

Personal Budgets: Where Next in Oxfordshire?

Summary & Recommendations

With funding from Healthwatch Oxfordshire, Community Glue has been working collaboratively with other organisations to review Personal Budgets and their use in health and social care. Over the spring of 2014 we talked to people and ran workshops, eventually [producing this report](#). At the launch event we ran another workshop looking at what we should do with our findings. This is an attempt to summarise the main points people thought we should make.

Resourcing of budgets and the infrastructure to support choice

We found evidence of budget cuts meant that people struggled to meet their basic needs, let alone choose services. People were worried by the proposed discontinuation of the brokerage/support planning service. Without adequate resources Personal Budgets cannot deliver person-centred care.

Support throughout the process

People told us that there wasn't enough support for Personal Budget holders, and the support that was available was too focussed on setting up the support plan quickly. People wanted support throughout the process, including help with employing personal assistants.

Bureaucracy

- Not everyone wants to manage their budget as Direct Payment: for those who do not, we recommend a 'menu' of support options that still maximises the degree of control and choice available.
- Many people find the bureaucracy of holding a Personal Budget intimidating. Reducing the bureaucracy would make life easier for people who are already managing their own care, and potentially encourage more people to get involved.
- *Putting People First* set out a collaborative vision of person-centred care, but the bureaucracy involved in commissioning is making it hard or impossible for small community groups and organisations to get involved.

Peer Networks

Many of the important, creative elements of person-centred care can be supported or delivered by small community and voluntary groups, and user-led organisations. This includes providing information and advice, help with planning, timebanks, micro-enterprises and the development of individual service funds.

