

HOUSING LIN POLICY BRIEFING

Individual Budgets

Background

- Commitment to pilot individual budgets was made in '*Independence, Well-being and Choice*', '*Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People*', '*Opportunity Age*' and the recent Department of Health White Paper, '*Our health, our care, our say: an new direction for community services*'. There is also reference in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's consultation paper on *Supporting People*.
- These documents set out the Government's intention to pilot the individual budget (IB) approach with a view to rolling out nationally should it prove successful.
- The project to pilot individual budgets is being led by the Department of Health in partnership with the Office for Disability Issues and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). The IB concept builds on the broad thrust of policy set out in "Modernising Social Services" i.e. a focus on person-centred support.
- Its development is partly a response to the barriers that we have met in trying to take Direct Payments forward.
- It also draws heavily on the success of the *In Control* project (joint Mencap/VPST project).
- Added dimension is its cross-departmental nature. Commitment from ODPM and DWP to overcoming boundaries.

What is an Individual Budget?

Individual Budgets represent a move towards greater personalisation of services and the approach is central to the direction of the modernisation of social care. Their development is part of a transformational change and therefore does not just focus on the idea of a 'budget', but requires a change in the way that the current community care processes operate.

The key elements are:

- A person-centred assessment, looking at a person's whole needs as well as risks to independence. Pilot sites will be working on the development of more streamlined assessment processes.

- A transparent allocation of resources, including income streams other than social care services to provide a full range of support. It is important that people needing support, and those who may be assisting them, know early on what resources will be available to them in planning their support.
- A person-centred planning process, allowing the individual to decide how best to spend their budget with external support or advocacy if required.
- Flexibility in how the budget can be spent, allowing need to be met in a creative way that best uses available resources.
- Monitoring arrangements that are proportionate.

What Income Streams are Included?

- The pilot sites are testing the inclusion of a range of income streams.
- This does not mean that other income streams could not be included at some point in the future.
- Income streams that are included in these pilots:
 - Council-provided social care services
 - Independent Living Fund (ILF)
 - Supporting People (SP)
 - Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)
 - Integrated Community Equipment Services
 - Access to Work

This means the pilots are covering a wide range of client groups including older people, disabled people, people with sensory impairments, people with learning disabilities and people with mental health needs.

It also means that providers of housing related care and/or support providers will need to consider the implications around the delivery and management of their services and their relationship with residents/users of their care and/or support services. For example:

Housing with care or support

This could include (Extra Care, sheltered or support housing for older and vulnerable clients

The IB arrangements for meeting the individual cost of the housing related support provided such as the provision of community alarm, scheme manager and other on-site or peripatetic support services currently met by Supporting People and/or social services

Home Improvement Agencies

The DFG payments arrangements under IB to meet the costs of undertaking major repairs, aids and adaptations to an someone's home

Floating Support Services and/or Home Care

The arrangements for older and vulnerable people living on their own in the community and assessed in need of low level care and support to use IB to access the services they need

Community Equipment

The arrangements for people assessed in need of community equipment to make use of IB to obtain the equipment they require

Issues associated with Individual Budget Approach

- The inclusion of a number of income streams will be a challenge to deliver. Pilot sites are working with CSIP colleagues and government departments on identifying and addressing potential legislative or organisational obstacles.
- Individual budgets could have a significant effect on the social care workforce, which may have to change to respond to the new roles required by the individual budget approach.
- Individual budgets could have a significant effect on housing associations and providers of housing related support, who may have to change the way they respond to the new roles required by the individual budget approach.
- The individual budget approach may entail the transfer of a certain amount of risk to the individual and away from local authorities, pilot sites have expressed interest in working with CSIP on the development of improved approaches to risk.
- We have to consider the effect that increased choice for the individual would have on the market for social care and housing related support services
- If in the long term councils were to act as a channel for the funding, this would have implications for local government finance systems. Councils may also have to hold notional budgets on behalf of individuals.

The IB Pilots

The first pilot began in December 05 – West Sussex. The remainder of the pilots are coming on stream in the early part of this year and will last for two years.

These sites are:

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| • Barking & Dagenham | • Kensington & Chelsea |
| • Barnsley | • Leicester City |
| • Bath & NE Somerset | • Lincolnshire |
| • Coventry City | • Manchester City |
| • Essex | • Norfolk |
| • Gateshead | • Oldham |

Further Information

Pilot sites will be developing local stakeholder engagement strategies and will be wishing to work with housing colleagues. In addition, the Department of Health is developing a programme of national stakeholder engagement.

Further information on the IB programme is available at www.individualbudgets.csip.org.uk

If you would like to receive further briefings from the Housing LIN and/or information on our regular national and regional events and associated learning tools and resources, please email us housinglin@cat.csip.org.uk or write to Housing LIN c/o EAC, 3rd Floor, 89 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TP.

If you have any comments on this Briefing or any examples of the use of individual budget and housing issues in your area, either email us or visit our discussion forum at www.changeagentteam.org.uk/housing .

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Other Briefings in this series:

- The White Paper
- Individual Budgets
- Long-term Health Conditions
- Wanless Review

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