

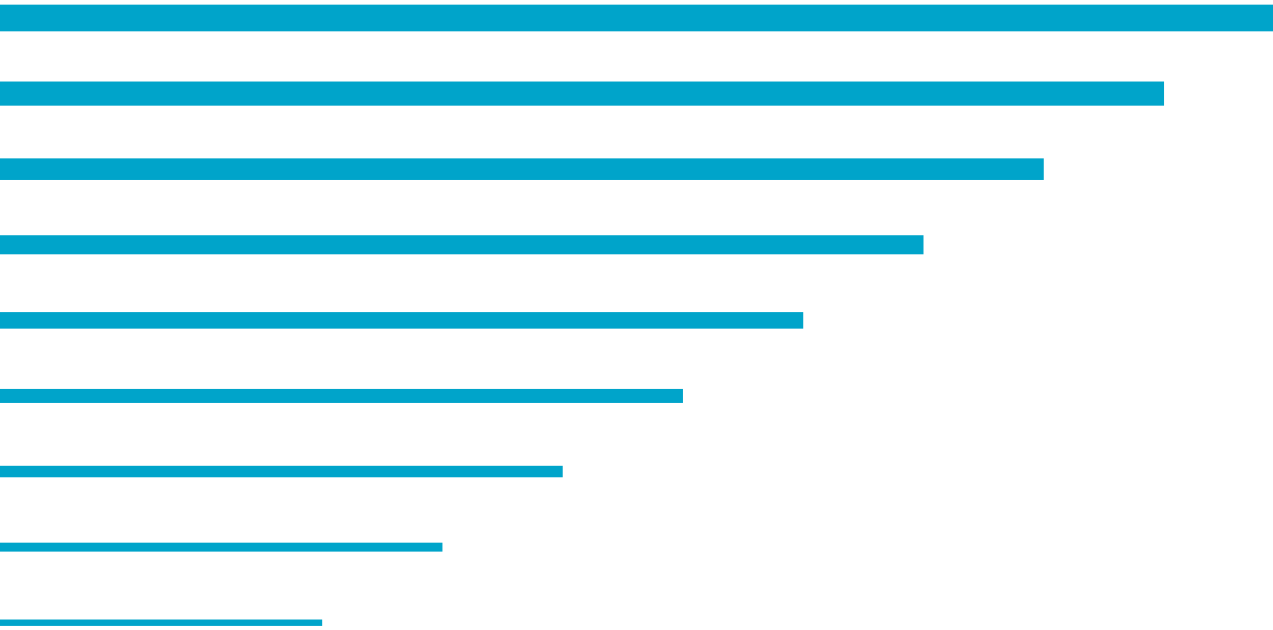


Department of  
**Health, Social Services  
and Public Safety**

An Roinn

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta  
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

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# DIRECT PAYMENTS

POLICY AND PRACTICE  
REVIEW REPORT

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## Foreword

A central theme of social care policy is the promotion of independence. Providing Direct Payments is a primary way in which we can effectively enable independence by giving people control over the purchase and delivery of services that support them.

Direct Payments have been available since 1996 but only available to service users. This, and the perceived complexity and bureaucracy of the system, has meant that take up has been lower than we would have liked. The Carers and Direct Payments (N.I) Act extends access to a much wider group of people and this review has sought to put in place a system which is more easily understood, more accessible and will bring greater support to those who wish to use the scheme.

The Review helps us learn from past experience and build on our strengths; identify management systems which need to be put in place, and critical success factors which will promote and support the uptake of Direct Payments. I welcome the opportunity to endorse and support the recommendations in this review.



**ANDREW HAMILTON**

**Deputy Secretary**

## **Section 1: Introduction**

- 1.1 Direct Payments are cash payments made in lieu of social service provisions, to individuals who have been assessed as needing services.
- 1.2 Direct Payments increase choice and promote independence. They provide for a more flexible response than may otherwise be possible for the service user and carer. They allow individuals to decide when and in what form services are provided and who provides them, who comes into their home and who becomes involved in very personal aspects of their lives. Direct Payments put real power into the hands of service users and carers, and allow them to take control over their lives.
- 1.3 Access to Direct Payments as a means of delivering social services in Northern Ireland has been available since 1996 under the Personal Social Services (Direct Payments) (Northern Ireland) Order 1996. Since then take up of Direct Payments has been limited in number with the majority being accessed in the physical disability programme.
- 1.4 The Carers and Direct Payments Act (N.I.) 2002 extends the provision of Direct Payments to include: disabled 16 & 17 year olds; parents of disabled children; disabled parents; and carers. These provisions came into effect on 19 April 2004.
- 1.5 Additionally, Regulations made under this Legislation, also effective from 19th April 2004, impose a duty on Trusts to offer Direct Payments to those people whom they have assessed and agreed to provide services to.

- 1.6 Guidance pertaining to the Carers and Direct Payments Act (N.I.) 2002 and its associated Regulations was issued in April 2004, replacing the previous Direct Payments Guidance issued in 2000. The purpose of the Guidance is to assist Boards and Trusts in implementing provisions carried in the new legislation. The Guidance aims to help Trusts set up simple but effective systems containing safeguards that are not unnecessarily bureaucratic or time consuming for those wishing to use Direct Payments.
- 1.7 The Minister with responsibility for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, sets out the priorities for Health and Social Services on an annual basis in the Priorities for Action document. This provides guidelines for targeting the resources that have been made available for health and social care.
- 1.8 Direct Payments have a significant impact on a number of the major policy themes referenced in Priorities for Action 2004/05 e.g., modernisation and reform; enhancing choice; empowerment; greater user involvement; putting the service user first.
- 1.9 Essentially, providing Direct Payments is a way of ensuring a holistic approach to individual needs by directly resourcing the user and empowering and supporting them to secure their own care.

## Section 2: Background Information

2.1 Information from Trusts indicates that there has been a significant growth in the number of Direct Payments recipients from 2001/2002.

2.2 As of 31/08/03, a total of 132 people in N. Ireland were in receipt of Direct Payments:

Programme of Care	Number of Clients
Physical Disability	76
Learning Disability	16
Elderly	34
Mental Health	2
Children	4
Total	132

2.3 In addition, a further 23 people had commenced Direct Payments and ceased. This was largely due to a change in their circumstances.

2.4 In most cases Direct Payments have been made directly to the service user. A number of Trusts have been flexible in how individuals have been supported in the management of a Direct Payment. The range of support options currently being used are: Microboard (A legally constituted body of family and/or friends established to manage the Direct Payment on behalf of the recipient); Agent; Office of Care & Protection Controller; Power of Attorney; Family; Spouse.

2.5 Direct Payments recipients have a range of needs, from those with low to those with high dependency. The number of hours allocated ranges from 59 hours to 1 hour per week. This is one illustration of how flexible and person centred, Direct Payments can be.

- 2.6 Direct Payments are currently being used to provide a range of services, the most common being personal care; practical domestic tasks; sitting service; home based respite and individual day support. There are also individual examples of Direct Payments being used to fund I.T. training, further education and transport where this is an integral part of their social services support needs.
- 2.7 A number of Trusts pay one set hourly rate for Direct Payments. There is some local variation in the rate paid i.e., between £6.80 and £7.90 per hour. Other Trusts pay rates, which depend on the type of service required or the dependency level of the recipient e.g., £8.50 for personal care, £6.00 for day/night sitting. Two Trusts pay a specific “sleep over” rate, one at £37.68 and the other at £47.40 per night.
- 2.8 Trusts have developed partnerships with Inland Revenue, Centre for Independent Living, Vela N.I. and Queen’s University Belfast to assist in the provision and management of Direct Payments.

## **Section 3: Review Methodology**

### **3.1 Aim of Review**

“ To review the implementation of Direct Payments Policy in Northern Ireland in the light of the extension of access provided in the Carers and Direct Payments Act (Northern Ireland) 2002, and make recommendations for improved Direct Payments schemes.”

3.2 The DHSSPS Review of Direct Payments commenced in May 2003, a variety of methodologies were employed to ensure a comprehensive process that would include the views of interested parties.

Methodologies used were:

- Regional Reference Group
- Questionnaire
- Trust Site Visits
- Interviews
- User/Carer Workshops
- Senior Managers Seminar

### **3.3 Regional Reference Group**

In May 2003 a Regional Reference Group was established to look at actions which could be taken to improve knowledge of and access to Direct Payments across Northern Ireland; the systems and structures which needed to be in place to support Direct Payments; and the guidance necessary for those providing Direct Payments and those using Direct Payments. Membership of the Group included representatives from each of the four Boards, Trusts with a responsibility for community care, the voluntary sector representing service users and carers, and

Direct Payment recipients. The Group was chaired by the DHSSPS. (Ref. *Appendix 1*)

### **3.4 Questionnaire**

A questionnaire was distributed to the eleven community Trusts. Its' purpose was to gather statistical, operational and attitudinal information on Trusts' experiences of implementing Direct Payments schemes from 1996. (Ref. *Appendix 2*)

The information collated formed a baseline that was developed during the site visits and ongoing consultations.

### **3.5 Trust Site Visits**

In an effort to gain a fuller understanding of what is required to make Direct Payments work on a practical level site visits were made to one Trust in each of the four Board areas. During these visits, carried out between January '04 and March '04, the Review Team met with practitioners and managers at various levels within Trusts involved in social care, finance and human resources. These meetings were focused on:

- Trust's experience of providing Direct Payments
- Systems currently in place to administer Direct Payments
- Training issues
- Interfaces between Social Care and Finance
- Other Trust initiatives interfacing with Direct Payments e.g. transitions, community development
- Examples of good practice

### **3.6 User/carer Workshops**

A number of workshops were held to elicit views of Direct Payments recipients, service users and carers. These workshops were facilitated by the Centre for Independent Living. They focused on peoples' experiences of Direct Payments to date, and also what could be done in the future to improve that experience.

### **3.7 Interviews**

A number of individual interviews were conducted with interested parties including Centre for Independent Living, Vela Northern Ireland, Carers Northern Ireland and Direct Payments recipients who could not attend the workshops.

### **3.8 Senior Managers' Seminar**

A half-day seminar was held for Senior Managers from Boards and Trusts in April 2004. The purpose of this seminar was to share with those who have strategic and operational responsibility for Direct Payments schemes, the preliminary findings of the Review, in advance of the final report. A copy of the Seminar Programme is attached at for information. (Ref. *Appendix 3*)

## Section 4: User Findings

### 4.1 Information & Promotion of Direct Payments

4.1.1 People have heard about Direct Payments from a number of sources:

- Trust Staff
- Centre for Independent Living
- Other Direct Payments recipients

4.1.2 People who inquired about Direct Payments report that there was a lack of knowledge among staff groups e.g. people asking for basic information that staff could not provide.

4.1.3 Those consulted would like to see Direct Payments included as a topic in the professional training of health and social care staff.

4.1.4 Staff in some instances were not proactive in giving information about Direct Payments to service users. This was evidenced by anecdotal information from people who heard about Direct Payments by chance from a source outside their local Trust and subsequently raised the issue with their Social Worker/Care Manager.

4.1.5 Information given to people about Direct Payments could be both confusing and contradictory. E.g. where a person was told that a particular client group was not eligible for a Direct Payment and subsequently discovered that this was not the case.

4.1.6 Written information was difficult for the public to access.

4.1.7 Confusion has been caused by the launch and significant publicity campaign of the Social Security Agency's direct payment scheme.

## 4.2 Motivating/De motivating factors

4.2.1 The prime motivating factor for people requesting a Direct Payment was dissatisfaction with directly provided services. This could be for a number of reasons even if the quality of service received was good i.e.:

- Where existing services did not meet an identified need.
- Where a service did not exist to meet an identified need.
- Where the service recipient feels that too many staff were involved in providing a service.
- Where there was a lack of flexibility.

4.2.2 People also sought a Direct Payment to achieve:

- Independence
- Choice
- Control
- Flexibility
- Privacy
- Added value for money
- Possible reduction in numbers of staff involved in delivering service

4.2.3 People were less likely to want a Direct Payment when:

- There was a lack of information, or that information was confusing.
- The process was perceived as too complicated and long drawn out.
- There was a heavy burden of paperwork/bureaucracy.
- There was an anticipated difficulty in recruiting staff e.g. rural areas, formal employment arrangements.

### **4.3 Positive experiences of Direct Payments Recipients**

4.3.1 Direct Payments give the opportunity to be independent and not reliant on family and friends. This has resulted in better relationships at home, enabling families to also live their own lives.

4.3.2 Receiving Direct Payments increased people's feelings of self-respect, and dignity, particularly in relation to the empowerment experienced by being an employer.

4.3.3 Direct Payments recipients valued their power to decide who works for them. This was particularly relevant where personal care or support for a child is involved.

4.3.4 Direct Payments had directly enabled people to return to work.

4.3.4 Support provided by the Centre for Independent Living had been valued by Direct Payments recipients as independent and comprehensive.

4.3.5 Support of the Inland Revenue had been beneficial, especially their provision of home visits. A payroll service was also valued.

4.3.6 Increased flexibility on the part of Trusts regarding the support options for the management of Direct Payments had increased uptake.

4.3.7 Direct Payments recipients say they had benefited from the reduction in contact between them and their Social Worker/Care Manager once the Direct Payment had been established (Trust Staff have also made this comment).

4.3.8 Direct Payments recipients were reassured in the knowledge that they could call on Trust support in an emergency or if the Direct Payment ceased to be a suitable option.

4.3.9 Those who had spoken to someone in receipt of Direct Payments when considering this option found that helpful.

#### **4.4 Negative Experiences of Direct Payments Recipients**

4.4.1 Direct Payments recipients had found it difficult to recruit and retain staff in today's competitive employment market, e.g. pension plans could not be offered.

4.4.2 Cover arrangements in an emergency situation remained a concern for people who used Direct Payments to meet their care needs.

4.4.3 Current Policy and Procedures documents concerning Direct Payments were felt to be over complicated and off-putting.

4.4.4 Paperwork requirements of some Trusts were felt to be unduly burdensome.

4.4.5 Negative attitudes among Trusts' staff had resulted in the lack of promotion of Direct Payments.

4.4.6 Training for personal assistants could be difficult to source if Trusts were not willing to provide it as "support in kind".

## 4.5 Future Improvements

4.5.1 Information about Direct Payments should be:

- In clear non jargonised language
- In a range of formats
- Publicised and accessible
- Kept up to date

4.5.2 Person centred assessments, rather than assessment for existing services, will increase the demand for Direct Payments in the future.

4.5.3 People with experience of undertaking Direct Payments felt that it would be beneficial for those considering taking up this option to speak to those who have already done so. It was also felt that the development of a network for current Direct Payments recipients may be helpful.

4.5.4 The utilisation of Direct Payments to provide more flexible respite has been welcomed, it is likely this option will be further explored in the future.

4.5.5 Simplifying paperwork such as return forms and the contract with the Trust would make the Direct Payment scheme more user-friendly.

4.5.6 Provision of a payroll service, and having the cost of the annual employer's liability insurance met from monies made available by Trusts would be greatly appreciated by Direct Payments recipients.

4.5.7 Direct Payment recipients have encountered difficulties recruiting and retaining personal assistants. They would welcome the opportunity to employ close family members should the need arise, and to have access to a database of staff for emergency cover. In order to secure the

services of the right calibre of staff they would like to see the amount of the Direct Payment rise annually in line with inflation so that they may consider a pay rise for staff. In addition, they would like Trusts to include their staff in Trust training sessions e.g. lifting and handling, basic hygiene and disability awareness.

### **General Comments**

*“It really was life changing.”*

*“You should just go for it.”*

*“Once you’ve used it you’ll never go back.”*

*“It changed my life.”*

*“There’s nothing better out there ”*

## **Section 5: Review Findings Statutory & Voluntary Sector**

### **5.1 Training**

5.1.1 Some Trusts had provided basic training on Direct Payments to staff. Very few staff had been trained to set Direct Payments within the context of Independent Living.

5.1.2 All Trusts identified a training deficit particularly in relation to the new legislation (Carers & Direct Payments Act (N.I.) 2002).

5.1.3 As little formal training had been given to staff, there was a basic information gap with regards to what Direct Payments were, whom they were paid to, and what internal Trust policy/procedures were.

5.1.4 Most staff lacked:

- A general understanding of Direct Payments.
- Confidence and enthusiasm to represent the benefits of Direct Payments to service users.
- Knowledge of where to go for assistance.

### **5.2 Information**

5.2.1 Information on Direct Payments was sparse and difficult to access (Centre for Independent Living, in conjunction with Mencap, is currently working on a simplified leaflet aimed at people with learning disability).

5.2.2 Anecdotal evidence suggests that in addition to user guidance, a basic information leaflet was needed to give to clients when their assessment

is completed. As well as giving an introduction to Direct Payments it could also signpost more detailed information

5.2.3 Staff were interested in getting more information on Direct Payments, and in particular in hearing about success stories.

5.2.4 Voluntary Sector Organisations felt that Trust Staff often presented Direct Payments in a negative way, or made it seem too complicated. Trust Staff could also appear selective about who they informed about Direct Payments.

5.2.5 A Regional web site with a link to Centre for Independent Living web site would be required.

5.2.6 The “Out & About “ Project based in Armagh which aims to integrate disabled people on their own terms into the Community, was developing a web site to disseminate information and raise awareness about Direct Payments.

### **5.3 Resources & Systems**

5.3.1 Trust’s systems for the management of Direct Payments differed greatly. There was also a variation in approach between Boards.

5.3.2 Some Trusts had inequitable systems for authorising Direct Payments and conventional service provision; in the former Trust Boards gave approval, in the latter Senior Social Workers could authorise.

5.3.3 Some Trusts did not have an internal group, which oversaw the implementation of Direct Payments on strategic and operational levels

within their Trust. Trusts, which had internal steering groups, were more successful in driving the Direct Payments agenda.

- 5.3.4 All Trusts required recipients to keep records/returns relating to hours worked by and money paid to employees, and other expenditure.
- Some Trusts reviewed records on infrequent basis e.g. 6/12 monthly.
  - Some Trusts required monthly returns to be submitted.
  - One Trust would not make payment until returns from the previous month had been received and verified.
  - One Trust received monthly statements on Direct Payment accounts directly from the bank

5.3.5 All Trusts had a formal review process for those in receipt of a Direct Payment. This ensured assessed needs were being met and monies were being managed appropriately.

5.3.6 Trusts were unsure as to the role Finance Departments should play in the provision and management of Direct Payment schemes.

5.3.7 Trusts were of the opinion that current systems were not robust because there had been no additional funding to develop infrastructure to facilitate Direct Payments. There was consensus among Trusts that the extension of Direct Payment schemes would require additional recurrent funding for:

- Infrastructure – e.g. finance staff
- Training purposes
- Care packages

5.3.8 Some Trusts had bureaucratic systems for releasing funding; the implications of a lengthy wait for a funding decision could be:

- Client losing interest
- Potential personal assistants no longer being available for employment.

5.3.9 Direct Payments were frequently seen as a last resort, offering an alternative in situations where service provision had either broken down or was encountering difficulties.

5.3.10 Staff had begun to see an improvement in the quality of life of those in receipt of Direct Payments. In some cases this had given rise to the notion that those receiving services through direct provision experienced a “second rate” service.

## **5.4 Finance**

5.4.1 Social Care staff had a perception that Direct Payments is a finance driven process that is too bureaucratic rather than an option to promote independent living.

5.4.2 Some staff and service users perceived Direct Payments as a way of the Health Service saving money.

5.4.3 All Trusts reported that Direct Payments were currently funded from existing Programme of Care budgets. They expressed concern at the lack of additional monies to fund new infrastructure arrangements necessary to facilitate Direct Payments operationally.

5.4.4 Trusts indicate that the introduction of Direct Payments had not been cost neutral because of accompanying increased infrastructure and training costs.

- 5.4.5 It was difficult to release money from core services (e.g. day care) to finance Direct Payments.
- 5.4.6 Trusts were divided as to whether or not it would be advantageous to ring-fence funding specifically for Direct Payments. Whilst such an arrangement would assist the promotion of Direct Payments, it could also create a two-tier service, whereby people who were agreeable to taking a Direct Payment would receive preferential treatment over others who were waiting for direct service provision.
- 5.4.7 Standardised financial monitoring mechanisms for Direct Payments recipients and Trusts' staff were needed to ensure equity across N. Ireland.
- 5.4.8 Trusts needed to build in a high degree of flexibility when monitoring how monies have been spent. So long as identified needs had been met, recipients should not be discouraged from getting added value from their Direct Payment.
- 5.4.9 Trusts' finance departments referred to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) Guidance.
- 5.4.10 Due to small numbers over a short period of time, no formal research had been carried out into whether or not Direct Payments represented value for money.  
Anecdotal information was available to demonstrate an improvement in "quality of life" for recipients.
- 5.4.11 All Trusts currently required Direct Payments recipients to operate a separate bank account to facilitate receipt of a Direct Payment.

Consideration should be given to Independent Living Fund monies being managed through the same account where appropriate.

5.4.12 A number of Direct Payments recipients reported difficulty opening bank accounts. National Centre for Independent Living will talk to banks at national level in an effort to resolve this issue.

5.4.13 Direct Payments recipients would welcome permission to use a small float e.g. £15 for small one off payments per month: e.g. gardener/window cleaner with receipts provided if required.

## **5.5 Critical Success Factors**

*Staff from statutory and voluntary sectors were asked to identify critical factors in Direct Payments schemes.*

5.5.1 Direct Payments schemes need to be seen as a priority area for Boards & Trusts and have organisational ownership.

5.5.2 There would appear to be a lack of knowledge of Direct Payments at Senior Management level within Trusts and Boards that results in a lack of promotion of Direct Payments.

5.5.3 Staff awareness and commitment: most Staff welcome the introduction of Direct Payments as an option in principle, but feel they are ill equipped to promote uptake.

5.5.4 Staff feel that if a designated person in the Trust takes a Lead/Champion role in promoting Direct Payments uptake would be increased.

- 5.5.5 Independent advice: the Voluntary Sector has the potential to play a vital role in encouraging the uptake of Direct Payments, and supporting individuals to manage.
- 5.5.6 User-friendly Guidance and Information: such material needs to be clearly written and presented, widely circulated and easily accessible.
- 5.5.7 The sharing of success stories has proved to be particularly beneficial for potential recipients and staff as a way of illustrating how Direct Payments can lead to an improvement in the quality of an individual's life.
- 5.5.8 The most favourable conditions for Direct Payments to grow are where systems can be flexible enough to promote lifestyle choices for Direct Payments recipients.
- 5.5.9 Although Direct Payments aim to promote independence, it is important that recipients feel supported on an ongoing basis, by social services.
- 5.5.10 If a potential recipient is referred to an independent support service e.g. the Centre for Independent Living, at an early stage they can be assisted throughout the process. Peoples' experiences demonstrate that it does not seem so daunting to learn in small steps.
- 5.5.11 The provision of a Payroll Service will be a major enabler in the promotion of Direct Payments.

## 5.6 Future Direction of Direct Payments

*Staff from statutory and voluntary sectors were asked to comment on how they saw the development of Direct Payments in the future.*

- 5.6.1 The majority of Trusts believe that Direct Payments offer a real alternative for clients and carers and would wish to see an improved uptake.
- 5.6.2 Trusts are currently focused on Governance issues; Direct Payments are about Self-Governance by clients as they make their own decisions about risk management to achieve independent lifestyles.
- 5.6.3 The uptake of Direct Payments will be driven by client demand, especially younger clients who aspire to equality of citizenship.
- 5.6.4 Interest in Direct Payments must be generated within the Voluntary Sector and Community Development initiatives as both have the potential to promote uptake and take on advocacy and support roles.
- 5.6.5 Whilst recognising that users of Direct Payments are the best “advertisement” of the scheme, a user-friendly information pack needs to be developed for the public
- 5.6.6 Staff training on Direct Payments should include:
- Regional Standards
  - Trust Systems & Processes
- 5.6.7 On-going staff training across all programmes should be provided.

- 5.6.8 Update training is important, as it is vital that practitioners are well informed.
- 5.6.9 Trusts/Social Services Teams should have an identified Direct Payments Champion, and an internal group responsible for the strategic and operational development of Direct Payments.
- 5.6.10 Regional Guidance should be produced by the DHSSPS in a range of formats, including the creation of a Direct Payments web site.
- 5.6.11 Guidance should be formally reviewed periodically to reflect future developments in practice.
- 5.6.12 Additional recurrent finance is needed for infrastructure and training costs associated with the expansion of Direct Payments.
- 5.6.13 A minimum set of data should be identified for auditing purposes which ensures financial probity regarding the use of public monies, but which does not place an unacceptable administrative burden on the Direct Payments recipient.
- 5.6.14 Direct Payments interface with Independent Living Fund should be explored.
- 5.6.15 Use of a scheme involving partnership approach with a “Local Area Coordinator” or “Community Development Workers” would assist in the identification of potential Direct Payments recipients, personal assistants and other appropriate resources, which Direct Payments could fund in place of current services.
- 5.6.16 Direct Payment users require more support in their role as employers.

- 5.6.17 The Regional Reference Group, which was set up to facilitate the Review, has proved to be an effective way of enabling an overview of the development of Direct Payments within N. Ireland. It has given the opportunity for examples of good practice to be shared and issues of common interest to be explored.
- 5.6.18 Development of the role of the Centre for Independent Living outside the EHSSB area would be beneficial. This should be done on an outreach basis, e.g. Department funding core costs and outreach funded by Boards.
- 5.6.19 Creative use of Direct Payments for respite may result in increased uptake, particularly with regard to parents of disabled children.
- 5.6.20 The implications of the future regulation of social care staff for Direct Payments should be explored.
- 5.6.21 The Carers and Direct Payments (N.I.) Act 2002 places a duty on Trusts to make Direct Payments available, therefore a report of Direct Payments schemes should be referenced in Trusts' Statutory Functions Reports to Boards.

## Section 6: Recommendations

### **Boards & Trusts should recognise their statutory responsibility/duty to make Direct Payments available.**

- 6.1 Boards & Trusts' staff should endorse Direct Payments as a primary choice for people for whom Trusts have agreed to provide social care support.

*Trusts staff require the full support of Chief Executives and other senior managers in recognising that the use of Direct Payments is an essential part of the modernisation agenda which values independence and social inclusion and promotes independent living.*

- 6.2 Trusts should ensure that every client is informed of the Direct Payments option as part of the overall assessment process. Direct Payments should be discussed when consideration is being given as to how identified needs should be met.

*Trusts should develop a mechanism to demonstrate the implementation of this recommendation e.g. a checklist included in the client's file.*

- 6.3 The Regional Reference Group on Direct Payments will develop an Information Strategy on both regional and local levels.

*Clear information on all aspects of Direct Payments should be made available in:*

- *Accessible formats*
- *Preferred language*
- *Preferred mode of communication*
- *With equitable access*

*Whilst most information will be agreed at regional level, Trusts should ensure that relevant information is provided on a local basis.*

6.4 Statutory and Voluntary Sector Organisations will establish and promote a range of support options that facilitate flexible and innovative practices and encourage the uptake of Direct Payments. This will be developed by the creation of a Direct Payment Development Fund for Northern Ireland by the DHSSPS.

*Developing support services is a key component of the successful implementation of the Direct Payments option. Boards & Trusts should consider ways in which they can offer support to Direct Payments recipients, such as:*

- *A Trust support service*
- *A support service in partnership with a voluntary organisation*
- *A voluntary/recipient run organisation support service*
- *Empowerment of Direct Payments recipients, their carers/families to facilitate peer support networks.*

*Support services should advocate and advise on all aspects of managing a Direct Payment e.g. employer/employee issues, Trust administrative requirements.*

6.5 The Department should develop standards in partnership with key stakeholders against which statutory performance will be measured. These standards will act as a benchmark to inform guidelines and best practice.

*The Standards will set out what users should expect with regard to information, process and professional practice issues. Trusts will be able to benchmark against these standards when reviewing their discharge of statutory function.*

6.6 A Regional Training Strategy will be developed to meet the needs of Staff, Direct Payments recipients, and those Personal Assistants employed by a Direct Payment. Each Trust will be responsible for the local implementation of the Regional Training Strategy.

**Staff:** *Different levels of training should be made available i.e. Awareness training set in the context of Independent Living Trust procedures/processes.*

**Direct Payments Recipients** *should have access to whatever training is appropriate to assist them in the management of a Direct Payment e.g. interview techniques, money management skills.*

**Personal Assistants** *may require training e.g. on basic hygiene, or lifting and handling techniques.*

- 6.7 Trusts will develop a step-by-step guide for their staff.  
*This Guide should clearly identify Trust processes/procedures and clarify staff roles and responsibilities.*
- 6.8 Boards and Trusts should establish a clearly identified point of contact for those seeking information or guidance on Direct Payment Policy. Such guidance should positively promote the use of Direct Payments.
- 6.9 The Regional Reference Group on Direct Payments chaired by DHSSPS will meet on an ongoing basis to review progress made on the implementation of the Review recommendations. It will create a number of sub-groups to address relevant issues.
- 6.10 The Finance sub-group established by the Regional Reference Group, will produce Guidance on Accounting & Audit requirements for Direct Payments made under the Carers & Direct Payments Act (N.I.) 2002.

## APPENDIX 1

### Regional Reference Group Members

Peter Deazley	DHSSPS
Charlie Bamford	DHSSPS
Stuart Baxter	DHSSPS
Mandy Jones	DHSSPS
Sean Scullion	DHSSPS
Margaret O’Kane	DHSSPS
Noel Quigley	WHSSB
Kieran Downey	Sperrin Lakeland H&SS Trust
Monica McNicholl	Foyle H&SS Trust
Peter Gibson	EHSSB
Patrick Graham	Homefirst H&SS Trust
Randal McHugh	NHSSB
Jim Loughrey	Causeway H&SS Trust
Maurice O’Kane	S & E Belfast H&SS Trust
Iolo Eilian	Down Lisburn H&SS Trust
Richard Black	SHSSB
Helen Ferguson	Carers NI
Ricky Devlin	Belfast Carers
Ian Sutherland	Craigavon & Banbridge H&SS Trust
Philomena McCrory	Centre for Independent Living
Kate Courtney	Armagh & Dungannon H&SS Trust
Hugh Hamill	N & W Belfast H&SS Trust
Valerie McCarthy	Vela Northern Ireland
Sue Taylor	Vela Northern Ireland
Shirley Henning	Newry & Mourne H&SS Trust
Gerry Cunningham	Ulster Community & Hospital Trust
Lexie Sinnamon	Direct Payment User
Linda McDade	Direct Payment User

## APPENDIX 2

### DIRECT PAYMENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

\_\_\_\_\_ **HSS TRUST**

#### 1. STATISTICS

Please give details of the following within your Trust:

- a) Number of clients currently in receipt of Direct Payments (as of 31.8.03)

PROGRAMME OF CARE	CLIENTS

- b) Total number who have received Direct Payments since 1996 by Programme of Care;

YEAR	1996/97	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04
POC								

**c) Number who did receive Direct Payments, but ceased**

	YEAR	1996/97	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04
POC									

Please summarise reasons for stopping, where known.

**d) Numbers who received Direct Payments for a short term planned period**

PERIOD (in weeks)	1996/97	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04
0-2								
3-4								
5-6								
7-8								
Over 8								

**e) Number of clients who were offered Direct Payment but refused**

	YEAR	1996/97	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04
POC									

**Please summarise reasons for refusal (where known)**

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**f) Number who were refused option of Direct Payment by your Trust**

	YEAR	1996/97	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04
POC									

**Please summarise reasons for refusal (where known)**

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**g) Number of Direct Payments made through specially set-up Trusts or Micro Boards;**

	YEAR	1996/97	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04
POC									

**h) Maximum number of hours per week allocated to individual cases**

**i) Minimum number of hours per week allocated to individual cases**

**Please comment on the typical dependency levels among Direct Payment users e.g high, medium or low**

**j) Are there any clients currently waiting for Direct Payments within your Trust (as of 31st August)? If yes, please state number and reasons for delay.**

**k) Please list the types of service purchased by Direct Payment users e.g personal care, transport/access, domestic tasks, sitting services etc.?**

**l) Does the Trust use discretion to allow employment of close relatives to provide services?**

- m) Who is the Direct Payment usually paid to? (eg service user, Micro-Board etc.)**

- n) What are the common difficulties encountered by your Trust in the provision of Direct Payments?**

## **2. FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS**

- a) How are Direct Payments currently funded within your Trust? (e.g. from within existing programme of care budgets)**

**b) Please detail expenditure on Direct Payments, by programme of care.**

	YEAR	1996/97	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04
POC									

**c) What hourly rate does your Trust pay for each service provided through Direct Payment, and how have these figures been arrived at? Give breakdown of constituent costs eg. Travel, employer’s costs, insurance etc.**

**d) Has any guidance been issued on this, and is a cost ceiling applied?**

**e) Has your Trust carried out any research into whether the use of Direct Payments offers value for money, in comparison with cost of providing conventional care packages? If so, please provide details, including any benchmarking with other Trust’s Direct Payment schemes.**

- f) Does your Trust feel that funds for Direct Payments should be ring-fenced specifically for this purpose?**

- g) Please list services provided to Direct Payment users, including details of any partnership arrangements with other agencies.**

**3. RESOURCES AND SYSTEMS**

- a) Please describe the systems your Trust uses to administer Direct Payments, including details of the audit process and arrangements for monitoring Direct Payments.**

**b) Does the Trust consider that these systems are adequate? If yes, would they be able to cope if there were to be an increase in the uptake rate of Direct Payments? If not, what does the Trust consider to be the key areas requiring strengthening?**

**c) In the table below, please detail how many Trust staff are involved in these systems, and what level of resources have been allocated to train these staff? Please complete for all programmes of care as appropriate, including finance and administrative staff.**

<b>POC</b>	<b>No of Staff</b>	<b>Training rec'd</b>	<b>Costs</b>

**d) What plans does the Trust have in relation to future training needs for staff involved in provision of Direct Payments?**

<b>POC</b>	<b>No of Staff</b>	<b>Numbers to be trained</b>	<b>Costs</b>

**4. USER EXPERIENCE**

**a) Does your Trust currently have any formal mechanism for gathering user feedback in relation to Direct Payments? (e.g. User surveys, monitoring process etc). Please detail any feedback you have received to date from Direct Payment users, and/or their carers.**

**b) What are the most common problems encountered by users?**

**c) Has the Trust made any amendments to any aspect of its Direct Payment systems as a result of user feedback? If yes, please detail.**

**d) What processes does the Trust use to promote the up-take of Direct Payments as a viable alternative means of accessing services?**

**e) Does the Trust have any suggestions about how uptake may be increased?**

- f) **Have any resources been directed to provide training support for service users? Please detail:**

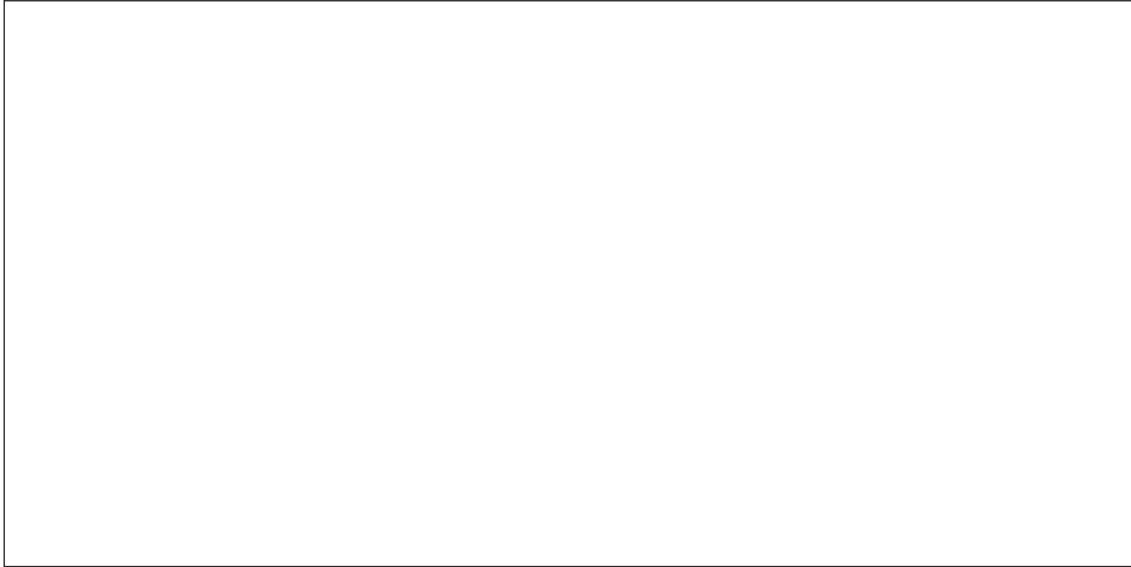
	<b>YEAR</b>	<b>1996/97</b>	<b>97/98</b>	<b>98/99</b>	<b>99/00</b>	<b>00/01</b>	<b>01/02</b>	<b>02/03</b>	<b>03/04</b>
<b>POC</b>									

## **5. GUIDANCE**

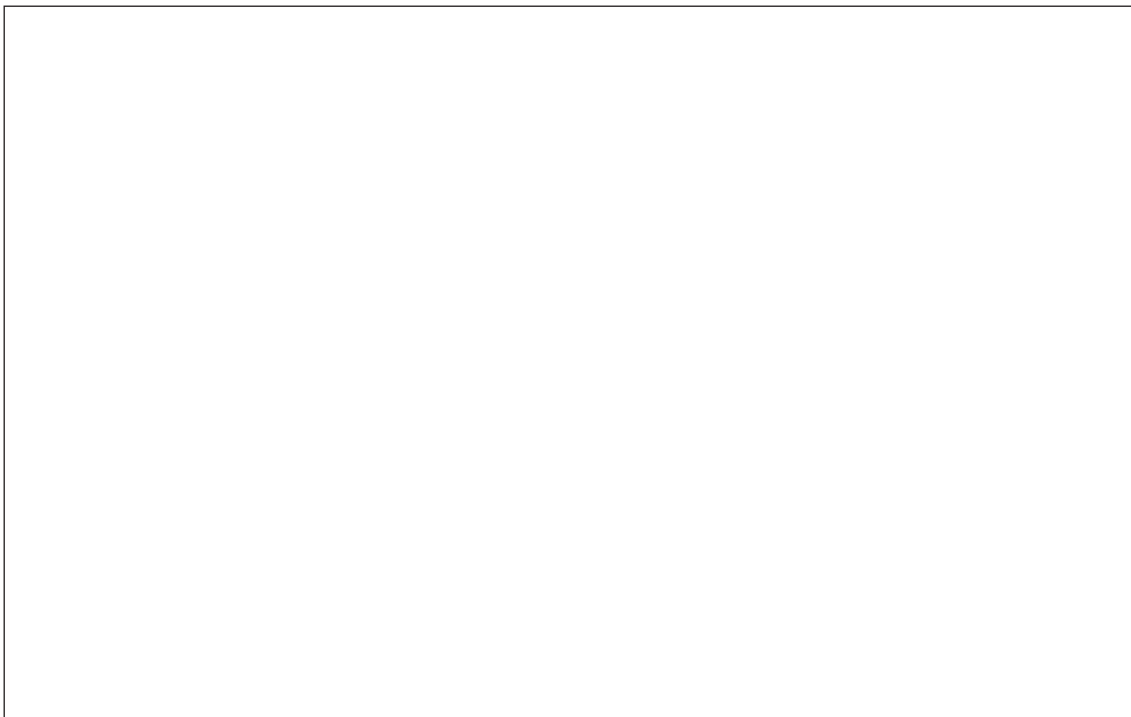
- a) **What guidance does the Trust currently use in providing clients with the option of Direct Payment? Please indicate the source of the guidance (e.g. internal, Departmental etc.), and to whom it is directed (e.g., users, carers, staff).**

- b) **What further guidance does the Trust feel needs to be established to improve the effectiveness of the Direct Payments Policy, and who should assume responsibility for developing it (e.g Trust, Department etc)?**

- 6. From the Trust's experience to date in administering and delivering Direct Payments as a viable alternative to conventional methods of service delivery, what are the crucial success factors in making the Direct Payment system work?**



- 7. What is the Trust's view on the future direction of the Direct Payment scheme?**



## APPENDIX 3

### Direct Payments Seminar

8th April 2004

Greenmount College

### Programme

10.00am	Registration
10.15am	Welcome & Introduction – P. Deazley
10.25am	Setting the Scene - A. Hamilton • <i>Background to Direct Payments Review &amp; Policy Context</i>
10.40am	User Perspectives • <i>Presentations from two Direct Payments Recipients</i>
11.00am	Coffee
11.15am	Review Report – M. O’Kane • <i>Aim, methodology, findings &amp; recommendations</i>
11.30am	Statutory Response – P. Martin • <i>Challenge for social services</i>
11.50am	Voluntary Sector Response – P. McCrory CIL • <i>Challenge for the voluntary sector</i>
12.10pm	Closing Remarks – C.Bamford
12.30pm	Lunch

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