

Direct Payments - Personal Assistant Rates Decision Making Tool

(Version 6)

Introduction

This guidance aims to help make decisions about the rates of pay for Personal Assistants (PAs). The tool is designed for people wanting to employ PAs to agree pay rates with the social worker or care manager that is supporting them to set up direct payment and support plan.

What is the PA rates Decision Making tool?

This decision-making tool aims to help jointly agree a wage and ensure consistency in how rates of pay for PAs employed through Direct Payments, are agreed across social care.

This tool works through a series of questions that help inform the decision of what rate of pay is most suitable. It aims to support a conversation and evidence the discussion and decision making.

When should the tool be used?

When an individual has decided that they will have a Direct Payment and employ Personal Assistants (PAs) to meet their support needs. This will help determine the rates of pay that should be used to recruit and help cost out the Direct Payment budget. PAs do not have to be identified at this stage. The rates pay agreed can be used to advertise the PA job.

This tool should be used

- When setting up new direct payments and employing new PAs.
- Where people are transitioning from a provider led support plan to having PAs.
- Where there is a disagreement between the PA employer and the allocated worker about the appropriate PAs pay rates
- The tool **should not** be used to review existing PAs rates unless there is a request to do so.

How to use it?

The questions must be worked through together between the PA employer and the social care worker. Both the PA employer and the allocated worker will need to see the tool. Decisions should be made jointly, and the rate of pay must be a shared decision based on the closest match. You will need to have a conversation to discuss each question and chose the statement that best fits the situation. Don't get hung up in the detail of each statement. The focus is in recognising the scale difference between the statements as a whole.

When the tool is being used for PAs that will support a child or young person, the starting point from each statement is what in usual circumstances would be the expectation of competency be? For example, any adult looking after a 5-year-old would be expected to manage some level of risk and decision-making; for completing the tool think about the additional level of skill / ability / knowledge needed by the PA because of the specific needs of the child they will be supporting.

If reaching agreement has been challenging, record the rationale behind your decision in the notes.

Once you've gone through the questions add up the total number of responses for A through to E. Add the totals to the Score Card. Refer to the Banding Levels at the end of page 6 and choose the option that nearest matches the total you've scored. This will guide you towards a pay rate to use. If the statements score evenly then you should discuss which answers are most important and jointly decide the nearest fit. Save a copy of the tool in Liquid Logic and provide a copy to the employer.

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