



Direct Payment Support Team Autumn/Winter 2022 Newsletter.

We wanted to take the opportunity with this edition to focus on the employer role and the support that is available.

We understand taking on this role can seem daunting but we are always looking at ways to support our clients and provide resources to help you if you decide to become an employer. The following will hopefully recap some important points, guidance and support available.

Employing PAs

Recruitment

The journey starts with the recruitment process and this can take place in a variety of ways. For example, you may wish to recruit someone you already know, put together your own advert, or approach the team for support and advice e.g. around drawing up adverts and information on advertising. Alongside this, our new PA portal has launched, which offers opportunity to explore PA profiles and make contact with candidates you wish to discuss job opportunities with. Utilising the portal may be a great place to start; www.flintshire.gov.uk/paportal

If you go onto advertise the role we also have the vacancies page on our direct payment webpages, whereby you can add your advert. Candidates applying can send their CV's via this portal, once the closing date has approached we will forward any applications onto you for you to review. When putting together an advert, consider things like:

- No personal details at this stage e.g. keep location brief, naming your town but no address and don't include names.
- Provide an overview of what you want to achieve with the support
- Consider important points to include about any diagnosis
- Think about what matters to you, what are your interests- this may help with recruiting likeminded people who share similar interests and hobbies
- Include details on the days and times you would like covering
- Is there any mandatory training that would need to be completed prior to support commencing

When moving forward with interviewing if you need any support from the team - we are on hand. You may want to discuss suitable questions to ask but conduct the interviews independently, but if it's new to you, you may ask that we also attend to support and build your confidence.

Employing new Pas – What to consider

Once you have found someone you'd like to employ, it's important you consider the following steps:

- Ensure they have a current/ relevant enhanced DBS check in place prior to support starting or contact the Direct Payment Support Team if a new DBS check is required
- Consider requesting references from previous employers
- Complete your duties under 'right to work checklist.'
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checklist>
- Consider if any mandatory training is required prior to the new PA starting
- Have an induction plan for the PA so they know what is expected and feel confident and happy in their new role
- Complete relevant risk assessments
- Ensure contracts of employment are in place from your PAs start date
- Consider a contingency plan e.g. how will support be covered when your PA is on annual leave

For all of the above the Direct Payment Support Team are on hand to discuss any of the points further.

Your query may also be answered by accessing the direct payment web pages :
www.flintshire.gov.uk/DirectPayments

Personal Assistant Training

When thinking about training for your Personal Assistants, there may be mandatory training needed for the role e.g. manual handling, medication training etc that is essential for the role, but there is also training available to support continued professional development.

We have teamed up with an online organization called Grey Matter Learning to provide online, accessible training for all PAs. PAs can now benefit from core courses along with opportunities for continued professional development. Alongside this Gemma has been working to create a bespoke training induction for Pas which covers modules that will help give the PA's a good general foundation of knowledge for their role. We would advise that all new Pas undertake the 'PA Induction Certificate,' the course takes 6 hours and they would be paid for their time to complete this. For more information please contact dp.support@flintshire.gov.uk

Other training opportunities are still available e.g. via the local authority workforce development team. Further places to access training are accessible via:

<https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Social-Services/Direct-Payments/Training.aspx>

Legal advice

There may be times where you need more specialist employment advice for example, the PA role is no longer continuing and you need to make your employee redundant or you have a issue with your Personal Assistant. Don't worry, advice and guidance is on hand.

Your Employer's Liability Insurance is there to help, with your policy you have access to their legal support. They have teams on hand to talk through any employment law issue you may have e.g. terminating contracts, managing sickness and maternity. If you are unsure if your situation requires legal support please contact the team to discuss your query, and if required we will direct you to your insurer for further support. It is important that you therefore keep your policy in place for the duration of employing staff and renew the policy yearly.

Employment Workshops

For further employer support, the insurance providers have offered to put on training days for individuals who employ PA's using a Direct Payment. This will provide an opportunity to learn more about being an Employer, employment law, the role of the insurance company and Direct Payments, and put forward any questions you may have about your role.

Before we can confirm dates we need to find out from our employers if this would be of benefit to them. Once we have enough responses and interest we can then proceed with asking the providers to set this up.

If you would find an DP Employers training day beneficial please contact the team and we can add your details to a list:

01352 701100 / dp.support@flintshire.gov.uk

DBS checks and renewals

Please remember the Direct Payment Support Team can support with new DBS checks before any new PA's commence work, if a relevant and up to date DBS check isn't already in place.

There is no cost to you for this service. DBS checks also need to be renewed every 3 years under your employment, so please keep a record of your PA's last issue date and get in touch with the team for support with a renewal.

How to get in touch with the Direct Payment Support Team

A reminder of how you can contact our team:

- Team contact number – 01352 701100
- Team email address – dp.support@flintshire.gov.uk
- Facebook Page – @Flintshire Direct Payments Support

Alongside our usual methods of contact, we are also able to use video calling to make our services more accessible. If you would like a discussion via video call and would like assistance to set this up, please contact our team.

Social Media

A further way to make contact with our team but also to connect with other direct payment users is via our social media pages;

Search for [Flintshire Direct Payment Support](#) on Facebook and [@FCCDPST](#) on Twitter.

Finally...we'd love to hear from you

We are always looking at ways to improve the service, therefore we would love to hear from you. You can use the contact details above to provide feedback, all feedback and suggestions are welcomed. We'd also love to hear how direct payments may be impacting your life.

Our social media pages are also there for you to access, reach out to other direct payment recipients and share information you think all would benefit from.

Thank you again from all of us at the Direct Payment Support Team.



If you would like to receive your newsletter in Welsh please contact the team and we will be happy to provide a Welsh language version