NHS
City and Hackney
Clinical Commissioning Group

Personal health budgets for children and young people in continuing healthcare

Introduction

A personal health budget is designed to give children and young people with disabilities and their families' choice, flexibility and control over their own health and wellbeing. This leaflet explains what personal health budgets are and how your child can get one.

Is my child entitled to a personal health budget?

To be eligible to receive a personal health budget your child or young person must be registered with a GP in Hackney or the City of London and have been assessed as being eligible for the NHS Continuing Care service.

What is a personal health budget?

A personal health budget is an opportunity to use the money that is already being spent on meeting your child or young person's continuing care needs, but in a different way.

Personal health budgets have been introduced to enable people to play an active role in managing their health and to work with health professionals as an equal partner. They give children, young people and their families the opportunity to use their budgets in innovative ways rather than from a traditional NHS service. A personal health budget, for example, can be used on a range of services from government or independent agencies, or from the voluntary sector. The budget can also be used to employ a personal carer in the home.

How do personal health budgets work?

Firstly, the child or young person's needs will be assessed and an estimate of the budget will be provided.

To help plan how the budget will be spent, a support plan is required. You can write this yourself for your child or with the support team. The plan sets out how the child or young person receiving the budget needs to be supported and how they and their parents and carers would like the budget to be used. Once that plan is agreed, the personal health budget will be available to use.

A list of suggested providers is available from the NHS support team working with your child, or can be found on Hackney's and the City of London's Local Offer websites:
http://www.hackneylocaloffer.co.uk
http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/children-and-families

You and your family can spend the budget on employing carers or personal assistants to support your child in the home.

Receiving your health personal budget

There are three ways you can receive your budget.

1. Payment is made directly to you

Money will be paid into your dedicated Personal Health Budget bank account. This will enable you to buy services or equipment agreed as part of your child's support plan. You will need to keep financial records and receipts to show how you have spent the budget, which will be monitored by the support team. If you accept a direct payment you will have to sign a formal agreement.

2. A third party holds the budget for you

You can nominate someone else – either an organisation, a family member or another person you trust - to look after your child's health budget and either you or they can arrange your child's support.

3. The NHS holds your budget

Things stay as they are now and NHS staff will continue to arrange and pay for the services and support needed. You can choose a combination of the three options if you wish. Once you receive the personal health budget, it will be reviewed regularly to see if it is still working for you child or whether your child's needs have changed.

Or a combination of these options, for example:
A family may wish for the agency they had chosen to hold the budget as a third party for some of their care needs and the remainder of the budget to stay within the NHS as a notional budget for their nursing care needs.

What can a personal budget be used for?

A personal health budget can be used for any services, activities or equipment that have been identified in the support plan. These could include:

- employing carers or personal assistants to support you or your child in the home
- paying for activities which help you or your child be more active in the community
- aids, adaptations and equipment to help manage day-to-day tasks.

A personal health budget cannot be spent on any illegal activities, alcohol, tobacco, gambling or day-to-day household expenses. Also some services may not be eligible to be used as part of your child's personal health budget. Your NHS support team can help explain what services are available.

Allocation of a personal health budget will not affect any benefits that your child or your family is receiving, as it is not classed as additional income.

For more information

Contact your local NHS Personal Health Budget Support Team by email on **nelcsu.chc@nhs.net** or by phone on **020 3688 1000** who will be happy to talk to you about this service.