



# Self Directed Support

## Frequently asked questions

### Social Work Services - Keeping You Informed

#### 1. What is Self-Directed Support?

Self-Directed Support (SDS) is an approach to providing support services. Every stage of the SDS journey from assessment and support planning to the review of the outcomes is carried out with the supported person at the centre of the process.

Starting by considering the individual's strengths, needs and goals SDS enables people to choose and direct their care and support to meet their agreed outcomes. With the right support, advice and information, the supported person knows best what they need.

#### 2. Who can use Self Directed Support?

SDS is for people who are eligible for social care and support. Children, adults, and older people who have been assessed as being eligible for care and support by Fife Council can use SDS. Adult carers are also eligible under SDS legislation. For more information go to:

[www.fifedirect.org.uk/assessment](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/assessment).

#### 3. The word outcome is used a lot. What does it mean?

An outcome is a goal or end result that an individual wants to achieve for themselves. Your life is unique to you so you will want to achieve your own outcomes.

As part of the SDS journey you will discuss what you want to achieve and how you want to live your life with your Social Worker, Social Work Assistant or Local Area Co-ordinator. You will also have the help of an advocate and/or family member if you want it and together you will agree your outcomes and prepare your support plan.

Your support plan will also include information about how other people such as family and friends and the local community can help you to achieve your agreed outcomes.

It is important that you feel your support plan belongs to you so it will be written in the format that you find easiest to use.

## 4. What does the SDS journey involve?

- You will have an introduction to the SDS approach
- Your eligibility will be assessed with social work staff
- You will be guided through the Supported Self Assessment by a person you are comfortable with
- You will agree your outcomes together
- You will look at the SDS options and agree your support plan
- Your support plan will be agreed
- Your support will start
- You will review your plan to see if it is helping you to meet your outcomes.

## 5. What choices do you have when arranging your care and support?

SDS has 4 options for arranging care and support. These options are:

### Option 1 - Direct Payment.

The person takes the money and arranges their own support by employing care staff or a Personal Assistant or buying a service from a care organisation.

Option 1 gives the supported person maximum choice and control over how their support is arranged and gives them maximum responsibility for arranging and managing their care and support.

### Option 2 – The person directs the available support through a Third Party.

Through Option 2, the person has a choice about who provides their care and support but has less responsibility for arranging their support and managing the money.

Through Option 2 the person can choose a care provider or the local authority to manage and arrange support on their behalf. The person can direct how, when and where their support is delivered.

The person takes their support plan to the care provider who agrees with the person the support needed to meet the outcomes in their support plan.

### Option 3 – The local authority arranges the support.

The person asks their Social Worker to choose and arrange the support that they think will best meet the outcomes in their support plan.

People who choose option 3 have less responsibility for arranging their care and support but also less choice and control over what support is given to them.

### Option 4 – a mix of options 1, 2 and 3.

Some people will want to control some parts of their care and support but not other parts.

Option 4 gives individuals the flexibility to use some of their individual budget as a direct payment and to receive some support from a care provider whom they have chosen (option 2) or have asked their Social Worker to choose on their behalf (option 3).

A person can choose to continue using the services they are already receiving if they are happy that the services are meeting their needs.

## 6. How can you use SDS?

The SDS approach encourages you to think about how you can get involved in the community. You could consider using community facilities such as:

- social clubs
- organisations
- short courses
- leisure centres
- theatres
- art groups
- colleges
- learning centres
- other community based activities.

You can also:

- buy support from an agency
- employ a personal assistant to provide their care and support
- pay for a short break or respite
- pay for certain pieces of equipment
- fund activities which help them to achieve the agreed outcomes in their support plan.

## 7. Is there anything you can't use SDS for?

The following services cannot be bought using funding from SDS:

- NHS services.
- Permanent residential or nursing home care.
- Adaptations to property.
- Anything that is illegal.

## 8. What about the risks?

Thinking about risks to your safety and well-being if you want to do some activities is part of the SDS process. You will be supported to think about the risks involved and how these might be best managed. This will be included in Your Support Plan.

Fife Council will make sure that your level of risk and your strengths and weaknesses are explored throughout the SDS journey. You will be encouraged to think about your risks as well as considering the day to day risks that everyone faces.

To minimise the risk of a supported person being taken advantage of by any person or organisation Social Workers will regularly review how well their services are working. They will provide advice, information and support.

## 9. Can people who are unable to make their own decisions and choices use SDS?

Some people are not able to make their own decisions about their finances or welfare. This may be due to a learning disability, dementia, mental ill health or other condition. If the person has a legal guardian to make decisions and choices about their welfare or finances on their behalf, then all of the SDS options are available to them.

If the person doesn't have a legal guardian, their Social Worker will involve the supported person as much as possible with the help of their family or carers and will arrange the care and support which will best meet their outcomes.

Fife Council has a duty to discuss each SDS option with the supported person. It is important that the supported person can show that they understand the 4 SDS options and to make the decision about the option that will suit them best.

## 10. What happens in a review meeting?

If you are receiving SDS you will have review meetings to discuss how your outcomes are being met, what is working well for you, what needs to change, to decide on your priority outcomes for the coming year, to discuss your needs if these have changed and any issues you have in relation to managing your budget. You will be at the centre of the review meeting and will be helped to share your views and decide if changes need to be made.

The first SDS review will happen within the first 6 months and follow-up meetings will take place at least once a year.

If you need to make a change to your SDS arrangements you can call a review meeting at any time. If the review shows you need more services because your circumstances changed or your health has deteriorated, Social Work staff will help you to change your support plan and to submit it again to Fife Council for approval.

## 11. Do you need to show how you have managed the money?

All your receipts and bank statements will need to be kept to show how the money has been spent. Fife Council will advise you about paying

an accountant to do this for you if you or your legal guardian prefers not to take on this responsibility.

If you choose to employ a personal assistant or other staff, then you will have to keep a record of what payments have been given. As an employer, you or your financial guardian or Power of Attorney will need to keep copies of employment documents such as insurance certificates, contracts of employment, record of hours worked and a protection of vulnerable groups (PVG) check.

If you ask Fife Council or a care provider to manage all or part of your individual budget for you, the person or organisation managing your budget will have to show how the money has been spent to meet your outcomes.

## 12. Is there any additional money available for SDS?

No. The cost of SDS comes from Fife Council's existing funds available for care and support.

## 13. Where can I get further information about Self Directed Support?

You will find further information about SDS on the Scottish Government website:  
[www.selfdirectedsupportscotland.org](http://www.selfdirectedsupportscotland.org)

You can contact the Social Work Contact Centre on **01383 441177** and they will put you in touch with the Self Directed Support Team or a duty worker who can answer your question.

To read the Self Directed Support Act 2013 go to [www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk) and enter Self Directed Support in the search box.