



**Self Directed Support**  
choice • control • independence

# Practitioner Guide

## **Self Directed Support**

An approach that puts  
you in control



April 2019



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# Introduction

This Self Directed Support Practitioner Guide is aimed at helping HSC Trust Key Workers understand and implement the Self Directed Support Process.

It may also be useful for others providing information, assessment and Support Planning in relation Self Directed Support.

This guide offers explanation as to the mechanics of delivering the 4 options under Self Directed Support. It should be noted there will be variances in implementation arrangements within each HSC Trust.

Key Workers, have a responsibility to be knowledgeable of any local practices and systems in place designed to help support the process.

Self Directed Support is about individuals, their strengths and assets, their right to live fulfilling lives, to be included as active people, to be full participants in assessing their own needs and also their right to exercise choice and control over any support provided.

Self Directed Support sits within the strategic aims of Transforming Your Care, particularly around promoting independence and personalisation as outlined below:

- Recommendation 15 – more integrated planning and delivery of support for older people, with joined up services and budgets in health and social care, and pilots to explore budgetary integration beyond health and social care.

- Recommendation 18 – personalised care designed to deliver the outcomes care users and their families want, with increasing control over budgets, and access to advocacy and support if needed.
- Recommendation 32 – more control for service users over budgets, with continued promotion of Direct Payments, and a common approach to personalised budget with advocacy and brokerage support where required.
- Recommendation 61 - Promote personalised care promoting the uptake of Direct Payments among mental health service users with involvement of current recipients to share their experiences, and advocacy and support where needed.
- Recommendation 68 - Greater financial control in the organisation of services for individuals and carers, including promoting uptake of Direct Payments with involvement of current recipients to share their experiences, and advocacy and support where needed.

It is also underpinned by the Carers and Direct Payment Act, (Northern Ireland) 2002. Self Directed Support is subject to Human Rights and Equalities Legislation.

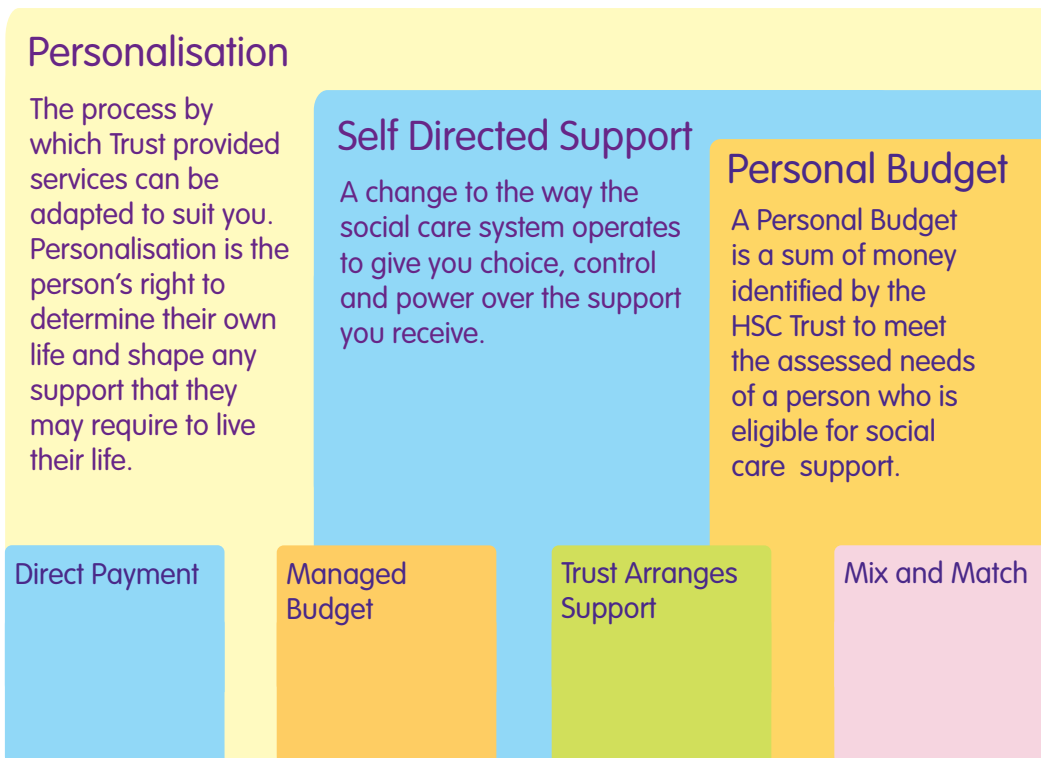
This Practitioner Guide has been developed and agreed regionally by all Health and Social Care Trusts and the Health and Social Care Board, as part of the implementation of Self Directed Support in Northern Ireland.

# What Is Self Directed Support?

Self Directed Support is a new way of providing social care support that empowers individuals to have informed choice about how support is provided to them with a focus on working together to achieve individual outcomes.

Self Directed Support enables individuals to choose how their support is provided and gives them as much control as they want over their Personal Budget.

## Diagram 1 Jargon Busting



## What Is A Personal Budget?

A Personal Budget is a sum of money identified by the HSC Trust to meet the assessed need of an individual who is eligible for and entitled to social care support services.

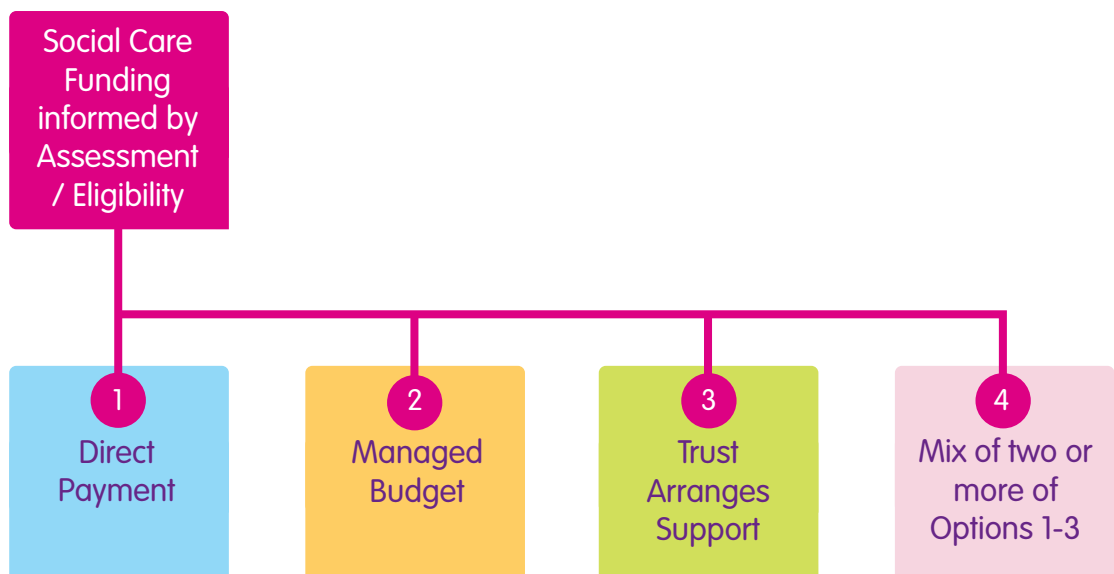
At the centre of every Personal Budget there is an individual support plan. Following the identification of an agreed Personal Budget the individual (and or their representative) will engage in the development of a Support Plan.

This plan will outline agreed personal goals and outcomes that will meet the individuals assessed need.

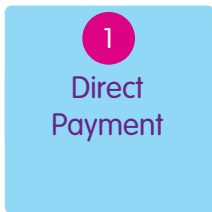
Once this plan is agreed by the HSC Trust the individual and or their representative will decide how the Personal Budget will be managed.

A Personal Budget can be managed in any one of four ways as shown below.

## Diagram 2 Self Directed Support Options



## Option 1: Direct Payment



The Personal Budget can be taken in the form of a Direct Payment by the individual or their nominated representative.

Direct Payments should be used flexibly to allow individuals more choice and control in determining how their assessed need is met and outcomes achieved.

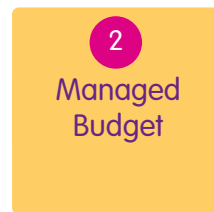
A Direct payment is payment made to an individual as an alternative to services which would have been provided, or purchased by the HSC Trust.

Direct Payments enables recipients to purchase services, resources, or to arrange their own support by employing a Personal Assistant or to purchase support from a Provider organisation.

Should the individual choose a Direct Payment they can receive support and information on being an employer from a range of sources including the Centre for Independent Living, or a third party organisation and or their Key Worker.

To support the Key Worker and the individual in their use of Direct Payments, Departmental Guidance is available from the HSC Trust internet, intranet and the DHSSPSNI website.

## Option 2: Managed Budget



This option allows for the individual to stay in control without the additional responsibility of managing a Direct Payment.

With this arrangement no money changes hands between the HSC Trust and the individual (the HSC Trust will manage the payments to the approved provider).

- Effectively, it is a personal budget that is administered on behalf of an individual with eligible support needs. The individual can direct the HSC Trust to make payments on their behalf for services to meet their agreed outcomes.
- The individual, in partnership with the Key Worker, can agree with the HSC Trust to oversee / administer their agreed budget.
- The budget will be held by the Trust and the Trust takes direction from the supported individual on how they wish their support to be delivered.
- The Trust will oversee the administration of the budget and provide and or arrange for the flexible support to the individual as and when agreed to meet their identified needs.
- If the individual wishes to spend their budget with a non-contracted provider this should be explored via a Direct Payment.

If an individual cannot choose Option 2 or manage their support under Option 2, even with additional support, then the HSC Trust retains its duty to provide services under Option 3.

\*The 3rd party organisation can be defined as either the HSC Trust or a contracted organisation.

## Option 3: Services Arranged For The Individual By The HSC Trust

3

Trust  
Arranges  
Support

There are a number of reasons why an individual may choose option 3, and this choice is as valid as other options in the Self Directed Support process.

The individual may choose for the HSC Trust to make arrangements for their appropriate support that will meet their agreed outcomes.

The Key Worker will have responsibility for sourcing and organising appropriate care and support arrangements with approved contracted providers to meet the individuals assessed needs.

It is important to note that when an individual chooses option 3, the principles of being provided with information, offered choice and some control still apply.

## Option 4: A Mixture Of Options 1-3

4

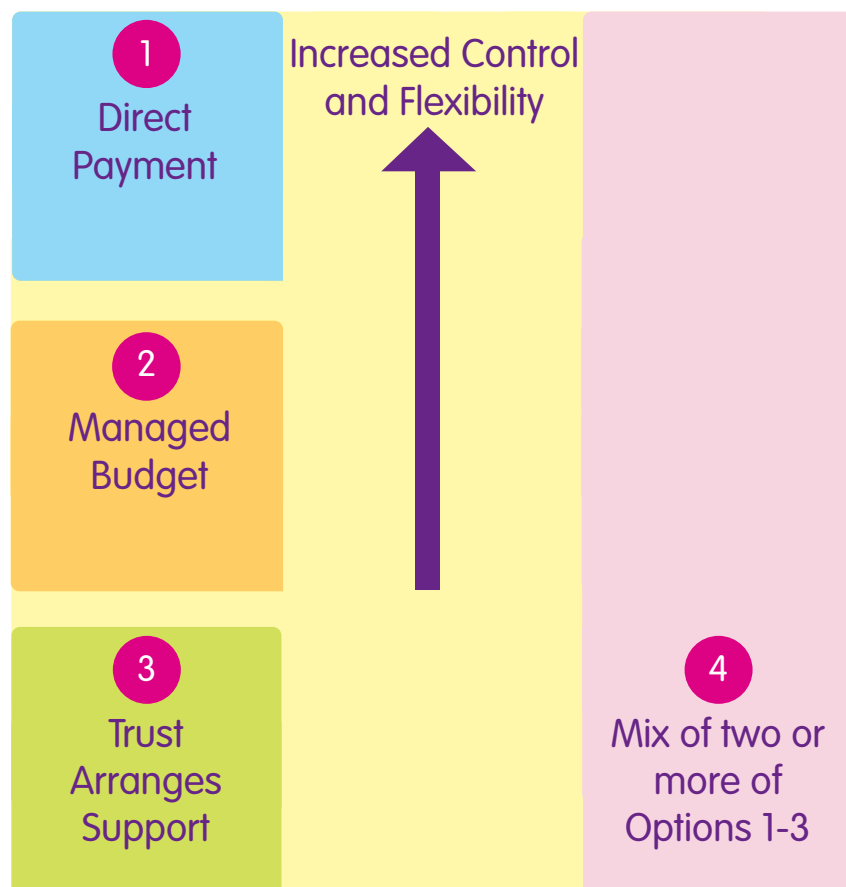
Mix of two or  
more of  
Options 1-3

With this option the individual can choose a mix of the options to tailor support that best suits them.

## Choice And Flexibility

The choice and flexibility of the Self Directed Support Options can be shown through the diagram below.

### Diagram 3 Degrees Of Choice And Flexibility



**Note:** The Personal Budget should never replace existing support networks within families or communities. Where the individual or their representative chooses to employ a Personal Assistant to provide the support it is only in exceptional circumstances that they could employ their spouse or partner or other person who lives in the household. Please refer to Direct Payment Guidance for further information on exceptional circumstances.

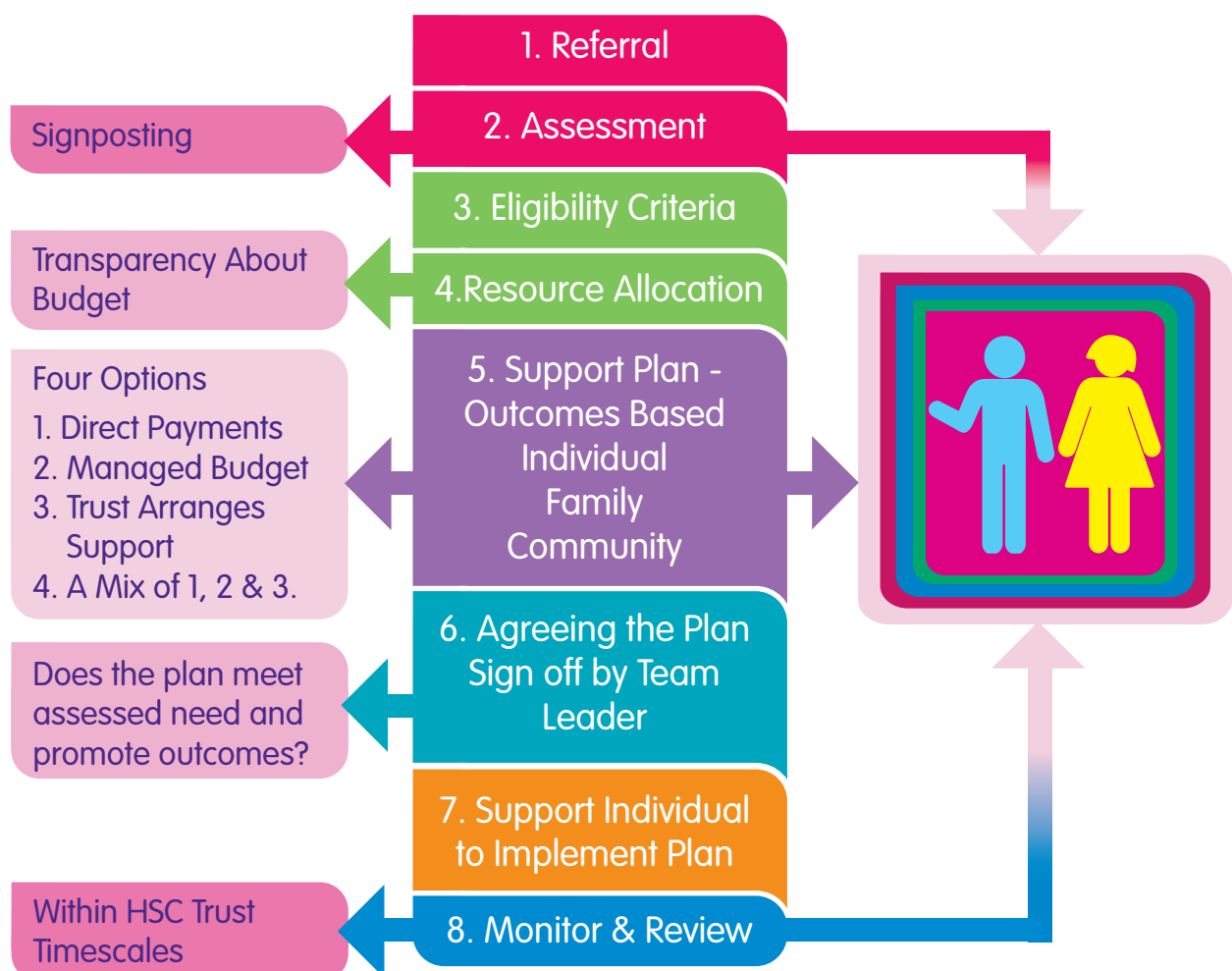
# Managing A Personal Budget For Someone Else

The Key Worker may be working with an individual who is supported by someone else. The individual may benefit from having a Personal Budget but be unable to give their consent. The person supporting the individual can receive and manage a Personal Budget on their behalf. As a Key Worker you will need to explore with the individual and relevant others the four options and give accessible information to inform the decision making process.

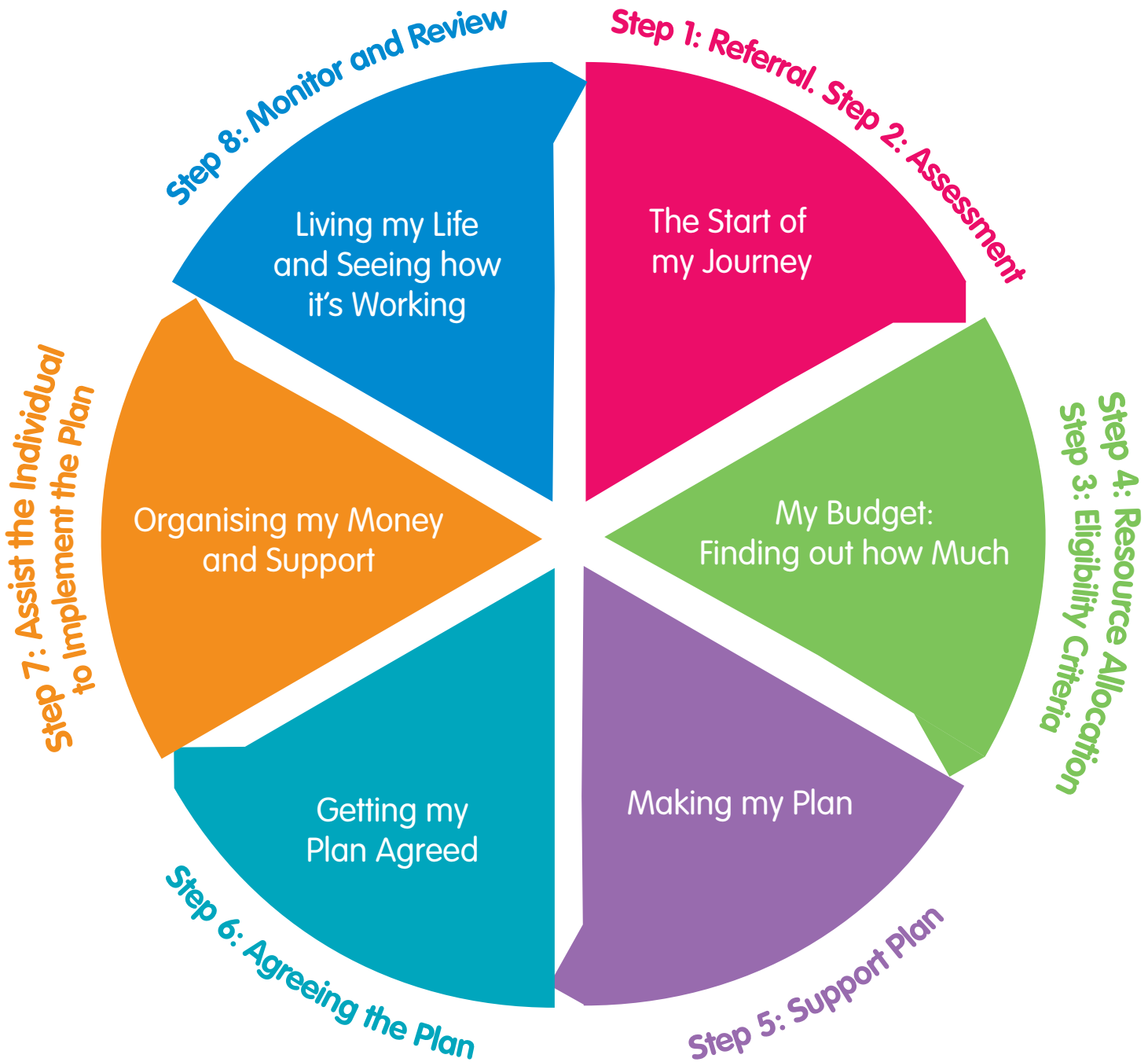
# The Self Directed Support Process

Diagram 4 below outlines the Self Directed Support Process for Key Workers, while Diagram 5 shows the relationship between the individual and the Key Worker perspective. The internal sections highlight the service user perspective, while the outer sections show the eight step process which Key Workers should follow.

## Diagram 4 Self Directed Support Pathway



# Diagram 5 Cycle Of SDS Support





## Step 1: Referral



People engage with services for a variety of reasons and circumstances. For some, they will be seeking advice and information that can be best supported through good initial communication, information and signposting. Often, referral for social care support will not be initiated by the person themselves. Clear information needs to be given to both the individual and the referrer about the purpose of any involvement in an individuals' life.

On receipt of a referral cases will be screened in line with HSC Trust protocols.



## Step 2: Assessment



The usual assessment frameworks will be used to assess needs, strengths and risks e.g. NISAT, UNOCINI, Carer Assessment or other tools within specialist programmes.

Self Directed Support requires that Key Workers adopt a holistic, person centred approach, demonstrating strength based thinking and working in partnership with individuals. Assessments should also highlight the individual's personal outcomes and explore existing resources and community networks.

The level of assessment undertaken should be proportionate to the needs, circumstances and risks presented.

Skilled assessment may often enable an individual to remain independent of formal services.

Assessment presents an opportunity to engage the individual and other key people involved in reflecting on what matters in the individuals life, and also why these

things are important (the outcomes) as well as challenges faced and opportunities to address these. Individuals should be considered experts in their own lives - therefore Key Workers need to work in partnership to explore and agree solutions and to mitigate risks together.

The main focus in assessment until recently has been on individual needs. Although distinguishing needs and outcomes can be challenging, it is necessary to do so in the context of eligibility criteria.

In almost all cases, the assessment provides an opportunity for individual participation in decision-making and should involve consideration of the role the individual wants to play as well as the role of other people, supports and services. Individual needs and outcomes can change over time, even over relatively short timescales. The assessment should respond to changing circumstances and needs, and changes during the course of the individual's life.

An outcomes focused assessment is in tune with relationship based practice in particular and with the "person centred planning" model which emphasises the collaborative nature of assessment, showing how the views of the individual, carer, assessor and agency are brought together to negotiate, agree and record outcomes. The agency perspective acknowledges the need to operate within statutory, governance and duty of care.

Where there is risk, regardless of whether this is in Adult or Children's Services the principles of Self Directed Support still apply but must be explored from a protective perspective. When providing a service, support for children, protecting them from harm remains the paramount concern. However, there is a need to understand and balance any risks and consequences of proposed actions.

When an individual is considered not to have capacity or where capacity is diminishing -appropriate information and support should be provided to enable participation, with due attention given to risk factors in the assessment and planning activities.

The majority of support provided in communities is undertaken by unpaid Carers, usually by family members. It is good practice to work with the individual who may require support and their Carer(s) to identify intended outcomes and agree how needs will be met. In addition it should be noted, Carers have legal rights to have their own needs independently assessed and will require information, advice and support in their own right.

During the assessment process Key Workers should provide information about Self Directed Support to individuals or their representatives to enable them to make informed decisions about the four Self Directed Support options and what makes a good Support Plan. See detailed information under Step Five of the Self Directed Support process on Page 17 of this document.



### Step 3: Eligibility Criteria



Self Directed Support, as an approach, does not negate the need for the application of eligibility criteria. It is a further development of the partnership approach with individuals and with families to expand choice in how support is delivered. This approach works within the context that social care support is not now, nor has ever been, an entitlement; rather, it remains linked to a sound assessment of need.

To be eligible for a Personal Budget, the individual must meet the following criteria:

- Be assessed by the HSC Trust as meeting eligibility criteria for a personal social service (HSC Trust should continue to use current mechanisms of allocating resources e.g. resource panels or approval by senior managers).

- Be willing to receive and able to consent to a way of accessing their Personal Budget (see Diagram 2). The individual or their representative must agree to and understand what receiving a Personal Budget will mean and the conditions attached. This is the person with parental responsibilities in the case of children.
- Children's Services staff will be required to comply with statutory duties as outlined within the Children's (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. Staff should also comply with the UNOCINI frameworks and guidance including the revised guidance re UNOCINI and carers assessment (CSIB) Further guidance is available at [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk /childrens-order](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/childrens-order).
- If this is a Direct Payment, current regional Direct Payment guidance should be followed. In addition under DHSSPS Circular HSC (ECCU) 01/2012 a legally authorised person can act on behalf of an individual who is unable to give their consent.
- Be able to manage their Personal Budget with as much help as they need.

Those not eligible for a Personal Budget should be signposted to other areas e.g. voluntary or community sector organisations or given advice to increase independence.

## Step 4: Resource Allocation

Where HSC Trust eligibility criteria is met, individuals will be notified of their Personal Budget.

NB: Individuals should be notified through a letter of offer of their Personal Budget within HSC Trust agreed timescales.



## Step 5: Support Planning



Following allocation of their Personal Budget the Key Worker will notify the individual and or their representative to agree the outcomes the individual wants to achieve from their Support Plan and how their needs will be met. The individual can also seek assistance from friends and family and or independent Support Planners to complete the Support Plan.

Keeping the individual central to the process is paramount. The Support Plan should be completed in partnership with the Key Worker ensuring they are realistic, achievable and risks are identified and managed effectively. Risk enablement can transform care by giving real choice and control to those using Self Directed Support and Personal Budgets. It is vital that the individual and their family have informed choice when managing risk.

With the support of their Key Worker, individuals should be enabled to define their own risks and to recognise, identify and report abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues. There will always be the professional challenge of balancing risk enablement with a duty of care to keep people safe. However, good communications, consistent and trusted relationships are particularly important to balance this.

Effective Support Planning seeks to promote the independence, health and wellbeing of individuals, while at the same time giving them more choice and control over the support they receive.

Outcomes focused support planning with an individual requires creativity and imaginative thinking to ensure the wider resources available are recognised and valued starting with the individual's own personal assets, their family and community supports partnered with the professional's experience, skills and knowledge of systems and potential sources of support.

The key characteristic of the Support Planning process is the importance attached to the individual's ownership of the Support Plan. The Key Worker should advise and encourage individuals to explore support networks in a way that acknowledges existing strengths and resources.

Support Planning can help the individual have choice, control and flexibility in how they live their life in the way they want to.

If it is not possible for the individual to prepare their own Support Plan, their views should guide the preparation of the Support Plan as much as possible. It is important that the needs of Carers should also be addressed, through the current Carers Assessment process.

It is recommended that the following areas should be explored and form the basis of the individual's Support Plan:

- 1. What is important to you?**
- 2. What do you want to change and achieve?**
- 3. How will you be supported?**
- 4. How will you use your Personal Budget?**
- 5. How will your support be managed?**
- 6. How will you stay in control?**
- 7. What are you going to do to make this happen?**

This Seven Step Guide is adapted from Helen Sanderson Associates.

# The 7 Step Criteria For A Good Support Plan

Criteria	What this means	The plan will not be agreed if
<p>1. What is important to you?</p>	<p>All about you</p> <p>Who are you?</p> <p>Likes &amp; dislikes</p> <p>Dreams</p> <p>Interests</p> <p>People</p>	<p>"This is not my plan"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NOT individual</li> <li>NOT specific</li> <li>TOO general</li> </ul>
<p>2. What do you want to change and achieve?</p>	<p>Changes you want to make</p> <p>Where you live</p> <p>What you do</p> <p>Your support</p> <p>Short &amp; long term</p>	<p>NOT clear</p> <p>Will not deliver the desired outcomes</p>
<p>3. How will you be supported?</p>	<p>What we need to do to support the above</p> <p>When? Where? Who?</p> <p>Health &amp; Safety</p>	<p>NO detailed plans for support</p> <p>Looks like you are at risk</p>
<p>4. How will you use your personal budget?</p>	<p>Detailed costs</p> <p>How will this be managed?</p>	<p>You're not clear about how the money will be spent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breakdown</li> <li>Contingencies</li> </ul>
<p>5. How will your support be managed?</p>	<p>How will your support be organised?</p> <p>Your role?</p> <p>Legality &amp; law</p> <p>Risks &amp; review</p> <p>Employing People</p>	<p>"There's no contingencies"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not clear</li> <li>You are vulnerable</li> <li>It's not legal</li> </ul>
<p>6. How will you stay in control?</p>	<p>How will you make decisions?</p> <p>Best Interest Decision</p> <p>Important decisions in my life</p> <p>How I must be involved</p> <p>Who makes the final decision</p>	<p>It looks like others are making the decisions for you</p>
<p>7. What are you going to do to make this plan happen?</p>	<p>Clear action plans</p> <p>What?</p> <p>Who?</p> <p>When?</p>	<p>There's no detailed action plan</p>

## Step 6: Agreeing The Plan

During the assessment process, having identified and analysed an individual's strengths, needs, risks and capacity, the development of a support plan enables the Key Worker, in collaboration with the individual and or their representatives, to consider how these needs and outcomes can be best met and address any potential challenges or conflicts of interest.

The guiding principles for validation of Support Plans are that the plan must be lawful, effective and affordable, meet assessed need and deliver agreed outcomes. A Support Plan should be agreed within the HSC Trust between the Key Worker and their line manager.

Under its duty of care the HSC Trust can refuse to agree to any element of a Support Plan where the support would:

- Unreasonably endanger any individual and put their safety at risk
- Support an illegal act
- Involve gambling or financial investment
- Fund health care
- Pay for anything that other sources of income should normally cover
- Not contribute to the agreed outcomes within the Support Plan

In all circumstances, the Key Worker needs to ensure that:

- a) Support Plan has been agreed by the individual and or representative and signed off by Key Worker and line manager.
- b) All identified risks have been considered. If there are issues surrounding risk that require approval at a higher level this should be managed within HSC Trust protocols (eg Risk Panel, agreement by senior manager, safeguarding processes)

- c) The Support Plan meets the individuals assessed need and agreed outcomes
- d) The Support Plan is within the resources allocated in an individual's Personal Budget.

The individual's Support Plan will be reviewed by the HSC Trust in line with statutory obligations. (See Step 8).



## Step 7: Assisting The Individual To Implement Their Plan



During the Support Planning process the individual and or representative will have considered the kind of support that works best for them, whether they want to manage their finances and who they want to provide their support.

**Option 1 – Direct Payment** If the individual and or representative choose to access a Direct Payment, Key Workers should use the current Direct Payments systems and procedures to manage this.

**Option 2 – Managed Budget** If the individual or their representative chooses a Managed Budget the HSC Trust will oversee the administration of the budget. The HSC Trust will provide or arrange flexible support to the individual as and when agreed to meet their identified needs and outcomes.

- HSC Trusts should use their internal procedures to organise this.

**Option 3 – HSC Trust Arranged Service** If the individual or their representative chooses to access a HSC Trust arranged service, the Key Worker will have responsibility for sourcing and organising appropriate care and support arrangements with approved contracted providers to meet the individuals assessed needs.

**Option 4 – A mix of the first 3 options for different aspects of support** If the individual and or representative choose to access a mix of the 3 Self Directed Options the Key Worker should work to ensure a seamless service.

## Step 8: Monitor And Review

Monitoring and Review are of equal importance as the Assessment and Support Planning stages. HSC Trusts have a duty to undertake reviews where support is provided to meet eligible need and as a response to significant change in circumstances. Frequency will be guided by risk and other factors. The Support Plan and arrangements should be monitored in line with HSC Trust policy and in consideration of the individuals presenting circumstances.

At the person centred review the Key Worker will review the individual's needs and circumstances, alongside agreed outcomes to determine if they are being met in the Support Plan. The review should take into account the views of the individual with regard to such issues as:

- Is the support plan working?
- Do they feel safe in their home and local community?
- Their level of social inclusion
- Their personal development
- Any caring roles they undertake

Where the individual's needs change, for example, if they go into hospital, become unwell, or if their Carer is not able to continue to provide the previously agreed support there may be a need to consider if the Support Plan remains effective, safe and legal. If changes to an individual's circumstances mean that resource allocation requires review, the Key Worker should follow current HSC Trust processes as outlined in Steps 2, 3 and 4 above, before the Support Plan is modified to reflect new circumstances.

An important aspect of the review process is determining if outcomes identified in the Support Plan have been met and the review process contributes to an understanding which can support people to make best use of their resources. This should be completed using an appropriate accredited tool, in line with HSC Trust policies and procedures.

## LINKS

Carers and Direct Payments Act (Northern Ireland) 2002:  
[www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/carers\\_directpay\\_guide\\_march04.pdf](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/carers_directpay_guide_march04.pdf)

Children's (Northern Ireland) Order 1995  
[www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/childrens-order](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/childrens-order)

A Guide to receiving Direct Payments (Revised 2008):  
[www.nidirect.gov.uk/guidance\\_for\\_receiving\\_direct\\_payments.pdf](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/guidance_for_receiving_direct_payments.pdf)

Health and Social Care Board  
[www.hscboard.hscni.net/sds](http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/sds)

Northern Health & Social Care Trust  
[www.northerntrust.hscni.net](http://www.northerntrust.hscni.net)

Belfast Health & Social Care Trust  
[www.belfasttrust.hscni.net](http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net)

Southern Health & Social Care Trust  
[www.southerntrust.hscni.net](http://www.southerntrust.hscni.net)

South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust  
[www.setrust.hscni.net](http://www.setrust.hscni.net)

Western Health & Social Care Trust  
[www.westernttrust.hscni.net](http://www.westernttrust.hscni.net)

Centre for Independent Living NI  
[www.cilni.org](http://www.cilni.org)

# Glossary Of Terms

<b>Assessment</b>	Assessment is the on-going process of gathering, analysing, interpreting and reflecting on information in partnership with individuals, to make informed and consistent judgements with a view to determining what, if any, intervention can assist in meeting positive outcomes and change.
<b>Choice</b>	Choice means having options, alternatives, and opportunity to express those.
<b>Control</b>	Control means people having influence and having a say in, for example, how support is shaped.
<b>Cultural Change</b>	Change that transforms individual and organisational attitude, value base and belief system to support the purpose of that change.
<b>Direct Payment</b>	A cash payment, paid directly to the individual (or to a third party). It is a self-directed support mechanism that allows a person an alternative to community care services
<b>Eligibility Criteria</b>	Specific requirements set out as thresholds for accessing specific services.
<b>Personal Budget</b>	Personal budget is the actual allocation of funding for self-directed support given to people after an assessment. The agreement of the budget should be a transparent process that demonstrates compliance with community care and other legislation.
<b>HSC Trusts</b>	Health and Social Care Trusts have statutory duties relating to arranging care and support in community care and children's services.
<b>Individual</b>	Adult, Child, Young person or Carer.
<b>Informed Choice</b>	Ensuring individuals have access to or are given enough information in an understandable format to enable them to make decisions and express choice.
<b>Key Worker</b>	Social care practitioner, named worker, care manager, assistant care manager, social worker, nurse, AHP
<b>Outcomes</b>	Outcomes: Personal outcomes – Defined by the person as what is important to them
<b>Outcomes Focused Assessments</b>	Assessments that engage with people through skilled conversation in what matters most and why, and highlights what needs to change and why.
<b>Personalisation</b>	Personalisation enables the individuals to find the right solutions for them and to participate in the delivery of a service. From being a recipient of service, individuals can become actively involved in choosing and shaping the services they receive.
<b>Person Centred</b>	Keeping an individual at the heart of any process that involves or impacts on them.
<b>Risk Enablement</b>	Promoting positive risk taking
<b>Support Planning</b>	The complex process whereby information gathered through assessment in partnership with individuals, using their personal outcomes and choices to help define what is going to be most helpful. It will define how goals will be agreed and how people and agencies can work together to achieve them.



# Looking for information?

We will provide you with up to date and accurate information (or support you to find help from other places) via:

[www.hscboard.hscni.net](http://www.hscboard.hscni.net)

[www.westerntrust.hscni.net](http://www.westerntrust.hscni.net)

[www.belfasttrust.hscni.net](http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net)

[www.northerntrust.hscni.net](http://www.northerntrust.hscni.net)

[www.southerntrust.hscni.net](http://www.southerntrust.hscni.net)

[www.setrust.hscni.net](http://www.setrust.hscni.net)

For additional information about Self Directed Support please contact your Trust Implementation Officer.

