

# All about personal health budgets

## Getting the healthcare you need



Easy Read version of:  
'Understanding personal  
health budgets'

# About this leaflet

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The National Health Service (NHS) has written this leaflet.



This leaflet talks about **personal health budgets** and tells you:

- what a personal health budget is
- why we think they could help people
- how some people use their personal health budget
- how to find out more.



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# About personal health budgets

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The NHS is working on a lot of new ideas that will make it easier for you to get the healthcare you think will help you. A personal health budget is one of these ideas.



A **personal health budget** is money to pay for your healthcare. At the centre is your care plan, which helps you decide your health goals together with your local NHS team.



This means:

- you agree the best way to spend the money with your local NHS team. This could be your doctor or care manager
- you know how much money there is for your healthcare
- you have more say about your healthcare.



You can already get a personal budget to pay for support from social services.

Now we want to try this in the NHS.

# How personal health budgets work

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You must spend the money on things in your care plan that keep you healthy and safe.



The local NHS has to agree that these things support your health.

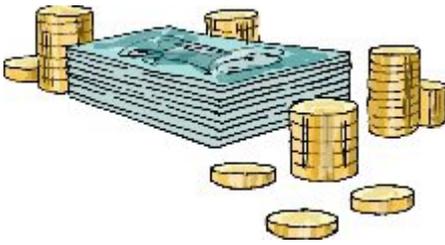


If things are working well at the moment, you do not have to change them.



But a personal health budget means you can change things if you want to.

**We think personal health budgets could work in 3 ways:**



### **1. Notional budget**

We tell you how much money there is for your care.



You say how you want us to spend the money. If your local NHS team agrees this meets your needs they arrange the care and support for you.

### **2. Real budget held by a third party**



An organisation, like a charity, looks after the money for you and helps you decide how you want to spend it. They are called the **third party**.



If the local NHS agrees with how you want to spend your money, the organisation buys the care and support for you.



### 3. Direct payment for healthcare

We give you the money to buy and manage your own healthcare and support.

Your local NHS team must agree that this meets your needs.



You have to tell us what you spend the money on.



You can already have a **notional budget** or **real budget held by a third party**.



We are testing out direct payments in certain places in England.

# What you can use a personal health budget for

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As long as you agree your care plan with your local NHS team, you can use the budget for most types of healthcare and support.



You can use the budget for things like:

✓ personal care



✓ training to help you look after yourself



✓ other equipment to help meet your health needs.

You **cannot** use a personal health budget to pay for:



**X** emergency health services



**X** services you normally get from your family doctor



**X** things that are not legal



**X** paying back money that you owe other people



**X** gambling



**X** alcohol and tobacco.

# Important things about personal health budgets

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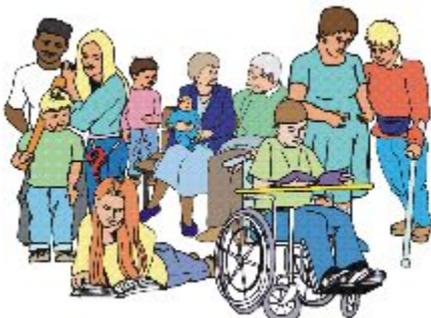
- this is still the NHS. So no one will have to use their own money to get the NHS care they need



- services you get using your personal health budget should work well and be safe



- using the services should be a good experience



- Personal health budgets should help all people get the best services from the NHS. They should not make things worse for anyone



- you do not have to use a personal health budget if you do not want to



- you should have as much control over decisions as you want



- organisations that provide your healthcare and social care should work with you and with each other to give you the best possible service



- if we are not trying out personal health budgets in your area, you can still ask your local NHS team about different ways they could support your needs in a way that suits you.

# How we are trying out our ideas



Personal health budgets might not be right for everyone but will help some people get the NHS care that is right for them.



We are trying out personal health budgets with a small number of people in some parts of England.

**October 2012**

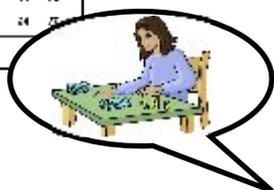
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In October 2012 experts will look at how this has gone and help us decide what to do next.

**April 2014**

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We hope that by April 2014 everyone who needs NHS healthcare for a long time will be able to ask for a personal health budget, including a direct payment.



After that, we hope anyone who could get better care with a personal health budget will be able to ask for one.

# How some people use their personal health budget



## David

David uses a wheelchair and has personal assistants to help with things he cannot do for himself.



His legs were very sore and a nurse had to come and put new bandages on them every day. David was often late for work because he had to wait for the nurse.



David used some of his personal health budget to get his personal assistants trained to change his bandages any time he needs them to.



This means David has more freedom and can go to work when he needs to.



## Anita

Anita has a disease that means she needs someone to care for her 24 hours a day.



She is fed through a tube 6 times a day and her husband gave up work to care for her.



Anita uses her personal health budget to pay for a team of personal assistants to look after her at home.



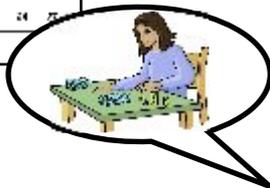
This means she is always cared for by people who know her and understand her needs.

# Questions about personal health budgets



## Who will have a personal health budget?

We are trying personal health budgets with people who are ill for a long time and people who use mental health services.



From April 2014 everyone who needs NHS healthcare for a long time will be able to ask for a personal health budget.



This is because many of these people have told us they want more choice about their care.



## Who decides who can have a budget, how big it is and what you can spend it on?

Your local NHS will work out how to make these decisions in your area.



They can help you understand how much money you might have and the type of things you could spend it on.



**Can I have a personal health budget as well as a personal budget from social services?**

Yes. You can ask them to put this together into 1 budget so you can plan for all your needs.



**Will I have to manage my own care?**

You will not have to do everything on your own.



You and your family or carers will agree a care plan with the NHS.



This will say how you will spend your budget to keep you healthy and safe.



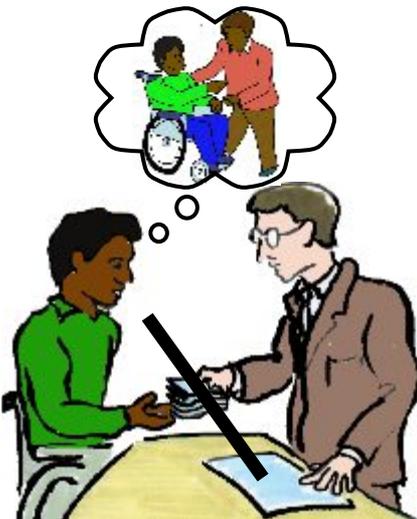
## **What happens if something goes wrong or my needs change?**

If your health changes or your plan is not right for you, you can look at it with your local NHS team and change things.



You will always get NHS care in an emergency.

You can go back to having NHS care like you did before if a personal health budget does not work for you.



## **Will I have to pay towards my healthcare if I can afford it?**

No. There should be enough money in your personal health budget to pay for the care you need.

# How to find out more

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Talk to the person who helps most with your care and support.

This might be your care manager or family doctor.



They can help you find out if we are trying personal health budgets in your area.



**If you have more questions or would like more information please:**

- talk to your local primary care trust (PCT)
- look at the Department of Health website:



[www.dh.gov.uk/personalhealthbudgets](http://www.dh.gov.uk/personalhealthbudgets)

[www.tinyurl.com/Dhbudgets](http://www.tinyurl.com/Dhbudgets)

- write to:



**Personal health budgets team  
The Department of Health  
162 Richmond House  
79 Whitehall  
London SW1A 2NS**

- email:



**[personalhealthbudgets@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:personalhealthbudgets@dh.gsi.gov.uk)**



## **NHS Choices**

Helps people get good information about illness and treatment and you can talk about your own experiences:



**[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)**



Your family doctor or primary care trust can help you make choices about your health and treatment.

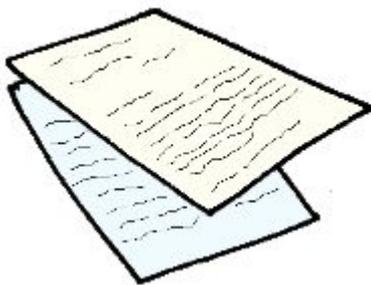
There is also information on these websites:



[www.tinyurl.com/allaboutchoice](http://www.tinyurl.com/allaboutchoice)

[www.tinyurl.com/aboutpatientchoice](http://www.tinyurl.com/aboutpatientchoice)

[www.tinyurl.com/yourhealthpages](http://www.tinyurl.com/yourhealthpages)



## Information prescriptions

This is a quick and easy way to provide information about different health problems and local services:



[www.nhs.uk/ipg/Pages/IPStart.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/ipg/Pages/IPStart.aspx)



## Peoplehub

The peoplehub website is a good place to talk with other people who have a personal health budget and their families:



[www.peoplehub.org.uk](http://www.peoplehub.org.uk)



If you want more copies of  
this leaflet, you can:

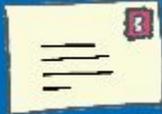
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