

INDIVIDUAL BUDGETS PILOT NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2006

The Individual Budgets Pilot is a joint programme between the Department of Health, the Office for Disability Issues, the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Communities and Local Government

In this edition:

• News from the Individual Budgets Team	1
• Update on the progress of the pilot	2
• Message from the CSIP team	2
• National Individual Budgets conference	2
• Issues Log for Independent Living Fund	3
• Launch of national network for self-directed support	3
• Increasing the uptake of direct payments	4
• Choice, empowerment and risk in social care	4
• Round up from the National Children's and Adult Services Conference	5
• Pilot site sharing its ideas	5
• Individual Budgets in the news	6

News from the Individual Budgets Team

Welcome to the second edition of the Individual Budgets newsletter. This is our way of staying in touch with you about the progress of the Individual Budgets pilot. People are telling us they want to take control of their lives and choose the way they are supported. They want to shape their own future and make their own decisions.

The Government is clear that putting power in people's own hands is the way forward for social care. We think that a modern system should put people and their families in control by offering personalised services and giving them the freedom to choose the type of support they want.

We are committed to driving this forward, and Individual Budgets, the *In Control* programme and work on promoting and increasing the take-up of direct payments are key to doing this. These are not separate initiatives or fleeting experiments, but the future for social care in the next decade and beyond. We are determined to make this approach work, and will bring together learning from the three programmes to tackle any barriers, share best practice and build momentum and enthusiasm for our vision.

Jaimee Lewis started on October 16 as the central communications advisor for the Individual Budgets team and will be responsible delivering communications for the project, including this newsletter.

Jenny Mason joined the team on October 30 as a part-time project worker and will be focusing on charging and audit issues. Jenny has already arranged visits to some of the sites and will be contacting others shortly.

If you have any comments or questions, or would like to get in touch with Jaimee or Jenny, please don't hesitate to email us at ibpilots@dh.gsi.gov.uk. And don't forget to check our website www.individualbudgets.csip.org.uk for more information.

Update on the progress of the pilot

We are asking the pilot sites to let us know every month how they feel they are getting on. Reports from October are showing that progress is generally good, and the sites are starting to increase the number of people who are getting an individual budget.

There are of course some challenges, and sites are working particularly hard to integrate income streams and assessments. A lot of effort has also gone into developing systems to allocate resources and the pilot sites are still trying to refine their systems as their projects progress.

The Individual Budgets team is working with the Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP) to collect the issues that are emerging from the piloting work and we are trying to address those issues now. One example that the pilot sites have identified is how we might charge for an Individual Budget. The project team has brought Jenny Mason on board to work with the pilot sites to try and address this.

We are starting to publish case studies on our website featuring people who have found that having an individual budget has made a positive impact on their life. If you would like to tell your story, please get in touch with us at ibpilots@dh.gsi.gov.uk.

Message from the CSIP team

There has been a lot of implementation support activity from CSIP since the last newsletter. We have launched new support planning materials and worked on activities around sustainability, resource allocation, income stream alignment and brokerage.

The next few weeks sees us working on making Individual Budgets work for all people, care management development and transitional issues.

DVD stories to demonstrate “images of possibility” for people getting Individual Budgets will also be available soon.

The new Knowledge Community will be operational by late November and we hope you will find this a much more accessible way to share ideas and information with your colleagues. CSIP are continually reviewing their activity in response to emerging needs and feedback from sites. If you have comments or suggestions, please contact martin.routledge@dh.gsi.gov.uk.

National Individual Budgets Conference

A national Individual Budgets Conference will take place in London on Tuesday 30 January 2007. The day will be an opportunity to bring together both the user and provider perspectives on Individual Budgets and will review the progress so far.

It will also provide a great opportunity for participants in the pilot sites – including funding stream owners, social services staff and people in receipt of individual budgets - to share their experiences and take part in wider learning about the personalisation of services.

There will be smaller group discussions on related key issues such as risk, workforce, commissioning, evaluation and moving forward.

Invitations will be sent out in late November. For further information, please contact the Individual Budgets team at ibpilots@dh.gsi.gov.uk.

Issues log for Independent Living Fund

An issues log on possible improvements required for the Independent Living Fund's (ILF) involvement in the Individual Budgets pilot will soon be published on our website.

The ILF is one of the income streams that we are testing as part of the Individual Budgets pilot.

The ILF has already published two protocols on the CSIP website to help pilot sites work effectively with the ILF.

A number of issues have already been addressed or resolved, and these details will be included in the log.

Representatives from the Department of Health, Department for Work and Pensions, Office for Disability Issues and the ILF will review outstanding issues when they meet again in January 2007.

All those involved with the work in the pilot sites need to be fully aware that ILF is a

cash-limited fund managed by a Board of Trustees. The trustees have a complex legal and financial framework – determined by trust deeds – that means they need to exercise their discretion in managing the funds and ensure they do not overspend their budget.

A new trust deed will provide more flexibility, but this will not take effect until summer 2007.

The ILF is also undergoing a formal review, which will result in recommendations that may address some of the other issues raised by pilot sites.

As further issues arise, they will be included on the log and will be resolved as quickly as possible.

www.individualbudgets.csip.org.uk will publish the ILF issues log shortly.

Launch of a national network for self-directed support

A new national network to support local authorities and their partners to move forward with self-directed support will be launched on November 24.

www.sdsnetwork.org will bring together everyone who is interested in transforming the social care system, including people who use services and their families, professionals and service providers.

The network will run in partnership with our work on Individual Budgets, direct payments and *In Control*.

It will also help those local authorities not involved in the Individual Budgets Pilot to

explore ways in which they can expand choice and control through personalised support.

The focal point for the network will be a vibrant on-line community open to all, with a range of linked projects, events and other activities across the CSIP regions.

The network will also provide an opportunity to explore other income streams that could potentially be included within the Individual Budgets approach.

For more information, please contact zoe.porter@dh.gsi.gov.uk

Increasing the uptake of direct payments

Currently, less than 42,000 of the approximately one million people eligible to receive their social care services as a direct payment do so.

To address this gap, a drive to increase the uptake of direct payments will start in December with a series of one-day regional workshops for local authority direct payment service providers, commissioners, users and carers.

Direct payments are a vital element of the Individual Budgets pilot as many people will take all or part of their allocation via a cash payment.

The Department of Health, working with CSIP, is seeking participants from across the country to share best practice and feed into a national solution that will encourage, support and drive a significant improvement in the usage of direct payments.

Participants will discuss innovative ways to overcome the barriers often associated with direct payments and will look at the systems needed to offer a good service with supported and satisfied customers.

The good practice suggestions and solutions identified will form a national web-based solution available on the new self-directed support network.

If you would like more information about the workshops, please contact helen.tomkys@dh.gsi.gov.uk.

Choice, empowerment and risk in social care

The *Our health, our care, our say* White Paper commitment to developing a common approach to risk in social care will result in best practice guidance being published in early 2007.

It follows the *Independence, Well Being and Choice* consultation in 2005, where respondents called for a debate about risk, which would lead to a national approach to risk management.

The work falls firmly within the Government's empowerment and choice agenda, as risk in this context is about supporting people to manage the decision-making process. We want to help people address the impact of choices upon them.

The Department of Health wants to empower people so they take new opportunities to live differently, while keeping themselves safe.

A reference group of major external stakeholders has endorsed the approach, and CSIP has been working with people who use services and groups of practitioners all over the country, including the Individual Budget pilot sites, to debate the issues and consult on what the guidance should include.

Consultation on the draft best practice guidance will begin in late November. For further information, please contact caroline.godleman@dh.gsi.gov.uk.

Round up from the National Children's and Adult Services Conference, Brighton

Individual budgets for social care are not just a series of experiments but the foundation stone of a modern social care system. That is what Minister for Care Services Ivan Lewis told directors of Individual Budgets pilot areas at a fringe meeting during the conference.

Individual Budgets, direct payments and *In Control* are the principal means of transferring power to people and putting them back in control of their lives and Mr Lewis said he would like to extend access to these types of funding to most of the 1.7 million people currently receiving social care.

Another speaker at the conference included the Department of Health's new Director-General for Social Care David Behan.

He described the vision of the *Our health, our care, our say* White Paper by highlighting work that is putting people in control of their lives, their care and their support.

He also asked delegates to consider ways they could encourage their staff to manage, rather than avoid risk and reinforced the importance of listening to peoples' views and redesigning services to meet their needs.

For further information on the conference, please see <http://www.adss.org.uk/events/2006/conf06.shtml>.

Pilot site sharing its ideas

The Minister for Care Services Ivan Lewis was the keynote speaker at Oldham Council's *Making Lives Better, Together* conference on November 3.

He said that personalised services such as Individual Budgets, *In Control* and direct payments were at the cutting edge of public service reform and he paid tribute to the pilot sites for their work so far.

Veronica Jackson, Oldham's Executive Director of Adult and Community Services, said the council was aiming for a "social welfare revolution" that gave people more choice and control, and "most importantly, the ability to be ordinary".

Her team provided an overview of the council's whole-systems approach to delivering the pilot, which will see an individual budget for everyone receiving social care in Oldham.

People who have had positive experiences under the new system also gave presentations on the impact that individual budgets have had on their lives.

For further information, please see www.oldham.gov.uk.

Individual Budgets in the News

If health can have it, why can't we? The Guardian, October 18

Minister for Care Services Ivan Lewis set out his plans for the future of social care. He said he would like to boost the status of adult social care, and to make user control, in the form of personalised care packages like Individual Budgets, the cornerstone of policy development.

<http://society.guardian.co.uk/conferences/story/0,,1924466,00.html>

Embrace choice, Hewitt tells social services The Guardian, October 20

Secretary of State for Health Patricia Hewitt told delegates of the National Children's and Adult Services conference that choice and partnership with the NHS were the keys to delivering a 21st century social care system. She highlighted the success of personalised services such as Individual Budgets, direct payments and *In Control* and said the challenge was to extend these schemes from the margins to the mainstream.

http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,,1927790,00.html

My agenda for change Community Care, October 19

Minister for Care Services Ivan Lewis wrote a column on how he would like to tackle issues around placing social care at the heart of civilised society. He said that Individual Budgets, direct payments and *In Control* were not experiments but ingredients central to a modern care system.

<http://www.communitycare.co.uk/Articles/2006/10/19/56120/Ivan+Lewis+charts+future+government+social+care+policy.html?key=IVAN%20AND%20LEWIS>

Cameron pitches for the not-so-grey vote The Financial Times, October 24

David Cameron called for a "profound change in the way we think about older people" during an address to Age Concern and backed wider use of direct payments and Individual Budgets to give people more control over social care. He also said it was wrong to assume that the elderly were resistant to change and that they could only ever be passive recipients of government service.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0e291076-62fd-11db-8faa-0000779e2340.html>