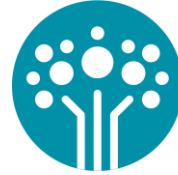




**START WITH
STRENGTHS**



**Social
Care &
Support**

Direct Payments and Using Agencies: Information Sheet 3

You may want to use an agency to provide your support. In this case, you will not be the employer and the agency will be responsible for managing the staff and will pay their wages. You will still maintain your choice and control as you will make arrangements directly with the agency. You will be able to say how, when and where your support will be provided.

Direct Payment rates

We will pay a rate towards the agency of your choice: your social care worker will be able to tell you what this is.

If the agency of your choice charges more than the agreed rate, you will be responsible for paying the difference. This is called a 'top up'.

If the agency of your choice charges less than this rate, we reserve the right to reduce the amount we fund to match the rate charged by the agency.

Considering other agencies

Before you decide to buy a service from a particular agency we advise that you ask:

- about their registration with the [Care Quality Commission \(CQC\)](#)
- to see a copy of their insurance policy
- if all their staff have had a [Disclosure Barring Service \(DBS\) check](#)
- how they manage their staff and how often someone will come and check you are happy with the service being provided
- if the agency employ the staff and meet all their tax and national insurance payments
- how they would deal with any complaint you may have
- what cover will be in place to cover staff holidays and sickness
- what training the agency provides for its staff, and what qualifications and experience they have
- if they carry out a risk assessment for you and the staff
- if you will be given copies of the hours that the staff work so that you can pay the correct amount
- how much it will cost you to use their service, and how to pay the money to them
- how you can pay them using your prepaid card account

- for the full cost of your support in writing

As you are contracting with the agency directly, they must provide you with a contract that both parties will sign and agree too. You must keep a copy of this for your own records.

You must receive an invoice from them for hours that have been worked, it is your responsibility to check these hours to ensure that it is correct.

If you have a managed account, the agency will send their invoice directly to Penderels for payments. You must ask for a copy of this, so you can check that the correct amount is being paid against your records.

If the agency tells you they will not be able to continue providing care for you, please contact your Social Care Team as soon as possible.

Once you have been working with individual members of staff for some time, you may think of employing them directly as a Personal Assistant and not using the agency. Some agency agreements allow you to employ their staff directly but are very likely to charge a fee or have a clause to prevent this as part of their conditions for providing the service for you. If you are considering this, please contact the agency and request their policy.

Contact details:

Independent Living Team

- Tel. 01926 413908 (between 9:00 -17:30 Monday to Thursday and 9:00 - 17:00 on Friday)
- Email: ilt@warwickshire.gov.uk

Warwickshire County Council Duty Teams

- Tel. 01926 410410

Warwickshire County Council Financial Monitoring Team

- Tel. 01926 418657

Warwickshire County Council Safeguarding Officer

- Tel. 01926 410410

Care Quality Commission

- Tel. 03000 616161
- Website: www.cqc.org.uk