

NEWS & VIEWS



WINTER EDITION 2013



Happy New Year

to all our readers!

Everyone at KDC wishes you a happy, healthy and prosperous year ahead.

We are delighted to welcome those of you who are new to Direct Payments and hope you find this newsletter helpful.

Planning for the future

Direct Payments recipients were recently invited to attend a 'Planning for the Future' event which helped people think about making arrangements for their loved ones after they have gone.



KDC was delighted to welcome Hugh Jones, of Hugh Jones Solicitors who focused particularly on the financial impact of leaving property and/or money to someone who relies on support from their local authority or the benefits system. He described how best to avoid the pitfalls to ensure that charges for care and support costs are not affected.

Everyone who attended found it useful and agreed how

important it was to make a will, regardless of whether or not a member of the family is disabled. And if you have a child under 16, with a neurological condition, you may qualify for financial help from Cerebra towards your solicitor's will-writing fees.

KDC has useful information packs covering all of the main points, including what to think about when making a will and how to set up a Trust fund for the benefit of a loved one.

To request a pack, simply call **Diane on 0151 480 4090**.



An important legal victory for disabled people

The Court of Appeal has upheld a legal challenge by five disabled people against the Government's decision to close the Independent Living Fund (ILF) in March 2015.

In a judgment of 12 November 2013, the Court held that the Minister for Disabled People had breached equality duties when making the decision in December 2012 to close the ILF and so quashed the decision.

You can keep up to date with all the latest news and information via our website.

Visit us at www.kdc.org.uk.



Follow us on twitter.



Make us a friend on Facebook.

Meet the Team

The KDC Direct Payments Team is here to help. We have a wealth of knowledge and experience so please feel free to contact us at any time for advice and information about any aspect of the scheme.

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**WORLD'S
BEST
BOSS**

Employment Road-Show 5th March

Do you employ your own PA? Do you worry about the rules around employment? We have been prompted by your comments to organise a short workshop where specialist advisers will be on hand for guidance and advice about being a good boss. This is a must for people who employ staff in their own home and would like more information to give them confidence they are being a good employer. Best of all it's free, and you will be able to talk to advisers about any specific issues you may have. You will also get the chance to chat with other direct payments users.

Interested?

The session will be held at the Caldwell Centre, Tarbock Road, Huyton on Wednesday 5 March at 10am. To reserve your place, call Diane on 480 8873.

If you'd like to come but the date is not suitable for you, let us know and we can make alternative arrangements for you.

Local Wheelchair Hire and Repair Service



Here at KDC we often get asked about where people can hire a wheelchair. Our advice is always to contact the Knowsley Care & Repair service which operates from the Centre for Independent Living (CIL).

The friendly team there offers Knowsley residents exclusive hire of wheelchairs to suit every need as well as an efficient repair service. Hire charges are very reasonable, starting at **£12.50 per week**, rising to **£40 for 6 weeks**. A **£50** refundable deposit is required for all periods of hire. You can either call into the CIL in Brickfields off Ellis Ashton Street, Huyton, L36 6HY (Monday to Friday 9am – 4.30pm) to collect your wheelchair when you need it, or reserve one in advance by phoning **548 6668**.

**INFO &
ADVICE**

**For more information
about wheelchairs and
other equipment,**

take a look at our website. Go to www.kdc.org.uk and click on the big yellow 'Info & Advice' button.



Support for you...

Don't forget that you are always welcome to come along to any of our direct payments support groups.

Meetings are held across Knowsley and topics range from finding a good PA at short notice, to how to get funding for respite and short breaks.

New Meeting Venue

Over the past few months the Peer Support Group has grown and we now have regular meetings in Huyton, Kirkby and Halewood. We are delighted to announce that we will be holding our first Prescot meeting on Thursday 16 January, 1pm – 3pm at Prescot Town Council, 9 West Street, Prescot, L35 1LF.

The meetings are for anyone who uses direct payments, families, carers and personal assistants. We discuss how to achieve the best from direct payments and issues around employing staff in your own home. Everyone is welcome and you don't need to live in the area where the meeting is held. People have told us that the meetings are really useful and are a great way to be able to share problems with others in similar situations.

Why not come along for a cup of tea and see for yourself? Here are the details:

15 January & 5 March -

The Caldwell Centre, Tarbock Road, Huyton L36 0SD

16 January & 6 March -

Prescot Town Hall, 9 West Street, Prescot L34 1LF

21 January & 11 March -

Platform 51, 101-105 Cherryfield Drive, Kirkby L32 8SA

22 January & 11 March -

Hollies Hall, Hollies Road, Halewood L26 0TH

All meetings start at 1pm & finish around 3pm



New meetings at Prescot Town Council

Andy Gilbert talks to clients about being a good employer



Direct Payments Information Sessions

Most of you will know that KDC undertakes a personal visit for everyone who comes onto the direct payments scheme. New users get a lot of support during the early days to ensure that they understand the procedures involved in the start-up process. We often find, however, that questions arise from some people months and even years down the line.

We would like to remind you that we are always on hand to help you with any queries or problems you may encounter – whether you've been using direct payments for a few months or a few years.

We run monthly information sessions for new clients and these are open to anyone who feels their knowledge and understanding needs refreshing. Some people may need advice about a particular issue or problem they are facing and the monthly sessions provide a chance to talk - in private - with one of our Independent Living Coordinators.

Feel free to come along to any of these sessions. Carers and families are most welcome. Sessions last about 2 hours and are held at our office in Huyton, at **2pm on the last Tuesday of every month**. No need to reserve a place – simply turn up. Here's a list of dates for the next six months:

28 January

25 February

25 March

29 April

27 May

24 June



Payroll Points Pay Days Are Changing



This is an important notice for people who receive a managed account service. With effect from 1 February 2014, KDC will be keeping strictly to the agreed timetable for paying your PA their wages.

This means that we will no longer be arranging payment of wages in advance of the official pay date, which is the Monday immediately following the last Sunday of the four weeks work period.

Here is a list of the pay dates for 2014. All are Mondays with the exception of 17 April which is a Thursday as Friday 18 April and Monday 21 April are public holidays.

24 February	24 March
17 April	19 May
16 June	14 July
11 August	8 September
6 October	3 November
1 December	29 December

Please note that it is important that you make your PA aware that their wages will be credited into their bank account on these dates.

Don't forget to pay your tax and insurance deductions



A reminder that if you haven't already done so, please remember to send your payment for tax and national insurance deductions for the period to 31 December.

Direct Payments for healthcare needs

New regulations came into force on 1 August 2013, enabling the NHS across England to make direct payments for healthcare. Following a successful pilot programme, adults eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare (and also families with children receiving NHS continuing care) will be entitled to ask for a personal health budget, including a direct payment. Many patients within the pilot programme chose to take their budget as a direct payment, once their care plan had been signed off by their GP,



NHS Consultant, Nurse or other healthcare professional. The pilot showed that patients with long-term health conditions getting personal health budgets had improved quality of life, and psychological wellbeing. Having a budget was associated with being less likely to be admitted to hospital, or need to see their GP, and the budgets were cost effective, particularly where patients had a lot of support from the NHS because of their long-term health condition.

This new legislation means that all of the NHS can now offer personal health budgets as a direct payment, where the individual or their representative is given the money to organise the care themselves.

We will be providing more information about how direct payments for personal health budgets will work in Knowsley as soon as the local guidance is made available.



KDC Connections is Knowsley's first on-line register for PAs seeking work and direct payments users looking for new PAs. Registration is quick and simple. If you are a looking for work you can search for suitable jobs and you can post your own details, background, experience availability etc. Employers can advertise vacancies and browse PA profiles.

More than 20 people have successfully found PAs or found employment since the site was launched in May 2013.

HAVE YOUR SAY

**Do you have any questions about any aspect of direct payments?
Have you had an experience – good or bad - which you would like to share?
Is there anything you need to know more about?**

If the answer is yes, then contact us here at KDC and we can include your views in our next edition. Contact Joyce on **480 4090** or email her at **joyce.greaves@kdc.org.uk**