



## ↓ Factsheet

# My life My choice

### What is My life My choice

Is about people being in control over the support and services they need.

### How does it work?

This new system consists of 3 steps:

- Assessment of needs;
- Allocation of a Personal Budget based on the above assessment;
- A Support Plan outlining how you wish to spend your Personal Budget.

### Assessment of needs

A Care Manager will help to establish whether you have eligible needs by completing an assessment with you. This will help to determine what level of support you need and how much social care funding will be available to you. A carer's assessment can also be included. A period of reablement may also be offered if this is your first assessment from us.

### Allocation of a Personal Budget

If you are eligible for social care funding you will be offered a Personal Budget and the option to buy the services you need instead of having them arranged for you. A financial assessment will establish whether you have to make a financial contribution yourself.

This means you will have control and more flexibility over your support arrangements.

If you don't qualify for funding you will be offered information, support and guidance - whatever your level of need.

### Making and agreeing a Support Plan

Once it is established that you do qualify for social care funding you will need to complete a Support Plan showing how you would like to spend your Personal Budget to meet your needs and achieve your social care goals. We need to agree this plan.

The different types of support you choose and how the services will be delivered should be discussed with your Care Manager. If you prefer, this can be done with the help of your family, or others close to you.

### What happens if I need help urgently?

Support planning can take a little time and so we will still arrange social care and support for you for short periods of time in urgent situations. However, we would then be working with you to develop your longer term support plan once your situation has settled.

### What can the money be spent on?

The budget can be used to meet your assessed needs in lots of different ways; this is where it differs from past systems, for example:

- to pay for personal care and support to help you live in your own home;
- to employ a personal assistant, or buy services from a care agency to help you with personal or domestic care tasks;
- to pay for short breaks at home or somewhere else so that you or your carer can take a break from your normal routine;



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- to fund activities such as college courses, driving lessons, which enhance your wellbeing and quality of life.

Your Care Manager will then need to agree the Support Plan using key criteria such as levels of risk and cost before the money can be released.

### Looking after the money and support

Once you have your budget there are different ways in which you will be able to stay in control.

- the money goes straight to you to look after;
- the money goes to someone you trust eg a relative or a friend who has agreed to act on your behalf;
- A Trust is set up to act on your behalf.

Some organisations also offer a Managed Account. You are still responsible for the money but the organisation looks after the day to day transactions.

Alternatively your Care Manager can organise and manage your support to the value of your Personal Budget for you.

### Review and learn

Regular review meetings with your Care Manager will be arranged to see how things are working for you.

### Keeping safe

We will build lots of safeguards in as you go through this process: addressing risks with you; only agreeing safe support plans; giving good advice about safely employing people and using the right agencies.

However, if at any time you or anyone else have any concerns about your own safety you should talk to your care manager or contact **Customer Services** on **0300 123 8 123**.

### Support organisations

**Age Concern Cheshire 01606 881660**

<http://www.ageconcerncheshire.org.uk/>

And

**Cheshire Centre for Independent Living**

**01606 872760**

<http://www.cheshirecil.org.uk/>

Can provide further helpful information about Personal Budgets

#### Accessing Cheshire West and Chester Council information and services

Council information is also available in Audio, Braille and Large Print formats. If you would like a copy in any of these formats or in another language, please email us at

[equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

We are also able to provide a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter to support customers with accessing Council services.

**Tel:** 0300 123 8 123

**Textphone:** 01606 867 670

**Email:**

[equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

**Web:** [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)