



**Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living**  
**An Evaluation of Introductory Direct Payment Workshops**  
**– One Year's Experience to January 2014**

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# **An Evaluation of Introductory Direct Payment Workshops – One Year’s Experience to January 2014**

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Thanks are due to all participants in our Training Workshops, the Independent Living Advisors, Peer Support Co-ordinators and Peer Mentors who contributed to the Workshops and Polly Hannan for design services and Carol Shirley for statistical collation.

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Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living is a Charity Number 1120611 and a Company Limited by Guarantee Number 5480761. It is a user-led organisation whose Vision is “All disabled people live independently as full citizens with Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities”

This document is available in a variety of formats on request from the office – [info@wiltshirecil.org.uk](mailto:info@wiltshirecil.org.uk) and phone number 01380 725400. It can also be downloaded from our website [www.wiltshirecil.org.uk](http://www.wiltshirecil.org.uk)

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## **FOREWORD**

Disabled peoples' user led organisations are specialists in peer support which enables participants to share their experiences to provide information and advice to those less familiar with the subject. Another related strength is to build on the expertise users have and thereby enable a growth in confidence to accompany it. In this way users can become more confident in taking control of their lives and the care and support they need to live as full citizens with equal rights. At this time "Peer Support" has become more widely valued by policy makers as a means to achieving progress – it brings communities of interest together, achieves change without very specialist knowledge and professional input and above all, at a time of economic restraint, is cheap!

Informal workshops are one model used as a vehicle for peer support and the workshops reported on in this report are an example of that. They bring together disabled people and carers who are new to the concept of receiving cash to purchase their own care together with more experienced direct payment users. They also act as a gateway to more opportunities of peer support which Wiltshire CIL offers – the chance to join an ongoing peer support group or special interest group, or to participate in virtual support via a website and most innovatively, to be linked to a volunteer peer mentor to plan with their support how to meet their needs long term.

We hope this brief evaluation of a small part of our work, detailing how we planned the workshops, will be useful to others seeking ways of supporting disabled people learn a new role.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Wiltshire CIL was formed in 2005 to promote Independent Living. As a Volunteer led organisation it carried out small pieces of work, including a Peer Support Group for Direct Payment users and later gained funding for a Peer Mentoring Project.

In April 2012 it was awarded the Contract for Support for all Direct Payment recipients in Wiltshire and from the start was committed to emphasise the value of Peer Support in providing this service.

In January 2013 it began a programme of Workshops for new Direct Payment recipients which emphasised Peer Support and had contributions from volunteer mentors and paid specialist staff. A total of 10 workshops was held with 100 attendances.

The total cost of the workshops was £4,500 and so the average cost per participant was £45 including publicity, trainer's fee, venue hire and travel.

Publicity was targeted at new Direct Payment recipients by a direct mailing to take account of reaching everyone as well as using general electronic publicity which attracted a few self funders.

The Course was designed to encourage participation and feedback from formal evaluation sheets completed by 66% of participants demonstrated this was valued.

14% of new Direct Payment recipients during 2013 attended the workshops – 7% of users and 7% of carers who were newly receiving Direct Payments. They were often accompanied by other family members to the workshops.

Some participants felt they had sufficient knowledge to proceed with arranging their Direct Payments after the workshop while others felt they knew where else to go for support within Wiltshire CIL to receive the further assistance they needed.

The workshops provided were Introducing Direct Payments, Being Assertive with Direct Payments, Recruiting and Managing Personal Assistants and Moving and Handling for Personal Assistants. A new workshop Choosing and Using an Agency will be introduced in 2014.

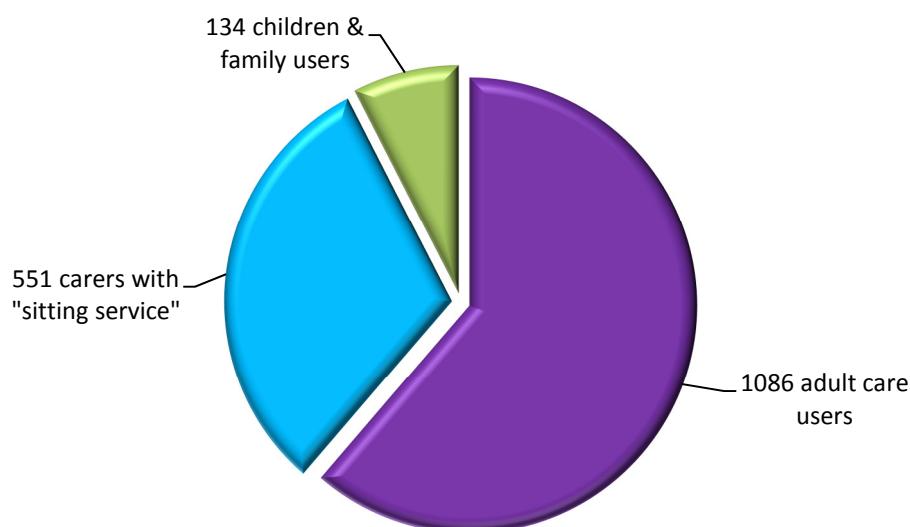
The workshops have been an effective way of providing support to new Direct Payment users in a new learning environment not primarily dependent on professionals. The value of Peer Support in Social Care is shown in this project.

## INTRODUCTION

Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living (Wiltshire CIL) was awarded the contract to deliver support to direct payment users in Wiltshire from April 2012. Prior to this as a previously volunteer- only organisation, it had a small contract to develop a peer support group for direct payment users. This experience and the wider commitment to build on disabled people's expertise and strengths throughout the organisation led us to design a support service with peer support choices as well as one to one assistance at different stages of users' journeys with direct payments. With disabled people as trained peer mentors available, it was possible to design workshops for new service users with contributions from mentors and relevant advisory staff on different aspects of planning to use direct payments. This short paper reviews the process of running the workshops over one year and suggests ways they can develop as part of the peer support Wiltshire CIL provides to disabled and older people.

In Wiltshire in December 2013 there were a total of 1841 Direct Payment recipients including 1086 adult care users, 551 carers who received a non means tested weekly payment equivalent to "2 hours sitting service" for a break and 134 children and families service users. The number of individual Independent Living Resource Advisors employed to support new direct payment recipients was three. Other support was provided through information on the webpage and through the peer support opportunities of groups meeting regularly, peer mentor advice and introductory workshops.

**Diagram to show make up of Direct Payment recipients in Wiltshire - December 31st 2013**



## **BACKGROUND**

Wiltshire CIL is an organisation of disabled people committed to assisting all disabled people overcome the barriers in society to their full participation. The provision of workshops providing information and advice built on the “lived experience” of disabled people was seen as a positive model which broke away from the tendency of one to one dependency sometimes created by professionals in the traditional welfare services and a means to encouraging them to take control of their funding to meet their individual needs. To learn what topics direct payment users would like training workshops on and details of locations etc, we carried out research published in December 2011 collecting the views of 100 disabled people (Evans 2012)

By the Autumn of 2012 we had a small group of trained mentors who were direct payment users committed to sharing their experiences with those new to them. We therefore planned three pilot workshops for the mentors to run facilitated by a freelance Disability Equality trainer. We publicised the workshops among our contacts and through the social work operations teams of Wiltshire Council but were only able to recruit three or four people to each of these workshops and did not have access to inviting new direct payment users directly ourselves. In December 2012 we had a final meeting of those interested in the training to prioritise subject workshops and learn from the pilot sessions.

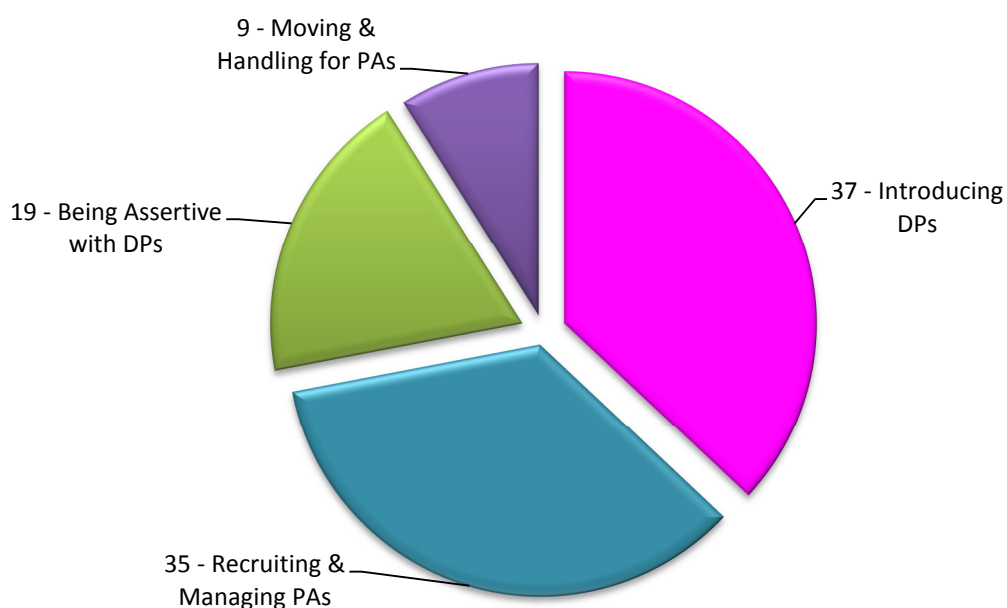
In implementing the contract with Wiltshire Council for all support to direct payment users from April 2012, the priority was to maintain a high standard of service for existing service users and to use the advisors to assist new users as quickly as possible. Open meetings which mentors took part in, were held in all areas of Wiltshire for those direct payment users with a wider interest in the service. Time was taken to build a confidential tailor- made information system recording contact with all direct payment users. Meanwhile final plans were made for workshops to be launched alongside the existing advisor service from January 2013.

## A YEAR OF WORKSHOPS – THE FACTS!

Thirteen workshops were held between January and November 2013 in which there were 100 attendances

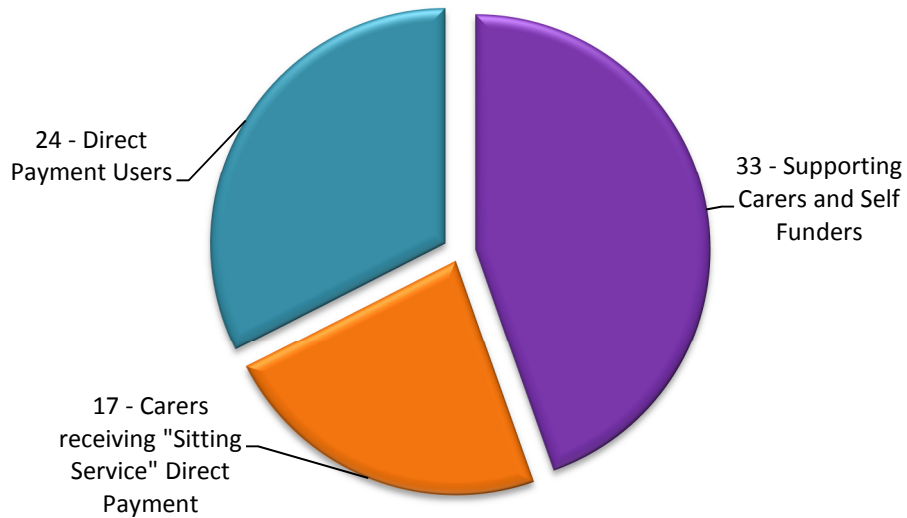
NAME OF WORKSHOP	LOCATION	DATE	NO.
Introducing Direct Payments	Trowbridge - The Hub	29th January 2013	14
Being Assertive with DPs	Potterne Wick - Scout Centre	6th February 2013	10
Recruiting & Managing PAs	Corsham - Fire Station	12th February 2013	9
Recruiting & Managing PAs	Potterne Wick - Scout Centre	13th March 2013	6
Being Assertive with DPs	Corsham - Fire Station	19th March 2013	5
Introducing Direct Payments	Potterne Wick - Scout Centre	27th March 2013	5
Introducing Direct Payments	Devizes - Sports Club	8th May 2013	4
Recruiting & Managing PAs	Trowbridge - The Hub	15th May 2013	7
Being Assertive with DPs	Wilton - Fire Station	21st May 2013	4
Moving & Handling for PAs & their Employers	Devizes - Sports Club	29th May 2013	9
Introducing Direct Payments	Chippenham - Museum	17th September 2013	7
Introducing Direct Payments	Wilton - Fire Station	25th September 2013	7
Recruiting & Managing PAs	Wilton - Fire Station	17th October 2013	13

### Numbers of Participants in Workshops for each topic

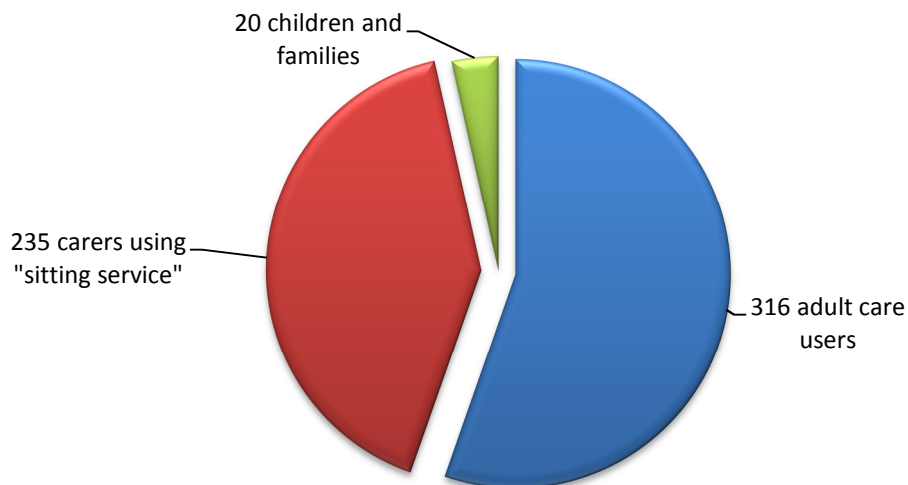




### Direct Payment Status of Those Attending Workshops



### Direct Payment Status of new recipients 1.9.2012 - 31.8.2013



It can be seen that 17 carers out of 235 (7%) receiving a new Direct Payment attended the workshops and 24 users out of 336 (7%) users total receiving a new Direct Payment attended the workshops together with their informal carers. This means that 14% of new Direct Payment recipients chose to attend a workshop. No separate figures about attendance were kept for parents receiving a Direct Payment for their child. However, it is thought this was a higher proportion than those of other participants since some of the workshops had lively discussions about parent carer situations leading the tutor to suggest to the peer support co-ordinators in Wiltshire

CIL that parent carers may wish to have an ongoing support group of their own within the support service structure. This has since been implemented.

### **Financial Costings**

In addition to staff administrative time arranging the workshops the following costs were incurred for the 10 workshops.

	£
Publicity – direct mailing	400
Freelance Trainer’s Fee	1500
Hire of Venue	600
Participants’ Travel	2000
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>4500</b>

The average cost per participant of a workshop session was £45 ranging from £25 per person to £125 per person for those with high travel costs.

### **PLANNING AND PUBLICITY**

Feedback from research carried out into training by Wiltshire CIL (Evans 2012) indicated that people found midweek mornings the most suitable time for sessions at venues near to where they lived. This, together with our access standards, including adjacent parking, guided our booking of venues. Our costings included the reimbursement of travel costs for recipients, an enabler for use by the whole group and the organisation of taxis to reach the venue if required.

Appropriate publicity is important when reaching out to marginalised citizens unused to participating in learning opportunities who may have learnt to be dependent on professionals for arranging their Social Care. We produced flyers about each series of workshops several weeks beforehand which were circulated electronically, to professionals in touch with potential and new Direct Payment recipients. However, the proportion of disabled and older people with access to computers is much lower than the population at large and there appeared to be some reluctance by professionals to recognise the value of the workshops and recommend them to users, so this was not an effective way to publicise workshops as we found in 2012. But in 2013 we had access to new Direct Payment users’ contact details direct as they all were referred by Wiltshire Council to Wiltshire CIL as the organisation providing the full Support Service to Direct Payment recipients, so we were able to target them with a direct postal mailing. The purpose-built information system, called Libra, used for recording all contact with recipients from referral gave us a county-wide contact list to send flyers to. To be sure the recipients understood the workshops were particularly to assist them, there was an accompanying letter explaining their role for new recipients and attractive aspects about arrangements such as the reimbursement of travel expenses and the opportunity to have taxi transport arranged in a rural county.

## What Participants said

“Where the meeting was held was rather small, also the parking was quite difficult – not many spaces available or much turning space.”

“Excellent venue”

“Very good venue. Easily accessible and Hall easy to get around etc. Refreshments on hand. Excellent.”

“The taxi arrived on time and was very helpful & friendly. Fully enjoyed the journey with conversation by the driver. Very polite”

“Thank you for arranging transport”

“Time was OK, but distance not”,

““We come from Cricklade, eight miles from Gloucestershire border so it was a trek, but worth it – thank you”

“Parking would have been good except overflowing due to other meetings taking place.”

“Taxi service excellent – allows my husband a break”

“Yes, fitted in well with my caring responsibilities”

## **COURSE CONTENT AND WORKSHOP METHODS**



Workshops were designed by a disabled freelance trainer to be welcoming and accessible to those not used to recent formal learning opportunities. They aim to provide practical information about using Direct Payments, taking away any anxieties participants had about their use and encouraging them to know where to return to at a later stage if further help was required.

With coffee/tea on arrival, each participant was issued with a folder containing a workshop programme, travel expenses claim form, an evaluation sheet and other relevant information about Wiltshire CIL's role etc. Pen and paper was available for

those who wanted it and copies of notes of the session were forwarded afterwards. Each workshop started by participants introducing themselves and saying what they hoped to get out of the workshop which was recorded to refer back to later in the session.

Each workshop followed modern participatory learning methods using exposition, demonstration, question and answer and case studies in small groups. The exposition took the form of a Powerpoint presentation used as a framework for input by various Wiltshire CIL contributors such as the Independent Living Advisors and the Mentors. At all times, participants were encouraged to ask questions and challenge what was said and contributors were presented as using their experience to build their knowledge and expertise of Direct Payments. In this way we moved away from underlying assumptions about “professionals know best” and “users being passive” about arranging their care. This enabled participants to begin the long journey of being in control of their own care and support arrangements.

#### What Participants said

“I have found out how to find out more!”

“Very informative”

“An extremely helpful and informative workshop”

“Extremely useful –answered a number of queries”

“Really well thought out course –thank you for inviting me”

“Learnt many useful nuggets of info

“Got information on employment contracts which will be very useful and found contact who will help”

“Liked the way we sat in a circle and could see each other easily”

“I found the open forum style of discussion to be extremely helpful”

“Very friendly, making me feel at ease when speaking or asking questions”

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION



Midway through each workshop participants were asked to join one of two small groups to discuss a case study. These groups were led by mentors and gave participants the opportunity of applying the theory outlined previously to a case study situation similar to their own in order to practise and grow confident in using the methods we advocate. Their ideas were collated and fed back to the whole group before the end of the session.

### What Participants said

“It was interesting to hear other peoples’ views about their situations and experiences”

“Feedback from others in group was a helpful experience. All the co-ordinators there were easy to talk to and offered much help.”

“Very helpful especially the interactions with other people”

“An excellent workshop with an interesting and varied group of people who were willing to share their experiences”

“Hearing views from others was very enjoyable and expands the experience”

## USING ATTENDANCE CERTIFICATES



Those who gained Certificates for academic achievements in their youth often decry the more common use of Certificates in today's learning climate which mark attendance but nothing more. However, for those far removed from school and college and diffident about their own abilities, as well as internalising the oppression of being discriminated against as disabled people, Attendance Certificates can be valued and indeed useful for the future if they apply for volunteering and job opportunities. We therefore printed Attendance Certificates for all who came to workshops and handed them out to participants towards the end of the session. As we observed how much these were valued we made handing out the certificates a more formal five minute part of the session.

## **GENERAL FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS**

A lot of quantitative and qualitative data was collected and analysed from the evaluation sheets completed by the majority of participants (61%) and demonstrated that the publicity, workshop style and content and wider role was valued highly. Four people left the workshop before completion of the session because they felt it was not for them and these were followed up by individual conversations afterwards.

Other comments made on the forms included:-

"A very pleasant couple of hours with like-minded people. Made me feel more confident in my carer role"

When asked how we can improve the workshop a comment was made - "I don't think you can"

"No specific improvements – it was a good workshop"

"Needs more time – sometimes as conversation on group tasks can be quite informative from members on their situations and needs"

Participants felt the workshop friendly, easy to understand

"Thought the workshop was very good and extremely helpful"

Participants felt the workshop friendly, easy to understand etc, although one participant felt it did not suit their level of knowledge and skills.

Participants felt the workshop was friendly and welcoming, easy to understand and informative. It met their expectations and increased their knowledge and skills.

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"I thoroughly enjoyed my experience, surrounded by good people. I have learnt much more about being assertive. Thank you"

## CONCLUSION

Out of all the workshops the most people were interested in the general **Introductory Workshop** – 37 attendances - before sometimes moving on to a more specific one such as **Recruiting and Managing P.A.s**. When the tutor asked why people had come on the workshop, many participants replied they had just received their letter of acceptance awarding them a direct payment and they didn't know where to start. This highlights the importance of marketing the workshops directly to new DP users as WiltshireCIL do. We also consider there is likely to be value in us reaching potential Direct Payment users at an earlier stage of their journey to control their own support. When social workers and social care co-ordinators give users and carers the choice of a Direct Payment, attendance at a workshop would enable them to ask questions about the extra tasks of management and the gains they would have which they might feel diffident about asking the professional. We have therefore made renewed efforts to have our 2014 workshop programme advertised to Wiltshire Council operational teams.

The requests for The **Being Assertive with Direct Payments** workshop came from the original research and was seen by some as a chance to practise skills such as asking for a re-assessment of need or learning to approach agencies in the purchaser role rather than as a service user only. In fact it proved less popular in practice – 19 attendances - and we cancelled the last one through lack of demand so this will not be in our new programme.

**Recruiting and Managing P.A.s** was also popular – 35 attendances and feedback on these sessions was particularly positive in providing information people needed in relation to employing staff – a new skill to be learnt! It was important to have an Independent Living Advisor employed by WiltshireCIL attend each of these workshops in particular because of the specific legal requirements of employing staff etc thus showing that information provided by peers to each other was not always adequate in imparting more technical legal information.

We piloted a workshop on **Moving and Handling for P.A.s and their Employers** which was attended by 9 people, half of whom were P.A.s. Although those attended felt it useful we were not entirely satisfied with it. Various tensions arose about the reality of P.A.s' experiences which needed dealing with in confidence and it was difficult to get the balance of contribution between the moving and handling specialist present and peoples' lived experience. This is part of a wider debate about what is appropriate training outside the employer's home for the P.A. to participate in as well as that provided in house by the employer. We are part of the Skills for Care national reference group on personal assistants looking at the wider issues connected with this for direct payments users and self funding people.

Taking feedback from those attending the introductory workshops and being aware that many direct payment users first begin to purchase their care through agencies

before moving on to employing their own staff we realised there was a gap in our workshop provision for about half of new direct payment users. We have therefore designed a workshop on **How to Choose and Use an Agency** which will be available in the Spring of 2014. Whilst not making as many demands on users and carers as employing staff direct, learning to negotiate with an agency about specific needs and maintain the quality of their service is not always as straightforward as is at first thought, particularly if the Direct Payment recipient has previously linked with the agency only as a user funded by Wiltshire Council.

There were some unexpected learning points from some attending the workshops:

- Some self funders found them relevant to their needs and were most welcome to attend the workshops. We will therefore advertise more widely to this group in the future. One person indeed found our workshop advertised on our website and arrived at the workshop with no previous contact with WiltshireCIL!
- During the workshops series, we became aware of the attendance of many family carers accompanying users. This highlights the importance of those around Direct Payment recipients in supporting them and helping them implement a new way of organising their care.
- Although we did not have a formal measure, we became aware of parents in particular who were receiving Direct Payments for their disabled children using the workshops to share experiences and learn from each other in informal conversations. This has led to an invitation to parents with children with direct payments to come together in a regular support group.
- Often those receiving a carers' "sitting service" direct payment came to the first workshop saying they wanted to understand what it was all about and stated in their evaluation they now felt confident to set it up themselves. From observation they grew in confidence at the workshops and could use transferable skills to implement the less arduous task of using this payment and reporting on it.

We have not formally evaluated how many workshop participants have moved on to use other aspects of Wiltshire CIL's support service but there is hearsay evidence this is quite widespread fulfilling one purpose of the workshops. A very beneficial unexpected result of the workshops has been two new trustees have joined the Board of WiltshireCIL bringing their user and carer expertise with them as well as other skills.

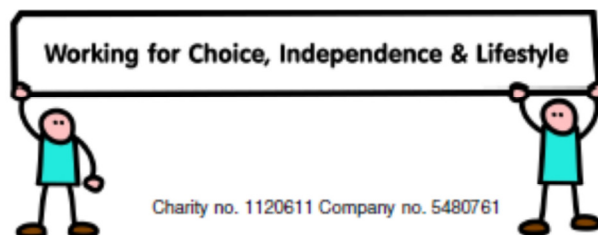
The programme of peer based workshops instigated by Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living as a form of support for new Direct Payment users, appears to be fulfilling a need for a proportion of Direct Payment users and their family carers. This is partly due to the careful targeting of publicity and the availability of free transport for all. They are cost effective and their emphasis on peer learning and



encouragement introduces participants to a new way of planning support they need as well as encouraging them to dip into other forms of peer support in the future.

We provide a number of other peer support programmes such as “on line”, a peer mentoring scheme and a peer support group network to enable participants to continue their journey of taking control as they become likely long term recipients of Social Care. The introductory workshops for new Direct Payment recipients provides a good opportunity to introduce them to the range of support they are entitled to use according to their current needs.

Such workshops are indicative of the way Social Care needs to move from its emphasis on the “professionals know best” to “users can take control of their support by learning from others” if users and carers are to learn to have Choice and Control in their support and therefore their lives.



**WORKSHOPS FOR DIRECT PAYMENT USERS AND CARERS**

**INTRODUCING DIRECT PAYMENTS**

WEDNESDAY 8TH MAY 2013  
 Devizes Sports Club, London Road, Devizes

**RECRUITING AND MANAGING PERSONAL ASSISTANTS**

(also suitable for Self Funders)  
 WEDNESDAY 15TH MAY 2013  
 The Hub, John of Gaunt School, Wingfield Road, Trowbridge

**BEING ASSERTIVE WITH DIRECT PAYMENTS**

TUESDAY 21ST MAY 2013  
 The Fire Station, Minster Street, Wilton

**MOVING & HANDLING FOR PA'S AND THEIR EMPLOYERS**

WEDNESDAY 29TH MAY 2013  
 Devizes Sports Club, London Road, Devizes

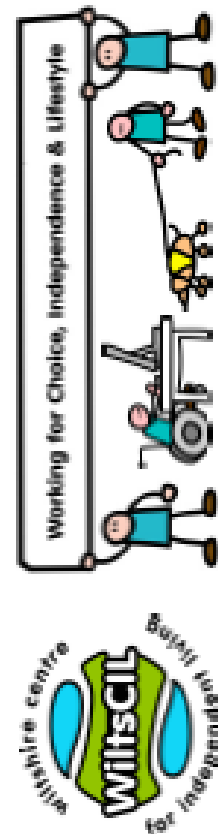
The workshops are FREE and will run from 9.30am–12.30pm. Refreshments will be provided.  
 Transport costs will be paid and transport can be arranged

If you wish to attend a Workshop, please complete this form and return to the Wiltshire CIL, Unit 1, 11 Couch Lane, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 1EB 01380 725400 or email [office@wiltshirecil.org.uk](mailto:office@wiltshirecil.org.uk)

I would like to attend the following Workshop(s):

- Introducing Direct Payments Wed 8th May  Recruiting & Managing PA's Tues Wed 15th May   
 Being Assertive with Direct Payments Tues 21st May  Moving & Handling Wed 29th May

NAME	
ADDRESS	
POST CODE	
TELEPHONE	
EMAIL	
Do you need transport ?	
Any special requirements?	



**WORKSHOP EVALUATION SHEET**

DATE:

TITLE:

Was the workshop at a convenient time and location for you? Yes  No

Comment

Were the travel/parking arrangements satisfactory? Yes  No

Comment

Did you find the Workshop:

- Friendly and welcoming Yes  No
- Easy to understand Yes  No
- Informative Yes  No
- Did the workshop meet your expectations? Yes  No
- Was the workshop suited to your level of knowledge & skills? Yes  No
- Do you feel your knowledge and skills have increased? Yes  No

Comment

How can we improve things? We value your views and invite you to comment on any aspect of the Workshop:

Comment

What other workshops would you like WiltshireCIL to organise?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION AND TAKING THE TROUBLE TO GIVE YOUR VIEWS**

**PLEASE HAND IN AT END OF SESSION OR RETURN TO US AT THE WILTSHIRECIL CONTACT DETAILS OVER**

01120 6111