Self Directed Support - Assessment

If you already use social work services, you could speak to the person you usually talk to about your support. If you don't have a Social Worker or Care Manager, but want to speak to one, you could phone or write to the social work department. Ask your Council how to get in touch with local support services to help you understand self-directed support or use the contacts included in this pack.

Preparing for assessment

As part of the assessment (or review if you already use services) of your support needs, you will be asked to think about the outcomes that are important to you. This might be through completing a supported self-assessment.

You will have a discussion about whether you can manage SDS and what kinds of support you need to be able to do this. You must have arrangements in place to manage the necessary paperwork, either alone or with help.

Help is available from your local support service. You will also need to satisfy the Council that the support which you intend to buy will meet your agreed outcomes. Your Social Worker or Care Manager can discuss with you what support you need.

Together you will produce a **personal care plan** which sets out your needs and how these **outcomes** will be met. Outcomes can cover areas such as: personal care, managing any health conditions, relationships and social support.

Before your assessment it is a good idea to keep a diary for a week or two to see what help and support you need each day. If you need support on specific occasions throughout the year, make sure it's included

What should I consider before completing my assessment?

The following are things that you may want to consider and talk about with someone supportive before you complete your assessment:

- What are your goals and what support do you need to achieve these things?
- What might help you on your recovery? For example:
    - Attending a workshop

    - A Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)
    - Using person centred planning tools
    - Help attending support groups or counselling services.
- Do you need emotional support, for example, do your moods affect your ability to function?
- Can you use support to help you to be involved in your community?
- Do you or would you like to go to college, work (voluntary or paid) or any other activity for which you need assistance?
- Is there anything that you would like to start doing with support? If so how much time would you need for this?
- Do you need support with financial matters (such as budgeting and paying bills), correspondence, going to the bank and post office? How often do you need support with this?
- How often do you go to a social or recreational activity or holiday and how much time does that take?
- Would you like support to arrange a short break, or do you need support to go on a short break?
- Do you need assistance with cooking/nutrition/healthy eating?
- How much time would you need for this (bearing in mind time for shopping, research, meal planning, cooking etc.)?
- Do you need assistance with domestic tasks such as changing the bed, washing, ironing, hoovering etc.? How much time do you need for this?
- Is there any other area of your life you would need support in?

Can I get help with my self-assessment?

If you already get support from the City of Edinburgh Council, you can contact your Social Worker or Care Manager, or contact Social Care Direct. You can also contact the Council if you do not get support but you think you may be eligible.

If you use Health in Mind's services, or those from another independent organisation, you can speak to your Support Worker or Service Manager about self directed support and they will be happy to help you.

You can also get help to fill out an assessment from another local support organisation, Social Worker, or Care Manager. Family members and friends can also help you complete your assessment.

Once completed, your assessment will then be submitted to social work for approval. Once your assessment is approved, your local social work department will work out how much money you will be allocated. This may be in the form of a direct payment or an individual budget.

After your assessment has been submitted

A Social Worker will consider the details you have given them. If the Social Worker decides that you may have needs that the Council should be helping you with, he or she may arrange for a home visit.

The home visit will include a person from the Council discussing with you:

- What your needs are
- How far they extend into your life
- How far they should be met by the Council
- What is the best way to meet your needs.

Remember it's important that the Council take into account your preferences and those of your family – you should not be afraid to tell the social worker what you think you need. They must take this into consideration.

At this point you can state your preference to have your assessed needs met by Self-Directed Support and you should be able to choose from the four options available. The Council has a duty to listen to your own preferences.

You may wish to submit an assessment of your own. This self-assessment, and is no more than your own statement of your own needs.

You can write or illustrate in any way you wish. You could for example write out a weekly timetable showing the times when you need support and describing the kind of support you need. Submitting a statement by yourself, or from someone assisting you, is your chance to say it as you see it.

Your social worker is not obliged to accept this assessment. However, they do need to take your views into account when making their professional judgement.

Next Steps

If the Council concludes that you have needs, which they have a responsibility to meet, they will state so in a community care assessment. You should be given a copy of this and have an opportunity to change it, again you can ensure that your preference is for Self Directed Support is noted. If it is agreed that you need support you will be offered arranged services or Self Directed Support. You can choose one option or have a mix of each.

Setting up Self Directed Support

Once agreeing on what option you should receive, your care plan will identify how your individual budget should be used. This may include a stated number of hours of care and support.

Some Councils are moving to flexible arrangements whereby care and support outcomes beyond a set number of hours can be purchased. In any event you are likely to need to identify a provider of care, usually an Agency or Personal Assistant.

In employing a Personal Assistant you can seek help and practical assistance and advice from a support organisation funded by your Council.

Reviews

Social work will review how you are getting on a few weeks after support has started to check that things are going well.

Another review will be arranged around a year later to ensure your needs are being met and to check if your circumstances have altered

Remember that there is support available

If any aspect of managing your assessment concerns you – look at the resources information sheet for where to get support.