



Where Do I Start? An Overview of Self Directed Support

Here's a brief guide to Self Directed Support. This is a good place to start, and the other information sheets in this pack provide more detail on the aspects covered below.

What is Self Directed Support?

The Social Care (Self Directed Support) (Scotland) Act became effective on the 1st of April 2014. This piece of legislation should mean that anyone being assessed for care and support via their Local Authority must be offered more choice about how they receive support.

Self Directed Support (often shortened to SDS) allows you to arrange some or all of your support instead of having it arranged for you (e.g. by social work or the housing department). It puts you firmly in charge of the support that you receive.

Self Directed Support is a relatively new way for people to access support. The focus is on people having choice about how to spend the money they are allocated. Most people who use social work services can use SDS (including those receiving direct payments).

Self Directed Support can make positive changes to the lives of people with mental health issues by giving them opportunities to live the kind of life they want to live.

How Does SDS Work?

You can choose for Local Authorities to arrange support for you, or you can be in control of arranging your own support or have a mix of these two.

For instance, you could choose to get help with cooking, cleaning, managing finances or support to get out of the house, join in activities or go to work, volunteering or college.

You could also buy support from relevant organisations or employ staff (e.g. a Support Worker or Personal Assistant).

How is SDS Set Up?

Initially, a representative from the City of Edinburgh Council (often a Social Worker) will assess your needs. You may choose to have a care provider with you at the assessment.

Assessment should focus on the outcomes you want to achieve and a personal care plan will be created. This outlines your needs and how they will be met.

If Social Work agrees that you need support, they must offer you the choice of SDS, rather than Council services only, if you are able to consent to SDS.

People can choose from four different options of support:

1. **Option 1** – You get a Direct Payment and organise services yourself to meet your outcomes.
2. **Option 2** – You get an Individual Service Fund, which is the budget for services needed to meet your outcomes. This Fund can be managed by the Council, a voluntary organisation or a service provider on your behalf.
3. **Option 3** – The Council organises support for you (which is how most people currently get support).
4. **Option 4** – Any mix of the options above.