

NEWS & VIEWS



WINTER EDITION 2015 / 16

DIRECT PAYMENTS
Knowsley Disability Concern

Happy
New
Year

2016

We would like to thank you for your valuable feedback in 2015 which has been used to help us make changes and improvements in our services. **Please keep your comments coming!**

Looking back, the year saw a number of challenges, including the closure of the ILF fund; the introduction of a new local policy for transport services; the Care Act 2013 brought new rights for Carers; and a change in the Council's charging policy resulted in many people having to pay more towards their care. Lots of you took advantage of our peer support groups and specialist workshop sessions to learn more about these and other issues and we hope to see more of you at similar events in the coming months.

In 2016, we will be facing more changes:

- **New pension regulations come into force for small employers - including people who employ PAs for their care and support**
- **Disability benefits will be affected with the move from DLA claims to the new Personal Independence Payment (PIP)**
- **The National Living Wage is set to rise**
- **More people will be accessing Direct Payments for personal health budgets to look after their continuing healthcare needs**

These issues are covered in the following pages but if you have concerns about how you may be affected personally, please call us on **0151 480 8873**. In the meantime, we look forward to being on-hand to provide support, information and advice to help guide you through the year ahead.

Our Support Group needs you!

The Direct Payments Support Group meets regularly to make friends, offer support and share experiences. The Group also helps us develop our services and information materials. We need more people to get involved. Contact Joyce on 0151 480 4090 for more information or simply come along to the next meeting on Wednesday 23 March at 1.00pm in The Caldwell Centre, Tarbock Road, Huyton L36 0SD.



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 has a wealth of knowledge and experience and is always on hand with help and information as well as the answers to any questions you might have.

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Advocacy

We all face problems and difficult choices in our lives and sometimes need the support of others to help us deal with them. We might call on family and friends for support or to help us find it elsewhere.

People with disabilities and those living with long-term conditions are often cut off from their wider community. They may know what they want but have difficulty making others understand and sometimes are unable to express their views or make their wishes known. They can often feel that no-one listens. It could be that they might benefit from the support of an independent advocate.

KDC's advocates are volunteers, independent and specially trained to work with people who need help to deal with issues affecting their lives and have their views and wishes heard. An Advocate will represent and protect someone's interests as if they were their own. They will stand alongside the person if they are facing a major change or difficult choice. An Advocate may offer support and encouragement for people to speak up for themselves or act as their spokesperson. They will be able to assist in gaining access to support and advice which might not otherwise be easy to obtain.

Being a Volunteer Advocate

The Advocacy team works with people of all ages with many different needs who may live by themselves, with family, in residential care or supported living accommodation. Volunteers carry out visits with individuals, often in their home or a suitable meeting place, to get to know them, build up trust, understand their issues and how best to support them.

Volunteer Advocates receive an induction when they join the team and spend time shadowing experienced advocates until they are competent to carry out unsupervised visits. Regular training sessions are held throughout the year to develop volunteers' skills and there are opportunities for formal qualifications to be gained.

If you are interested in becoming a Volunteer Advocate or think you, or someone you know, would benefit from the help of an Independent Advocate, phone the Knowsley Advocacy Hub on 0151 244 4090.



Support for you...



automatic enrolment

New legal duties for pensions now in force - are you affected yet?

Many of our customers who receive Direct Payments to employ their own PAs have already started to make arrangements to comply with their new legal responsibilities.

Changes in the law mean that you must provide and pay into a workplace pension scheme for certain employees. This is called Automatic Enrolment and the Pensions Regulator will be writing to tell you when you need to start a pension scheme for your PAs. This is called your 'staging date'.

Find out more! Come along to one of our Auto Enrolment Information Sessions. We have arranged another series of sessions in February where a representative from The Pensions Regulator will be on hand to answer your questions.

All of the sessions will take place at the Belle Vale Community Fire Station, Childwall Valley Road, Belle Vale, Liverpool, Merseyside L25 2PY

Afternoon Session
Thursday 25
February 2016
Start time: 3.00pm
End time: 5.00pm

Evening Session
Thursday 25
February 2016
Start time: 6.00pm
End time: 8.00pm

Morning Session
Friday 26
February 2016
Start time: 10.00am
End time: 12.00 noon

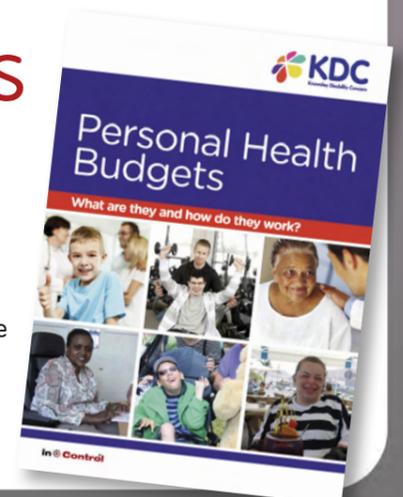
Feedback from previous sessions has been excellent with all attendees saying how important and valuable the information was. View their feedback on our website. www.kdc.org.uk

To reserve your place, contact Johanne on 0151 480 4090

Personal Health Budgets and Direct Payments

Everyone receiving NHS Continuing Healthcare has the right to ask for a personal health budget and more people are now receiving Direct Payments to manage their healthcare needs.

KDC has produced a booklet which contains comprehensive information and guidance to help people access personal health budgets. Contact us for a copy or visit our website at www.kdc.org.uk and click on the link to Personal Health Budgets.





New Year - New Name

Your Payroll is the new name for KDC's payroll service and we do hope you like it! You will be begin to see the new logo on our information packs, leaflets and payroll forms but you will continue to enjoy the usual excellent standard of service from the same payroll team.

Pensions Auto Enrolment Service Launched

This month sees the launch of a new payroll service to help you manage all of your new legal duties as an employer.

The service includes:

- Acting as your nominated contact in all dealings with The Pensions Regulator
- Sending statutory letters to your all your employees on your behalf

- Setting up a qualifying pension scheme
- Assessing your workers and enrolling staff
- Deducting employee contributions and calculating employer contributions
- Managing opt-ins, opt-outs and postponements
- Completing the Declaration of Compliance
- Ongoing worker assessment and reassessment

There will be an annual fee for the service which can be funded from your Direct Payments. To sign up, simply complete the forms we shall be sending you on or around your staging date. Contact us on 0151 949 5442 for your staging date and do come along to one of our information sessions. (see Page 3).



National Minimum Wage and Sleepover Shifts - Are you paying enough?

PAs on a sleepover are traditionally paid a flat rate per shift which is often less than the National Minimum Wage per hour, because time spent asleep wasn't classed as working time. As a result of a tribunal in 2014, this is no longer the case and a PAs average wage during any pay period must not fall below the National Minimum Wage, currently £6.70 per hour for workers aged 25 and over.

Here's an example:

Mrs Smith employs a PA to work 15 hours plus 1 sleepover from 11pm to 7am each week. She pays them £7.20 per hour and £33.13 for the 8 hour sleepovers.

The wages calculation for Mrs Smith's PA for a four week pay period is:

15 hrs @ £7.20 x 4 weeks = £432.00
4 sleepovers @ £33.13 = £132.52
Total Pay = £564.52

The total working hours for the four week pay period is **92 hours** so the average hourly rate paid can be worked out as **£564.52 / 92 = £6.14**.

This means that Mrs Smith is paying her PA at an hourly rate below the National Minimum Wage and she needs to increase their wages by **£0.56 per hour** or **£12.88 per week** in this pay period.

If you think you are affected by the new rules, contact Joanne or Sandra on 0151 949 5442

Remember, from April 2016, the new National Living Wage (NLW) comes into force and means that all workers aged 25 and over must be paid at **least £7.20 per hour**. In the example above, Mrs Smith will need to pay an extra **£1.06 per hour** or **£24.38 per week** for this pay period.

Direct Payments and Wages pay dates...

Date DP received	Last date for payroll changes	Wages pay date
18 January	11 January	25 January
15 February	8 February	22 February
14 March	7 March	21 March
11 April	4 April	18 April
9 May	2 May	16 May
6 June	30 May	13 June

You can find a full schedule of dates on the payroll section of our website

Period for	Hours worked	Last date for changes	Pay slip issued date	PA's official payday	Money received into SP
2015-2016					
10	30/12/2015 - 31/12/2015	14/12/2015	14/12/2015*	28/12/2015	29/12/15
11	28/12/2015 - 24/01/2016	11/01/2016	24/01/2016	24/01/2016	24/01/16
12	24/01/2016 - 21/02/2016	08/02/2016	17/02/2016	23/02/2016	23/02/16
13	23/02/2016 - 20/03/2016	07/03/2016	16/03/2016	22/03/2016	22/03/16
14	20/03/2016 - 17/04/2016	04/04/2016	13/04/2016	19/04/2016	19/04/16
15	16/04/2016 - 13/05/2016	02/05/2016	11/05/2016	17/05/2016	17/05/16
16	12/05/2016 - 09/06/2016	30/05/2016	08/06/2016	14/06/2016	14/06/16
17	08/06/2016 - 05/07/2016	27/06/2016	05/07/2016	11/07/2016	11/07/16
18	04/07/2016 - 01/08/2016	24/07/2016	01/08/2016	07/08/2016	07/08/16
19	01/08/2016 - 29/08/2016	23/08/2016	29/08/2016	04/09/2016	04/09/16
20	28/08/2016 - 24/09/2016	21/09/2016	21/09/2016	27/09/2016	27/09/16
21	24/09/2016 - 21/10/2016	19/10/2016	19/10/2016*	25/10/2016	25/10/16
22	20/10/2016 - 17/11/2016	14/11/2016	14/11/2016*	20/11/2016	20/11/16
23	16/11/2016 - 13/12/2016	11/12/2016	11/12/2016*	17/12/2016	17/12/16
24	12/12/2016 - 09/01/2017	06/01/2017	06/01/2017	12/01/2017	12/01/17
25	08/01/2017 - 05/02/2017	03/02/2017	03/02/2017	09/02/2017	09/02/17
26	04/02/2017 - 01/03/2017	28/02/2017	28/02/2017	05/03/2017	05/03/17

* Pay slip sent out one week early in time for Christmas