be different. An assessment should be all about you and your own circumstances. Here is a list of the top 7 things that make a good assessment:

- Is a calm and comfortable conversation with a professional?
- Considers what the whole of your life is like - not just the needs arising from your impairment or other condition.
- About your strengths and skills as well as your needs and support
- It is not just about ticking-boxes or filling in forms.
- When you and the professional are open and honest with each other?
- When enough information and advice has been provided for you to fully take part? Including independent information from non-council sources.
- When your professional listens to you and encourages you to say what you think.

If you are applying for a Self-Directed Support assessment for a Child

If you are a disabled parent or able bodied parent or guardian claiming for a Self-Directed Support assessment for someone under 16 years of age you will be more involved.

It is important that the child is as involved as possible in the decisions about his or her support. During the child's Self-Directed Support assessment both the practitioner and disabled parent or able-bodied parent or guardian should be thinking about how the support will help the child's well-being by keeping him or her involved and thinking about:

What if the Council decide I don't need support?

If the council decide you don't need support from them that shouldn't be the end of it. The professional working with you

should help you find other places where you can get support. This could be

- * Your own skills and strengths
- * People you know, such as friends and family
- * Other people in your community
- * Local charities or support organisations
- * Printed information or signposting to information online from Midlothian libraries

Don't be afraid to ask for more information. You can also contact the council again for another assessment if your needs change.

Some Frequently asked questions:

What if I didn't have the time or I forgot to say everything I wanted in the assessment?

If you feel that you have not provided all the information in relation to your assessment, you should contact your worker and discuss this with them. They will want to make sure all relevant information is included in the assessment.

What if I am not happy about the assessment or its outcome?

You should speak to the worker who carried out the assessment in the first place and discuss your concerns. If you are still not happy, you can raise a complaint using the council's complaints process. Support organisations may be able to help you to do this.

Who gets to see my assessment?

Only people who are involved in providing your support are allowed to see your assessment. In order to provide the best support, the council may ask you if we can share information with other agencies. Your worker will explain information sharing to you and ask for your permission to share information.

I am concerned about old information being included in the assessment.

If you think old, unimportant (irrelevant) information has been included in your assessment, you should discuss this with your worker and ask for an explanation of why it needs to be included. If it has to be included, you can discuss what level of detail is required.

Remember: depending on your income, you may be charged for some social care services including:

- * Care at Home (including Supported Accommodation, Supported Living, and Housing Support Services)
- * Day Care and Day Opportunities
- * Community Alarms & Telecare
- * Short Breaks and Respite Breaks
- * Laundry Services
- * Transport
- * Some support provided through Self Direct Support

It should be noted that these charges are not the result of the introduction of Self Directed Support – charges were in place many years before this.

Support Planning

What is a support plan?

A support plan sets out how you will use your money to buy support and how that support will help you make the changes in your life that you want to make.

How to make an SDS Support Plan?

When considering Self Directed Support one of the most daunting tasks is how to make a support plan. This is not something to be rushed into or taken lightly.

Making a support plan helps you work out what's important to you and how you can use your budget in the best way.

A support plan shows the local authority:

- How you will get the things you need and the life you want,
- How you will spend your personal budget.

They need to know this before they can agree on the final amount of your personal budget.

Your support plan should answer these questions:

- What is important to you?
- What do you want to change or achieve?
- How will you arrange your support?
- How will you spend your money?
- How will you manage your support?
- How will you stay in control of your life?
- What will you do to make this plan happen?

You can make a plan by yourself or get someone to help you.

There are different ways to make a support plan

The plan can be as short or as long as you want it. It's your plan and it's personal to you.



- You can use words but you don't have to,
- You can use pictures and photographs,
- Make it yourself or ask someone to make it for you,
- Use ideas from your person-centred plan if you have one,
- Use a template or a workbook to help you,
- Use a computer to make a presentation,
- Video your ideas and thoughts,
- Record it on a tape or podcast.

You can ask:

- Someone in your family, a friend or neighbour
- A group of people who are part of your life and help you to reach your goals
- People at work or school
- A care manager or social worker
- Someone who works for a support provider or community organisation
- A paid, professional support broker – Midlothian Council can help you find one
- Advice and information organisations, such as Lothian Centre For Inclusive Living.

What needs to be in your support plan?

Midlothian Council needs your plan to answer these **Seven questions:**

1. What is important to you?
2. What do you want to change or achieve?
3. How will you arrange your support?
4. How will you spend your money?
5. How will you manage your support?
6. How will you stay in control of your life?
7. What will you do to make this plan happen?

What is important to you?

If someone reads your plan they should be able to get a good understanding of:

- Who you are,

- Your interests,
- Your lifestyle,
- The important people in your life,
- Your likes and dislikes,
- Your hopes for the future.

Start by writing a list of things about yourself, such as:

- Your age,
- What you like doing,
- Things you are good at,
- Things you would like to do,
- How you communicate.

About Me

Name. *Ann Other*

Age. *25*

Gender. *Female*

Communication: *Sign Language*

I like: *Music, Cinema, Eating Out. Long lies, Cooking*

I do not Like: *Washing dishes, Ironing, Steps*

Hopes: *To get a degree, an electric wheelchair, To hear again and listen to my son and daughter laughing.*

What do you want to change or achieve?

What you want to change in your life, for example:

- Where you live,
- What services you have,
- How you spend your time.

Things you would like to do in the future, for example:

- A course,
- Plans to live independently,
- Get a job.

Only put down things that have a real chance of happening and that will make your life better, not worse. People who help you will need to agree with what you put. However, don't put things down just because other people think you should. They must be things that are important to you.

How will you arrange your support?

Put in your plan the help and support you need to make the changes you want in your life.

There are different ways to organise your support. You can:

- Organise it all yourself – perhaps with the help of family and friends,

- Ask the local authority to organise it all for you
- Ask an organisation to help – for example, Lothian Centre For Inclusive Living.
- Ask a service provider to organise your support or Organise some parts yourself and let others do the rest.

How will you spend your budget?

You need to say:

- How you want the money to be paid, for example as a direct payment or to an agent
- What your support will cost for the year
- What money you will need for the following two years.



You can manage the money yourself or have someone else manage it:

- Someone you trust – a family member or friend
- A Trust (a legal group set up to act for you)
- Someone you pay – a broker, an independent social worker or an advocate. Lothian Centre For Inclusive Living run a Payroll Service.
- A service provider who manages the budget for you and provides support using an Individual Service Fund
- A care manager or social worker.

Midlothian Council like the budget to be paid into a separate bank account. They require viewing of your quarterly returns. You need to say what you'll spend the money on. Some people use their money for:

- Personal assistants – people who work just for you (although you don't need to employ them yourself)
- Expenses, equipment or transport
- Housing, adaptations or supported living services
- Sharing costs with people who have the same needs or interests
- Supported employment or setting up a business
- Therapists and specialists like speech therapists or

counsellors

- Social services such as respite services, day centres, adult placement services, home helps.
- Using local people and resources can be cheaper than just
- Buying services 'off the peg' from a provider.

The support in your plan must not cost more than the agreed budget.

Your plan must not include anything illegal!

How will you manage your support?

Your plan must be clear about how you will organise and pay for support. You can do it all yourself or get help. If you are going to employ people you need to do everything legally.

Your plan must show:

- How you will pay salaries. For example, are you going to use an accountant?
- Who is responsible for what
- That you will comply with employment law and with the race and sex discrimination laws
- What agreement you have with any support provider you will use.

How will you stay in control of your life?

Your plan must say what decisions you will make and what decisions other people will make.

If your plan relies on other people making decisions, it must say how they will help you make as many decisions as you can and how they will know whether you agree. If someone else will manage your money for you, how will you review your support with them?

Decision-making agreement

If other people are making decisions on your behalf, your local

authority may want you to have a decision-making agreement.

In a decision-making agreement you put down:

- Important decisions that you or other people need to make about your life,
- Which decisions you will make and which you need help with,
- Who will make the final decisions?

You and the person helping you must sign and date the agreement. If you can't sign, you can ask someone to be a witness or make a mark that people will know is yours. You may need someone to agree to this for you. This person is called your 'lead representative' or 'agent'. They will say if the agreement is okay and take on the legal responsibility of the contract for your self-directed support.

An agent can be:

- A member of your family or a friend,
- Someone you trust – someone who always wants the best for you,
- Someone who will not be moving on in the near future,
- A paid professional such as an independent support broker.

For some people making big decisions like choosing where you live may be difficult to make. The Mental Capacity Act is there to help with this. www.publicguardian-scotland.gov.uk/

What are you going to do to make this plan happen?

A clear action plan will help you make sure your plan happens.

An action plan should say:

- **Who is responsible for each action,**
- **When each action will be done,**
- **How these actions will help you make the changes you want,**
- **How you will keep a check on what has been done,**
- **How you will deal with any problems.**

More Reading and Information

www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/04/5438

The easy read version of Self-directed Support (Scotland) Act 2013 is available to download from www.forwardmid.org.uk/pdf/SDS-Act2013-Easy-Read-Guide.pdf

www.lothiancil.org.uk/

www.ccpscotland.org/

www.sdsinfo.org.uk/

www.selfdirectedsupportscotland.org.uk/

quarriers.org.uk/

www.centreforwelfarereform.org/library/categories/health-equality/the-flexibility-of-selfdirected-support.html

A discussion paper self-directed support: your choice, your right from the Centre for welfare reform is available to download from

www.forwardmid.org.uk/pdf/selfdirected-support-your-choice-your-right.pdf

www.scottishhumanrights.com/health-social-care/social-care/#self-directed-support-1440

Advice and Information

You can also get information and advice from a local support organisation. The support for Midlothian is provided by Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living www.lothiancil.org.uk

An independent advocate help you to have a stronger voice?
Midlothian Local Advocates

CAPS – The Consultation and Advocacy Promotion Service; for people aged 18-65 with mental health problems.

Old Stables, Eskmills Park, Station Road,
Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ

www.capsadvocacy.org/

CAPS
independent
advocacy

Facebook

www.facebook.com/CAPIndependentAdvocacy/

Twitter [icon@capsadvocacy](https://twitter.com/icon@capsadvocacy)

Tel:  0131 273 5116

Email:  contact@capsadvocacy.org

EARS Advocacy Service Midlothian

Older people and People over 16 with physical disability, acquired brain injury, stroke survivors (up to 2 years post stroke)

14 Ashley Place, Edinburgh, EH6 5PX

Tel:  0131 478 8866

www.ears-advocacy.org.uk

Email:  info@ears-advocacy.org.uk



Partners in Advocacy - Lothian Adults over 16 with Learning Disability.

2nd Floor, Beaverhall House, 27/5 Beaverhall Road, Edinburgh, EH7 4JE

Tel:  0131 478 7723

www.partnersinadvocacy.org.uk/

Email:  edinburgh@partnersinadvocacy.org.uk



People First (Scotland) Collective advocacy for people with learning disability.

77-79 Easter Road, Edinburgh, EH7 5PW

Tel:  0131 478 7707

www.peoplefirstscotland.org/

Email:  peoplefirst1@btconnect.com



VOCAL Midlothian provides information, advice, support, counselling and advocacy to carers, former carers, and anyone working with carers.

VOCAL Carer Centre

30/1 Hardengreen Estate

Dalhousie Road

Dalkeith

EH22 3NX

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Tel: 📞 0131 663 6869

Email: ✉️ midlothian@vocal.org.uk

www.vocal.org.uk

Who Cares? Scotland Speaking out for young people in care

113 Rose Street

Edinburgh

EH2 4DT

Tel: 📞 0131 226 9270

Email: ✉️ enquiries@whocaresscotland.org



Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living

Information and advice is available from a local support organisation. The support for Midlothian is provided by Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living www.lothiancil.org.uk/

Self Directed Support gives you choice and control over how you would like your support delivered. You will be given four options on the type of support you want and who you want to give you this support. – It's your choice.

Agreeing the Final Contract

You and the professionals agree the final support plan.

Midlothian Council has to make sure the support you get is meeting your needs and that it is helping you to do all the things that were agreed in your support plan. One way they will do this is by taking a review of your needs from time to time. This will be in the final agreement.




When can Midlothian Council refuse my choice of support?

Midlothian Councils and their staff have what is called a '**duty of care**' which means that they have to be sure that any support they give you or pay for, is meeting your needs. If they don't think the support you want will meet your needs then they can refuse to arrange it with you.

The professional working with you should only refuse your chosen support if it is clear it will not meet your needs. If this happens they should:

- Explain why the kind of support you chose will not meet your needs
- Help you to look at other kinds of support that might meet your needs, and
- Tell you about your right to complain through the complaints procedure

What if Midlothian Council refuses your choice of support or you disagree with the professional working with you?

Firstly, you should speak to the member of staff who is working with you or asked to speak to their manager. You can do this by E_mailing:  social.work@midlothian.gov.uk or in writing to the

Client Relations Officer Midlothian Social Work. Fairfield House, 8 Lothian Road, Dalkeith, Midlothian, EH22 3AA.

If you are still not satisfied, you can make an official complaint. When you submit a complaint, the Council will let you know within 28 days that they have received it, and tell how they will progress your complaint.

They may need to interview you, and it's important that you know that they won't discriminate against you because you complained.

Midlothian Social Work

Fairfield House, 8 Lothian Road, Dalkeith, Midlothian, EH22 3AA

Telephone:  0131 270 7500

Email:  social.work@midlothian.gov.uk

Care Commission

If you are receiving or living in a service that is registered with the Care Commission such as a care agency, you can make a complaint directly to them:

Email: enquiries@careinspectorate.com

telephone:  0845 600 9527

Further help

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

If you are unhappy about the outcome of your complaint,

you have the right to have it considered by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

www.spsso.org.uk/

Freephone  0800 377 7330 or call  0131 225 5300

Freepost SPSO (this is all you need to write on the envelope, and you don't need to use a stamp).

You could also contact one of the support organisations mentioned earlier.

The logo for the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) consists of the letters 'SPSO' in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The 'S' and 'P' are a dark purple color, while the 'S' and 'O' are a lighter, lavender color.

Support

Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living

Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living (LCiL) offers support and advice for disabled people, people with long term conditions and older people across the Lothians, including Midlothian.

The Independent Living Team (ILT) can provide support for people considering a direct payment and assist with preparations for social care assessments. They can also offer guidance on identifying suitable care agencies or employing Personal Assistants (PAs). For PA employers, ILT can also provide extensive and ongoing support to help you meet your responsibilities as an employer. You will be assigned an Independent Living Officer who will work with you in a person centred way, taking into account your individual needs.

ILT can also help you with PA recruitment, including writing adverts and job descriptions, advertising, writing contracts and more.

For PA employers in Midlothian, LCiL's payroll service can assist with payroll processing, HMRC payments and pension enrolment. The fully accessible payroll service also offers an enhanced payroll service, to fully manage your direct payment and or Independent Living Fund Scotland (ILFS) finances as required. With an enhanced service, payroll holds your funds and makes all payments out to employees, HMRC etc. and also manages quarterly financial returns to the local authority.



All ILT services are free to service users in Midlothian and Midlothian Council also fund the cost of payroll services for direct payment recipients, this may include the cost of an enhanced payroll service depending on your individual needs.

LCiL's Self-Directed Support Development programme also

offers a range of peer support opportunities for disabled people and LCiL's training service provides regular workshops for PA employers on employer responsibilities, PA management and more.

LCiL can also help you with;

- Arranging and conducting interviews,
- following up references,
- staff induction and training,
- information about agreeing a probation period, staff rotas,
- public, employee and employer's liability insurance,
- giving you information about your local peer support group.

For further information on any of these services please contact:

Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living (LCiL)

Norton Park Centre, 57 Albion Road Edinburgh, EH7 5QY

Tel:  0131 475 2350

(Opening Hours: Monday – Friday, 10.00 am – 4.00 pm)

Minicom: 0131 475 2463

email:  LCiL@lothiancil.org.uk

www.lothiancil.org.uk/

www.facebook.com/LothianCIL/ for more information on our services, news and upcoming events.

Employing close family members

You may be able to employ a close family member as your PA if:

- You are unable to find a care agency or employ a PA who can deliver the services you need
- You have special communication needs
- Your cultural or religious needs can only be met by a family member
- You and your social worker/care worker agree this is appropriate

However, if you want to employ a family member Midlothian Council must agree to this arrangement.

You should think very carefully about employing a family member who lives in the same house as you, as it will be difficult to separate the times when they are your employee and when they are delivering unpaid care.

Before approaching your social worker/care worker to discuss employing a family member you should think about:

- How will this change your relationship with them?
- How will you feel about being their boss?
- What will you do if they don't do the job you are employing them to do?
- How will you feel if you have to end their employment?

Review

How will the council make sure my support is still working for me?



Your council has to make sure the support you get is meeting your needs and that it is helping you to do all the things that were agreed in your support plan. One way they will do this is by taking a review of your needs from time to time.

What is a review?



A review is when the professional working with you takes another look at your support, to find out if your needs have changed. They might decide that you need more support or less support.

When should a review happen?

Councils would like to review people every year but they should also do a review if your needs have changed or if you have asked for them to be reviewed. The professional working with you should tell you before your review and clearly, explain what will happen.

Forward Mid are committed to a fair and equal implementation of Self Directed Support in Midlothian. If you have experience and wish to share your story please contact Iain  01875825937 or  iainwisharttait@live.co.uk

Alternative Publications

Please like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/forwardmid/
Forward Mid Publications are available in large print on request from Eric Johnstone Tel: 0131-663-9471 or email eric.johnstone@mvacvs.org.uk write to Eric MVA, 4-6 White Hart Street, Dalkeith, EH22 1AE with your request. Electronic copies can be found on www.forwardmid.org.uk. The latest Firefox browser has the reader symbol  in the address bar, click and select narrate from left menu. The latest Safari Browser has the reader symbol  but does not read aloud. These only work on websites without errors. If you require help please contact Forward Mid and we will arrange to help you.

Edited by Iain Tait for Forward Mid

Midlothian Council launches Personal Assistant (PA) Scheme

The Midlothian Council Social Work team have been working hard to create and promote a directory of Personal Assistants (PAs), helping bring together those looking for work as a PA with people looking to hire their own PA support.



The scheme was launched on the 1st November with one of its main aims being to bridge the gap of inequality for individuals and families in Midlothian when it comes to recruiting PAs through a Direct Payment.

What is a Personal Assistant?

A Personal Assistant (PA) is:

- Someone who is employed directly by the person they are providing support to.
- Someone who will work to meet someone's individual needs as described in their support plan.

Someone can be employed as a Personal Assistant if:

- The individual employing them is in receipt of a Direct Payment from Social Work.
- They are the successful candidate as chosen by the person they will be working for.

How do I use the Personal Assistant Scheme?



The scheme sits on the Midlothian Council Website and is a

public directory of existing and yet to be employed PAs. An individual or a family who have undergone an assessment and have an agreed Direct Payment can use the list to identify candidates they might want to invite for an interview.

Everyone who is a part of the Personal Assistant Scheme is a member of the PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) scheme and has provided Midlothian Council with the evidence of this.

- Midlothian Council do not quality assure or assess potential candidates. It is up to the employer to ensure all appropriate checks have been carried out.
- The scheme cannot guarantee the successful recruitment to PA posts. It will, however, help to connect people and increases the chances of both employers and PAs finding the right person to work for or employ. Check out the scheme at

www.midlothian.gov.uk/personal-assistants

Any questions should be directed in the first instance to the allocated social work practitioner or to Rebecca (Becky) Hilton if there is no allocated practitioner ( rebecca.hilton@midlothian.gov.uk,  0131 271 3922).

What is a Direct Payment and how can it be used?

A Direct Payment is one of the 4 self-directed support mechanisms to arrange and manage support following a social work assessment. The principle of a Direct Payment is that it offers an individual more choice, control and responsibility by providing support as a cash payment. The individual then use this payment to choose, arrange and manage their support.


Across Children and Adult Services in Midlothian there are

approximately 130 individuals using a Direct Payment as a means to meet their assessed social care needs and associated personal outcomes (the things that matter to the individual). Some have opted to use this to purchase care and support directly from an agency of their choosing, while others have decided to take on the role of employer using their funding to directly employ personal assistants. There are then a whole array of other creative uses inbetween. The best use of someone's individual funding is discussed and agreed at the point of assessment or review between the Social Work Practitioner and the individual and there is always room to change and negotiate better uses as experience and practice grows.

Some examples of how people have looked to use their Direct Payments across Midlothian are:

Using a direct payment to take the reins of respite provision. Instead of using a traditional care home model of respite several individuals have chosen to arrange their own respite. This has ranged from using the funds to purchase supported meditation retreats to looking at pooling funding with likeminded folk to independently arrange everything from travel to accommodation and support.

Direct Payments have also been requested to purchase one off equipment and items of support, which have been assessed as meeting someone's outcomes better than traditional forms of support. For example: to purchase DIY home build projects and technology such as a laptop and specialised programmes. Use has also extended to exploring the funding of driving lessons and bus passes to enable family members and trusted individuals to provide care or to take a break from caring.

If you would like to discuss using a direct payment or ways you could use your direct payment differently please speak initially to your allocated social work practitioner, alternatively if you do have an allocated practitioner please get in touch with our contact centre on  0131 271 3900.



Passport to Independent Living **Self Directed Support – our lives our choices**

Glasgow Centre of Independent Living have published a book which illustrates the benefits of Personal Assistants both for the PA employer and the PA. A PA will provide practical assistance and support to enable the PA employer to live a full, active and independent life in the way that they choose. No two roles will be the same as each job will be specific to the needs of the PA employer. The 14 stories featured in the book illustrate the wide and varied role of a PA. Here is a short extract from Omar and Dale's story.



Omar (PA Employer)

Until university, my family had provided all my support so I had lived a rather sheltered life. During my first year at university, my mum had to attend with me to scribe. Although I have a warm relationship with my family and greatly appreciate their support, I wanted to be more independent and embrace all aspects of university life.

Then I applied for Self Directed Support. I chose a direct payment because I wanted to be in control of my support

Dale

In 2006, I had just completed a degree in sports coaching and was looking for a part time job to tide me over for a couple of months, when I saw Omar's advert. Ten years later, I'm still here! I started working for Omar when he was a student at Edinburgh Napier University. I had no experience of supporting someone with a disability, but I did know what it was like to be at college – both the pressures and the social life!

No two days are the same working with Omar and that variety is one of the things I enjoy most about being a PA. I also enjoy working and building a relationship with one person and I value being able to support Omar to live his life as he chooses. I get a great deal of satisfaction from that. It's not all plain sailing of course, there is the occasional 'niggle' but we don't let it fester.

Omar

We do a lot of social things on my days off. This kind of relationship may not suit everyone, but the reason it works is because Dale "gets it," as they say. I don't have to 'remind' him that I am the employer because we have a deep mutual trust and I know that he understands the PA/PA employer relationship through the quality of support he provides and by the way he respects my wishes - even if he doesn't always agree! Having PAs has literally changed my life.

Forward Mid are extremely grateful to Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living for giving us permission to publish these extracts from their excellent publication: **PAssport To Independent Living**. You can read the whole book at:

www.gcil.org.uk/media/68838/passport%20to%20independent%20living.pdf

Forward Mid would also like to thank Omar and Dale for allowing Forward Mid to use their story as an example of the how fulfilling a role can be for a PA and how life changing having a good PA can be for a disabled person.