

# Personal Health Budgets

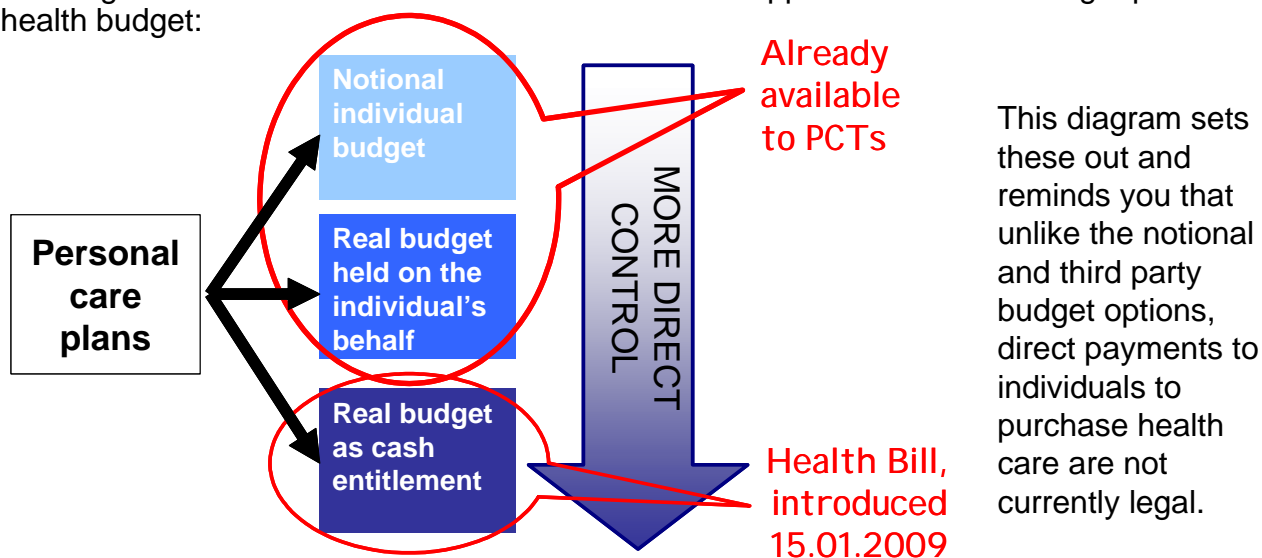
Update - February 2009

We are starting a pilot programme for personal health budgets, as a way of giving people greater control over the services they use. The pilots will build on experience internationally and in social care in this country. We have asked potential pilot sites to apply to us by 27 March.

We have been talking to a whole range of people about their views on this idea, and the work already going on to personalise healthcare. This has helped us introduce draft legislation into Parliament and publish a guide to help primary care trusts and local authorities get going. This note follows the "Initial Information" and "Update" sheets from July and October last year, available at: [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/HighQualityCareforAll/DH\\_090018](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/HighQualityCareforAll/DH_090018)

## The Health Bill – changing the law to allow the testing of direct payments for health care

You might remember that we think there are 3 broad approaches to delivering a personal health budget:



There are draft clauses in the Health Bill that would allow pilot schemes to test out direct payments as part of the personal health budget pilot programme. The Bill is currently in the House of Lords, and if everything goes smoothly it could be law in July 2009. However, we would also need to make regulations, so realistically piloting of direct payments for health care probably won't start until summer 2010. You can read the Bill and follow its progress at: <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2008-09/health.html>

## Getting started

Although direct payments cannot be used yet, people can start to personalise NHS services. Apart from the two legal mechanisms of delivering personal health budgets, there are many other tools out there to help – elective choice, personal care plans, information for choice and the patient prospectus to name a few.

On 28th January, we published *Personal health budgets: first steps*. It sets out key principles of how personal health budgets should work (which partners helped us develop) and early practical lessons. It also invites expressions of interest from potential pilot sites – more overleaf.....

# Personal Health Budgets

## **First Steps in a long journey**

*Personal health budgets: first steps* isn't the final word. We'll publish more guidance as needed, particularly for direct payments.

However, we hope it will help people get started, and we're looking forward to seeing the innovative proposals that health and social care colleagues come up with.

### **The 6 key principles:**

1. Upholding NHS values
2. Quality is key
3. Tackling inequalities and protecting equality
4. Personal health budgets are voluntary
5. Decision making close to the individual
6. Partnership

### **A few key questions:**

#### **Q. Could any organisation run a pilot?**

A. Each proposal must be led by a primary care trust, to make sure it fits with the overall commissioning of services for the pilot area, but there could be lots of different combinations of organisations that could run successful pilots. Anyone with an interest should get in touch with their primary care trust.

#### **Q. When will you tell us where the pilots are?**

A. Once the expressions of interest are in at the end of March, we'll start the process of going through and shortlisting. We hope to be able to announce the sites later in spring, but we're hoping to get a lot of good applications and that might push things back slightly.

#### **Q. What happens if I want to personalise my care and my area isn't chosen as a pilot site?**

A. As we set out in *Personal health budgets: first steps*, there is already a lot that primary care trusts can do to help people take more control over the services they use. Talk to your care coordinator about the possibilities that might be open to you.

**Don't forget – bids are due 27 March and we'll keep you up to date as the selection process progresses, but there's already a lot you can do to begin personalising services. Keep in touch.**



### **Learning community**

As set out in *first steps*, you don't need to be an official pilot site to get started, although it is the best way to become able to test out direct payments for health care, as these will be limited to approved pilot sites.

To maximise the sharing of learning around personal health budgets, we will be establishing a learning community for all those with an interest. This will be hosted by Integrated Care Network (part of the Putting People First team at the Department), working together with key partners including In Control. It will include online resources and dissemination events.

Please do let us know what you would like this community to look like and the types of resources you think it should help you find and share.