

## Know your rights about personal budgets



What is a personal budget?

A personal budget is money you get from the council to pay for the things you need, like



- support at home
- things to do in the day.



With a personal budget you get more choice about the support you get.



Someone can look after your personal budget for you, like someone from the council.



Or you can look after it yourself with help from your family or a supporter if you want.



If you look after it yourself then you are in charge of paying for the things you need, like your support or the things you do in the day.

Looking after your own personal budget is called getting a direct payment.

Finding out how much money you will get in your personal budget

The council works out how much money you should get by doing an assessment.

An assessment is a way of finding out what support a person needs.

You might have to go to a meeting or fill in a form for your assessment.

The council will work out how much money you need to pay for your support.





## How to spend the money

When you know how much money you are going to get you can choose what to spend it on.



The council will help you to spend it in the best way.



They will help you choose support that is good for you.



They might help you make a care plan.

A care plan is a piece of paper that shows what you are going to spend the money on.



The council will keep checking your plan to make sure you are getting the things you need.



Are personal budgets a good thing?

Mencap thinks personal budgets are good because they give people more choice over what support they get.

But Mencap is worried about a few things.



1. We are worried that councils will use personal budgets as a way of spending less money on support for people with a learning disability.



We want councils to make sure that people get the right money to pay for the support they need.



2. We are worried that some people may find it hard to change to a personal budget.

Councils need to make sure that people get good information and support to change to a personal budget.



Councils also need to make sure that there are good things for people to do if they are going to close some services like day centres.



3. We are worried that some people will be forced to have a personal budget.

People should be able to say no if they don't want a personal budget.



4. We are worried that councils in different parts of the country are doing things differently.

This means some people will not get as much as other people because of where they live.



What to do if you are not happy with your personal budget

If you are not happy with your personal budget you should talk to the council.



You can ask to have a bigger say about how to spend the money.



You can complain if you did not get enough information or support to change to a personal budget.

Complain means saying you are not happy.



If you do not have enough money to pay for the things you need then you can ask the council to do your assessment again.

## More information

You can get more information from the Mencap Direct Helpline.



You can call 0808 808 1111



You can send an email to [help@mencap.org.uk](mailto:help@mencap.org.uk)



You can text 0771 7989 029



You can use the textphone  
18001 0808 808 1111



You can send a letter to

Mencap Direct Helpline  
Mencap  
3rd floor  
Delta View  
2309-2311 Coventry Road  
Birmingham  
B26 3PG