
A brief guide to **Personal Health Budgets**

More choice and control over your own or your child's care



All adults receiving continuing healthcare (CHC) or children receiving continuing care (CCC) from Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group are now entitled to ask to receive this funding in the form of a Personal Health Budget (PHB).

It starts with your care plan

A PHB works in a similar way to the personal budgets many people already use to manage and pay their own personal care.

With a PHB you, the patient, decide together with your NHS team what your health needs are - your 'care plan' - much as you do now (or as you do for your child if your child is the patient). But the PHB system is designed to give you more choice and control over how these needs are met. To give just one example - you might wish to employ a carer direct rather than through an agency.

What can I spend my PHB on?

On any care or services set out in your care plan and agreed with your NHS team and Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). These might include therapies, personal care, and equipment. If a form of support or care you currently receive isn't working well for you, you could change it. There are some real-life examples of choices patients make given on the NHS Choices website - see back page of this leaflet.

What can't I spend my PHB on?

You will not be expected to pay for emergency care or routine care you would normally get from a GP. There are also various things you wouldn't be allowed to spend the money on (such as alcohol and tobacco). How your plan gets signed off, and things you can't include, will be explained to you at the beginning of the planning process.

How much money will I receive?

You will be told at the start how much money is available to you. This will vary from person to person depending on their needs.

How will my care be managed?

As explained above, your PHB is for spending on the healthcare and support set out in your care plan. This can be managed in three ways (or perhaps a combination of the three ways):

1. As a notional budget

This way, no money changes hands. You find out how much money is available to you to provide yourself with care, and agree with your NHS team on the best way to spend it. The NHS Team then organises this for you. (This is the method closest to the way in which continuing healthcare has been organised up until now).

2. As a real budget, held by a third party

A third party - an external organisation, legally independent of both you and the NHS - would hold the money on your behalf. When you and your NHS team (with advice from the third party if you wish) have decided on the care to meet your needs, the third party would then pay for it. For example, if you did choose to employ a carer direct rather than via an agency, the third party could offer you support with employment issues such as recruitment, tax and payroll.

3. As a direct payment to you to buy healthcare

You would get the money to buy the care and support you and your NHS Team have decided you need. You, or your representative, can then buy and manage the care yourself (although you will have to show how you are spending the money).

Do I have to have a PHB?

No - if it doesn't work for you, you can continue to receive your care as you do now.

What if something goes wrong, or my needs change?

You would not be left to re-arrange everything yourself. Your care plan, which will have been agreed with you (and your family, carers and representative as appropriate) will include information about contingency plans.

How do I get a PHB?

Contact the CCG's CHC team to discuss PHBs. Even if you decide a PHB is not for you, you can discuss other ways to make sure that you get the healthcare and support which works best for you.

Can children have PHBs?

Yes, even though continuing care for children is decided on different criteria than is adult CHC. You, as the child's parents or guardians, would hold the budget on their behalf.

Sources of further information

The PHB pages of the CCG's website at: www.bedfordshireccg.nhs.uk

The PHB pages of the NHS Choices website at:

www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs/yourchoices/personal-health-budgets

Includes real-life examples of some different ways in which patients buy support and care through their PHBs.

NHS England's PHB webpages at:

www.personalhealthbudgets.england.nhs.uk

Contact Details

Email: chcadmin@nhs.net

Write to: Continuing Healthcare (CHC) Team
NHS Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
Suite 2, Capability House,
Wrest Park, Silsoe
BEDFORD MK45 4HR

Telephone: 01525 864430 and then extension:
5856 for Adult Continuing Healthcare (CHC)
5819 for Children's continuing care (CCC)