

Appendix B

DIRECT PAYMENTS Consultation Results



During November 2016, the City of Cardiff Council Social Services team conducted a consultation with Service Users and Case Managers regarding the current Direct Payments system.

As part of this consultation, citizens were asked how they felt about their current service and if they had any recommendations for how the service would look. In addition, they were asked which options for support they have been using already, or would use in future if asked again. Opportunities were provided to give detailed comments on their experience.

The overall consensus from Service User feedback is that in most cases, Direct Payments are an effective way to meet their care needs, and have been delivered successfully. The more detailed comments have shown that there are a number of specific instances where their experience has been negative, and that often revolves around the incumbent provider.

Response rate



- 187 total service user questionnaires received
- Roughly 30% of overall service users
- 14 Adult Services Case Manager questionnaires received
- 5 Children's Services Case Manager questionnaires received
- 100% of Children's Services Case Managers approve of the proposed 'pick-list' based model
- 60% of Adult's Services Case Managers approve of the proposed 'pick-list' based model

Response at assessment

April – Nov 2016



- **Of the candidates who declined, 65% of those declined because they were satisfied with their current care arrangements**
- **When declining, service users gave the following reasons:**
 - *Would prefer to stay with existing Agency – happy with standard of care provided*
 - *Residential/nursing home placement arrangements in place*
 - *Service user does not feel able to manage own care*
 - *Service user/family requires care in place immediately*
- **30% of candidates offered Direct Payments agreed either to take them up now or to work towards them in future**
- **40% of the overall cohort that were assessed or reviewed during this time were not offered Direct Payments for reasons of capability or eligibility**

Investigating the way that social workers assess for and recommend Direct Payments is an important part of the recommissioning process. Currently, there are over 50 different reasons recorded in CareFirst for why DP has either been refused or not offered, and this needs to be better monitored in order to improve future processes.

Initial thoughts

- 93% of respondents felt their Social Worker was helpful during the process
- 90% believed that Direct Payments were able to meet their care needs
- 93% believe their banking choice provided enough support to manage their DP service
- 74% chose to use Managed Accounts service for the first time, compared to 77% who would set it up if they started again



Meeting needs



- 66% of service users would prefer to have contact with their support worker 'As & When' rather than on a regular basis
- Over 70% of respondents believed that the Direct Payment service satisfied or exceeded expectations
- Only 14% of respondents believed that the service only met some or none of their needs

Detailed feedback



Which services, if any, would you expect to have received in addition?

- *13/24 (over 50%) of comments on this question indicated that Service Users would have expected improved support on elements included within the proposed pick-list, or additional support with different areas. Some of these comments also mentioned improved information and better communication from the provider, which are integral elements to the proposed model*
- *This compares to 5/24 (20%) of comments on this question that indicated they would not expect any more support than was provided.*

How well do you think the Direct Payments service met your needs?

- *12/21 (60%) comments under this question described their service positively, but these comments are often in relation to a named Personal Assistant*
- *8/21 (40%) comments in this section described their service negatively, information or payments*

What suggestions would you make to improve the service?

- *In this section, 12/18 (67%) of comments indicated that the service requires significant improvement. Key factors listed here include:*
 - *Dissatisfaction with payroll runs and payments*
 - *High staff turnover contributing to poor communication*
 - *Low quality of information from the incumbent provider*
- *Just over a quarter of comments(4/18) indicated that they were satisfied with the system and did not wish to see any changes*

Points of interest



- 80% of surveys were filled in by someone else, with over 50% of those being a family member
- From all the additional comments provided, 32% make specific aspects to elements of continuity of service from the incumbent provider.



Conclusions

The feedback from surveys indicated that most social workers and service users agree that Direct Payments is usually an excellent way to meet care needs. There is also consensus that the degree of flexibility within DP can improve independent living and quality of life.

It is clear from the more detailed comments in the surveys however that there are a number of areas within the Direct Payments process that need to be tightened up, and that there are some alarming discontinuities within the service provided by the incumbent provider.

In addition, the feedback from social workers would seem to imply that the current system can be cumbersome to implement, and therefore that any changes to the system must be made with a view to ensuring that Direct Payments are easier to access and manage.

It is reasonable to infer from the responses that Direct Payments have made a positive impact on the lives of people in Cardiff, and that with an effective and functional system in place, this impact could be built upon. Furthermore, the drive to increase uptake of Direct Payments is likely to be successful if the issues described by the respondents can be addressed, and these main points are:

- *Communication with provider organisation e.g.. quality of information/single staff point of contact*
- *Accurate managing of accounts, payroll and payments*
- *Effective recruitment within the PA market, and engagement of PAs with providers*
- *Regular and effective contact with service users*
- *A more understanding and informed approach to complex needs*