



Information for Holders of Direct Payments from Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership (GCHSCP) during the COVID 19 Pandemic (April 2020)

Introduction

The COVID 19 Pandemic has resulted in great challenges for all of us involved with Glasgow Health and Social Care Partnership (GHSCP) and across the whole country.

Whilst we have been working hard to ensure that people receive the services and support that they need, people have experienced some disruption to their usual care arrangements. This has included people in receipt of Direct Payments and in response to recent queries, GCHSCP has developed this information sheet to assist people who are Direct Payment recipients.

Please be aware that if, despite all efforts, you are unable to find any replacement care and are in immediate need of support, please contact your local Social Work office to discuss any essential care needs you have which require urgent support . Contact details are provided at the end of this document.

Replacement Care and Support:

- As a result of the COVID 19 pandemic your support provider may need to reduce or cancel support. If you need to arrange your own replacement support, you can organise this yourself using your Direct Payment monies, including the contingency element of your budget.
- If you need guidance or advice during this time you can also contact GCHSCP's independent provider of SDS support, the

OFFICIAL

Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living (GCIL). Contact details are at the end of this document.

- The rules in relation to employing family members remain the same. Direct Payments funding cannot be used to pay people related to you who are living in the same household.
- Due to the impact of COVID 19 and its effect on staffing levels GCHSCP are anticipating unprecedented demands on care and support services. This means that we will only be able to respond to requests for essential care at this time. Care and support is unlikely to be at the same level of service which was delivered prior to the COVID pandemic.

Paying for Support

- During this time of uncertainty for Personal Assistants and social care providers GCHSCP believes it important to offer a level of security and stability to ensure the needs of Glasgow's citizens are met during the pandemic, and also once the pandemic is over. Where you have reduced or cancelled your support due to Co-vid 19, and intend to resume your support once the pandemic is over, you should continue your existing payments to Personal Assistants and support agencies.
- GCHSCP is taking this approach to the social care it purchases, and we are asking Direct Payment recipients to take a similar approach to paying personal assistants or support organisations.
- Glasgow City HSCP pays Direct Payment holders 4 weeks in advance; and this will continue. This should enable you to continue to pay for the supports agreed in your support plan.
- Once the pandemic has abated, GCHSCP may seek to recoup funds in cases where Direct Payment holders have cancelled support.

Government Furlough Scheme

- You may be aware that the Government has introduced the "Corona Virus Job Retention Scheme", while this is welcome, the applicability of the scheme to supports purchased via Direct Payments should be considered carefully given that GCHSCP has undertaken to continue to fund your Direct Payment.

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

- GCHSCP recommends that Direct Payment holders (particularly those who employ staff directly) seek independent advice from Direct Payment Support organisations and from their own legal advisors.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- The Scottish Government are currently working on guidance for Direct Payment recipients. We will issue this information as soon as it becomes available.

Contacting Social Work Services - Social Care Direct

If you are making a referral or need to ask a question then Social Care Direct will provide help or assistance. You can contact them through the following methods:

Phone: 0141 287 0555

Textphone: 18001 0141 287 0555

Email Adult Services: socialcaredirect@glasgow.gov.uk

Email Children and Families

Services: scdchildrenandfamilies@glasgow.gov.uk

Social Care Direct is available during the following times

Monday to Thursday 08.45 - 16.45

Friday 08.45 - 15.55

In an emergency situation outside of these times please contact Glasgow and Partners Emergency Social Work Services on:

Tel: 0300 343 1505

OFFICIAL

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. My Personal Assistant is off sick or self-isolating with symptoms of COVID-19 or has to self-isolate due to an underlying health condition. I am left without critical care. What should I do?

A. Self-isolating employees are legally defined as being unfit to attend work. They should therefore notify you of their intention to self-isolate in accordance with your sickness and absence procedures. You should put into action your pre-arranged Contingency Plan. This should have been established when you first started arranging your support using Direct Payments. If you are unable to arrange the critical replacement care you need, please contact your local social work office.

Q. My replacement care arrangements cost more than my usual care arrangements. What should I do?

A. If your replacement care arrangements cost more than your usual care arrangements, you can use the balance in your Direct Payment account, including the contingency element of your Direct Payment to fund the difference. If you require additional funds (because there are not enough funds to cover the increased care costs in your direct payment account), then please contact GCHSCP to discuss.

Q. Can I use my direct payment monies to purchase Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for my PAs?

A. Yes, as an employer you are responsible for purchasing and providing PPE for your employees and should do so in line with the national guidance. Where your support needs involve the PA delivering personal care tasks such as washing, dressing, continence care etc. you are advised to provide them with the necessary PPE which includes things like disposable gloves, disposable aprons, eye protection and facemasks. You can use your DP monies to purchase this equipment.

Q. I am unable to purchase PPE because I can't find a supplier with stock. What should I do?

OFFICIAL

A. PPE is getting harder to purchase due to high demand. The government has promised to provide emergency PPE supplies to Direct Payments recipients, and are due to issue guidance on how DP recipients will be able to access PPE shortly. As soon as this is published you should follow the Government guidance. If you urgently need PPE before the Government system is in place, and cannot purchase it yourself, please contact GCHSCP.

Q. Can I use my DP to employ a family member who lives with me during the Co-vid 19 Pandemic?

A. Not usually. The usual rules on employing family members still apply during the outbreak. If you want to employ a member of your family who lives with you, you need to get GCHSCP agreement in advance. GCHSCP will only agree to this in exceptional circumstances. If you feel that these apply to you, before you do anything else, you should speak to your social worker or local social work office.

Q. I employ my own PA's and am in the extremely vulnerable category and need to be shielded for 12 weeks. I can manage for this time with support from family what do I tell my staff about getting paid?

A. As an employer you will have to make your own decision about this, taking into account the contract you have in place with your employees and any legal advice you have received. If you are unsure what to do, you can approach one of the support agencies giving advice on this matter. GCHSCP will continue to pay your Direct Payments at the usual rate, which will allow you to continue to pay your PA's as normal if that is your decision. In order to sustain services, GCHSCP have decided to continue to pay the agencies it contracts with at usual rates for the time being.

Q. My Support provider is still expecting me to pay them even though I have said I don't want the service as my child is highly vulnerable and I want to limit the people coming into my home at this time. Do I pay them?

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

A. As you contract directly with the support provider you will need to make your own decision about this taking into account the advice that is available to you. GCHSCP will continue to pay your Direct Payments at the usual rate, which will allow you to continue to pay the support agency as normal if that is your decision. In order to sustain services, GCHSCP have decided to continue to pay the agencies it contracts directly with, at usual rates, for the time being. If you decide not to pay your provider GCHSCP may claim back the money allocated for this support once the Co-vid 19 pandemic is over.

Q. I have been advised to Shield for 12 weeks and employ my own PA's. Should I "Furlough" my staff?

A. The national guidance on Furlough leaves some room for debate on this point. It is not completely clear on whether the wages of workers who are funded by public monies will be eligible for Furlough. As an employer you will have to make your own decision about this, taking into account the contract you have in place with your employees and any legal advice you have received. If you are unsure what to do, you can approach one of the support agencies giving advice on this matter. GCHSCP will continue to pay your Direct Payment at the usual rate, which should allow you to continue to pay your PA's as normal if that is your decision.

Additional Sources of Support

- **Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living (GCIL)** independent provider of SDS support, advice, guidance, payroll, training, housing, employment and consultancy services:

<http://www.gcil.org.uk/>

Tel: 0141 550 4455

Email gcil@gcil.org.uk

- **GAIN (Glasgow Advice & Info Network)** provides financial, debt and benefit advice - <https://www.gain4u.org.uk/>

OFFICIAL

- **Glasgow Council for Voluntary Sector (GCVS)** have produced a list of community resources: [Glasgow Community Support Directory](#)
- **Government** information and advice on where to find support <https://www.readyscotland.org/coronavirus/>
- **Government** information for individuals and businesses: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-individuals-and-businesses-in-scotland>
- **Government** Coronavirus Guidance www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance
- **Health Protection Scotland** provides information and advice on how to keep yourself and others safe during Corona virus outbreak: <https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19/>
- **NHS Covid-19** information in other languages: www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk/coronavirus-information/#
- **Personal Assistant Network** www.panetworkscotland.org.uk
- **SPAEN (Scottish Personal Employer Network)** www.spaen.co.uk
- **Your Support Your Way Glasgow** a Glasgow City HSCP website providing useful information and advice on within Glasgow <https://www.yoursupportglasgow.org/homepage>

GCHSCP are aware of the difficulties that are being experienced at this difficult time and we will continue to keep you informed of further developments.

OFFICIAL