

Personal health budgets *update*



July/August 2010

A pilot programme involving around half the primary care trusts in England is underway to test out personal health budgets in the NHS. An in-depth study with twenty of these sites is part of a wider evaluation exploring the potential of personal health budgets to benefit different groups of people. The pilot programme will run until 2012.



First evaluation report published

The first interim independent evaluation report on the programme has been published by the personal health budgets evaluation (PHBE) team.

Based on interviews with project leads, "Early experiences of implementing personal health budgets" highlights some of the challenges the pilots face and how they are beginning to overcome them. The report can be downloaded from the [Learning Network](#) or the [PHBE website](#).

Milestones: July 2010

- Nine sites approved to pilot direct payments in health
- Personal health budgets in the NHS White Paper, "Equity and excellence: liberating the NHS"
- Annual meeting for all sites in the DH pilot, with funding and commitment confirmed by Minister of State for Care Services
- Direct payments for health care: information for pilot sites" published
- First interim evaluation report published

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Direct payments for health care pilots announced



People will be offered more choice and control over their health care with the launch of the first direct payment scheme, Minister of State for Care Services Paul Burstow has announced.

Direct payments for health are monetary payments made by PCTs to individuals to

allow them to purchase the care they need. They are one mechanism for delivering personal health budgets.

So far, nine pilot sites have been authorised to offer direct payments as part of the Department of Health's personal health budgets pilot programme. The authorised pilot sites are

Doncaster, Eastern and Coastal Kent, Central West London, Islington, Merseyside, Oxford, Somerset, West Sussex and Hull with City Health Care Partnership CIC.

Following a public consultation by the Department of Health, regulations governing direct payments in health came into force on 1 June. "Direct payments for health care: information for pilot sites" has been published on the [DH website](#) to give pilots clear advice to meet the regulatory requirements.

Facts and figures

So far, **twenty five** sites have been awarded full pilot status: **17** in-depth evaluated sites and **eight** from the wider cohort. **Nine** sites to date are piloting direct payments. Across **five** pilot sites, **65** people are now participating in the evaluation.

Find a list of pilot sites and more information about them – via our interactive map – on the [personal health budgets Learning Network](#).

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Events

In May, we met with the twenty in-depth evaluated pilot sites to talk about **progress of the pilot programme so far**. And on 15 July, pilot sites from across England gathered in London for an annual meeting, **the big personal health budgets get together**.



Minister of State for Care Services Paul Burstow gave a keynote speech, where he confirmed this year's funding for pilot sites and reinforced the Government's commitment to personal health budgets.

The DH personal health budgets team joined up with ACEVO to discuss the **third sector's role** in personal health budgets; spent time with **carers** to find out their thoughts and experiences; and held a session about **end of life care**.

NHS Doncaster held a stakeholder event in June, which saw residents relate their own personal health budgets stories. NHS Merseyside also held an event, which provided an opportunity to outline their plans to an audience of clinicians and get their input.



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Personal experiences and stories

The first personal health budgets pilot story has been shared on the [Learning Network](#). Debbie, from Doncaster, explains how a personal health budget helped her organise flexible nursing care for her father Brian after he had a series of strokes.

We are following the experiences of people with a personal health budget, and will be sharing some of their stories with you. Keep an eye on our Learning Network for more stories throughout the year.



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Personal health budgets Learning Network



If you have an interest in personalisation in health, then take a look at the online Learning Network for the pilot programme.

The website is a source of [news](#), [stories](#) and [resources](#) about personal health budgets and related areas, and a platform for you to engage in [discussion](#) with others who are interested. You can also email the personal health budgets team at personalhealthbudgets@dh.gsi.gov.uk.

Later this year we will have a new website address – we will keep you posted, but in the meantime do keep visiting www.personalhealthbudgets.org.uk.

You can also find information about personal health budgets on our new policy pages on the [Department of Health website](#).