



Direct payments and personal assistance in mental health

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The history

- ◆ In England direct payments to service users since 1996
- ◆ Previous third party payment scheme since 1983
- ◆ National research project to push DPs in mental health from 2001 to 2003
- ◆ Other projects since, particularly to users who are BME



How it works

- ◆ The different countries that make up the UK operate slightly different laws
- ◆ DPs are mandatory in England
- ◆ Only money for social care needs and not health needs
- ◆ Assessed as having social care needs and a care plan is drawn up
- ◆ DPs should be offered at this stage



How it works 2

- ◆ DP support workers help set up the DP
- ◆ User is given enough help they need
- ◆ User has separate bank account that money is paid direct into
- ◆ DP package is reviewed with Care Coordinator regularly
- ◆ User accounts for money spent with the Local Authority



What people use DPs for

- ◆ Social support
- ◆ Domestic support
- ◆ Personal care
- ◆ Practical support
- ◆ Transport
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Arts
- ◆ Leisure
- ◆ Respite
- ◆ Childcare
- ◆ Therapeutic support
- ◆ Night sits



Independent Living

- ◆ Is about Choice and Control
- ◆ Is not about doing everything yourself
- ◆ Is about having enough support to lead the life you choose
- ◆ *Choice and Control is a loaded term in mental health!*



How DPs help Independent Living

- ◆ Gives the user more Choice and Control
- ◆ They are at the centre of their care needs, being enabled not done to
- ◆ Empowers people to think more positively and creatively about their situation
- ◆ Literally breaks people out of institutions into real life



Challenges in Mental Health

- ◆ The division between a health need and a social care need is very confused
- ◆ Need properly funded DP support services to enable DP take up and success
- ◆ Attitudes of professionals to knowing about, promoting, utilising and believing in DPs, and letting go of power!
- ◆ Enabling potential users to feel OK about taking the risk of DPs



Why Lobby for DPs

- ◆ Moral and political imperative to help people take charge of their own health
- ◆ DPs are a proven way of personalising care
- ◆ DPs allow creativity and flexibility and create a different market place for 'care'
- ◆ Promotes Social Inclusion for excluded groups



How to Lobby for DPs

- ◆ User groups must form – *Strength in Unity*
- ◆ Make representations to people in power
- ◆ Use evidence of success elsewhere
- ◆ Persevere as you will win them over!

