

Making **choice** and **control** a reality for **disabled people**

A lot of **people with disabilities** rely on the government for:

- financial **benefits**
- **services** like the NHS
- **equipment** you need.

At the moment you don't have much choice in **what you get** and **how that's done**.

The government wants to give you **more options**.

The new system

Your choices will be to either:

- ➔ stick with the **old way**
- ➔ get paid to **buy services** (physiotherapy, for example) yourself
- ➔ or **combine** the two.

If you already get **adult social care** funding you might be used to paying for the services you want with that money. The new system will cover **more types** of benefits and services.

They're going to **test** this new system in **some areas of England**.

However there are some **questions that need answering** before the test starts.

Which benefits **and** services to include in the test run

Some of the benefits and services the government wants you to think about are:

➔ **Access to work**

Helping you and your company get the things and services you need to support you in your job.

➔ **Independent living fund**

If you have severe disabilities this can help you live in your own house and get the help you need.

➔ **Disabled facilities grant**

Money from the council to make your home easier to live in.

➔ **Housing support**

A charity or local company who can help you get the skills you need to live safely and well.

➔ **Disabled student's allowance**

Money to help with extra cost like computer equipment, note takers and travel.

➔ **Disability job programmes**

Services for your particular needs to help you get the encouragement and support you need for getting a job.

Are these the **right benefits**? Are there **any others** you can think of?

What if some the benefits or services in this test are used by people without disabilities?

Because this new system is **only meant for disabled people**, the government wants to know if they should do anything differently if there's a type of benefit that people who aren't disabled can access, like **housing support**. Can you think of any other examples of benefits like that?

How to make the whole system as easy to use as possible

The government wants to know how they can make the new system easy to understand. This includes all the **guidance** and **support** people will need to **choose** the right system for them, advice on how to **budget**, and how to **complain** if something goes wrong.

The new rules might mean that old services end up closing

The new system might mean that **less people** use the old government services, meaning they might have to get much **smaller**, or even **close down**. Do you have any ideas on how we can avoid hurting people who want to **keep using** their old services or don't want to take part in the new system?

How do we make it cheaper for people to buy expensive equipment and services?

At the moment it is **much cheaper** for a **large organisation** to buy equipment and pay for services which many people use, than for **one person** to buy equipment and services **just for them**. The new system might mean people **lose out**, because getting the services you need might be **more expensive overall** so there's **less money** to go around.

How much should this new system cost to set up?

Local authorities could end up spending more they can really afford setting up this new system. If this happens, **what should they do?**

In similar schemes local authorities have had some trouble...

Do **local authorities** see any difficulties combining this new system with the old one, for example does any of the money you can give out to disabled people at the moment have **rules** which might be **incompatible** with the new system?

How do we make sure that all the organisations that need to work together?

Disabled people and the **organisations** that represent them, like **charities**, will need to be involved in as many of the decisions that companies and local authorities make. **How do we make that happen?**

How to respond

You need to get your thoughts and ideas on this consultation back to the Office for Disability Issues by **30 September 2009**.

Write to:

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