



A Guide to Self-Directed Support





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What is SDS?



The Social Care (Self-Directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 came into effect on the 1st of April 2014 and it changed the way that councils (local authorities) deliver social care and support services to individuals and families. Self-Directed Support SDS is all about encouraging individuals (who have been assessed as eligible to receive social work funded services) to have choice and control over their support so they can meet their Health and Social Care outcomes. The aim of the Act is for supported people to be equal citizens with rights and responsibilities.

Links to the legislation can be found below:

https://aberdeencity.mylifeportal.co.uk/useful_resources.aspx

Who is SDS for?

SDS is for anyone who has been assessed as eligible to receive social work funded services from Aberdeen City Council. This includes adults, older people, children, families and carers.

Where can I get more detailed information?

Aberdeen City Council and the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership have a dedicated portal which holds valuable information for those looking for support, receiving support services or friends and family who want more information. The portal is regularly updated to make sure information is current. It is called MyLife Portal and can be found at the below URL:

<https://aberdeencity.mylifeportal.co.uk/home/>



The SDS Process

I think I need some support: how can I get SDS?



Individuals need to be assessed as “**eligible**” to receive services through SDS. An individual’s eligibility will be assessed by a practitioner (usually a Care Manager or someone in a similar role). If you are not eligible to receive social work funded services, you will be given information as to other sources of help where possible.

Eligibility means ‘to meet appropriate conditions’. Social Work Services can advise as to what SDS eligibility conditions are.

What does the assessment involve?

Before your assessment with your practitioner, it may be helpful to think about what support you need and how you’d like that support to be delivered. During the assessment, you (or your legal representative) and the practitioner will have a chat and the practitioner will gather information about what you may need. If you are eligible for a social work funded service, the practitioner will discuss with you how your needs could be met through SDS.



The SDS Process

What happens next if I am eligible?

If you are assessed as eligible to access support then you will be given information about the 4 SDS Options. You will be supported in making the right decision for you. You will then agree on outcomes for the year and be involved in making your support plan with your practitioner. The support plan will be finalised and then you will receive your support in-line with your support plan and with your chosen SDS option. Your support will then be reviewed during the year to make sure it is still meeting your needs.



Who do I contact if I am not already in touch with social work?

If you are not already receiving support or services funded through Aberdeen City Council then you'll need to contact the appropriate department to set up an assessment:





What are the Four Options?

Option 1: Direct Payments (DP)

A direct payment is where an individual is given a personal budget, in order to buy goods, activities and services that meet their agreed outcomes. Examples of what this may look like:



The monies will be paid into an account that has been set up solely for the Direct Payment. Direct payments gives the most choice and control over your support as you are paid your budget directly and you then pay for your staffing, activities and services that have been agreed in your support plan. Through this option, it allows you to employ a personal assistant (PA). Choosing a Direct Payment gives you the most flexibility and choice; but it is also a lot of responsibility.

You can find out lots of useful information and a step-by-step guide to option 1 on our factsheet:

<https://aberdeencity.mylifeportal.co.uk/media/20929/sds003-option-1-factsheet-april-2017-final.pdf>



Option 2: Directing your Support

Option 2 is where you still get full choice and involvement of how you want your agreed needs and outcomes met but you do not have the financial responsibility. You decide on what goods, activities and services you want and these will be paid on your behalf. It is down to you to shop around for your support. Information on providers and support and advice agencies can be found online (including some on the MyLife portal).



See our factsheet on Option 2 for more information and step-by-step guide:

<https://aberdeencity.mylifeportal.co.uk/media/20886/sds016-option-2-factsheet-april-2017.pdf>



Option 3: Local Authority Arranged Support

Option 3 is where the Local Authority (The Council) will source a service on your behalf and pay for it. The service will still be focused on supporting you to achieve your outcomes. You and your practitioner will decide together on a service from a list of providers who are contracted by the council.

Option 3 is the only option available to individuals who do not have capacity or a legal guardian who can make decisions regarding care and support.



To find out more about Option 3: Please see our factsheet:

<https://aberdeencity.mylifeportal.co.uk/media/20933/sds004-option-3-factsheet-may-2017.pdf>



Option 4: Mix and Match

Option 4 is a combination of Options 1, 2 and 3. This can be as creative as you like as long as the mix of options meets your agreed outcomes and is within your allocated budget.

Here is an example of what this may look like:



To find out more about Option 4, see our factsheet:

<https://aberdeencity.mylifeportal.co.uk/media/20934/sds005-option-4-factsheet-may-2017.pdf>



Frequently Asked Questions (1)

What is an outcome?

An outcome, in terms of SDS is something that you would like to change in your life or something you want to achieve. You might also hear outcomes being called goals. You will sit down with your practitioner and agree some outcomes and how you want to achieve them. This will form part of your support plan.

I am already receiving services: can I get SDS on top of what I am already getting?

It is a common belief that SDS has a separate budget and is something 'extra' to individuals already receiving support services arranged by the council. This is not the case, the money comes from the Health and Social care budget as it did before. The difference lies in empowering individuals to have more choice, control and flexibility as to how their budget can be spent. If your needs have changed then contact your practitioner.

SDS is not an additional option to be offered. SDS is the option.

Will I need to pay anything under any of these options?

It all depends on your circumstances. Your practitioner will carry out a financial assessment with you to see if you are in a position to pay anything towards your care.



Frequently Asked Questions (2)

I am a carer: Can I get help from SDS?

The legislation says that anyone who provides a substantial amount of care on a regular basis is entitled to an assessment. From there, it will be decided if you are eligible to receive support.

What do I need to do to manage a DP on behalf of someone?

An individual can be a supported person's legal representative in managing a DP when they have Power of Attorney or Financial *and* Welfare guardianship. Please see our section on 'Legal Powers' on the portal.

https://aberdeencity.mylifeportal.co.uk/legal_powers.aspx



Further Information

This guidance document has been made by the Self-Directed Support team at Aberdeen City Council. If you require any more information then you can:



Email us at: SDSHelpline@aberdeencity.gov.uk



Telephone: 01224 523837



Website: <https://aberdeencity.mylifeportal.co.uk/home/>

If you are currently receiving support or services through Aberdeen City Council then contact your practitioner.



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