

#3 | 2025

Quarterly Newsletter



Hertfordshire Direct Payment Support Service

Welcome to the Hertfordshire Direct Payment Support Service newsletter!

In this newsletter you will find details of the upcoming online support drop-in session – a welcoming space for Direct Payment holders and their representatives to ask questions, share experiences, and receive tailored guidance from a member of the Employment Advice and Guidance team.

This edition also highlights useful resources from Skills for Care, designed to help both Personal Assistants and Individual Employers grow in confidence. Topics include preparing for better conversations, understanding employer responsibilities, and exploring opportunities for funded training.

Additionally, we are providing some practical guidance regarding contacting Hertfordshire County Council in the event of experiencing difficulties in recruiting a Personal Assistant.

The Hertfordshire Direct Payment Support Service team is always here should you have any questions or require additional support.

Marianna Petrides

Communications Manager



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- Upcoming events and workshops
- Operational updates from our team
- Local opportunities and resources
- Key announcements and news



Save your space now →

Your online space to ask questions and receive support from our team

Hertfordshire Direct Payment holder Online support drop in

📅 Wednesday 5th November
🕒 1:00pm – 2:00pm
📍 Microsoft Teams

Curious to learn more about Direct Payment support, or interested in hearing the experiences of others?

Our online drop-in is a warm, supportive space designed to boost your confidence and leave you feeling more informed about Direct Payment management.

By joining, you can:

- Speak directly with members of our team
- Gain practical guidance on Direct Payment management
- Connect with other Direct Payment holders and representatives
- Discover ways to make the process of managing your Direct Payments simpler

There is no obligation to share — you are very welcome to simply listen in and pick up useful guidance.

Our team enjoys meeting you, learning from your experiences, and offering support to help you feel more confident in managing your Direct Payments.

Watch the webinars here →

Skills for Care - Support for Individual Employers and Personal Assistants (PA's)



Skills for Care webinar: Preparation for better conversations for Personal Assistants and Individual Employers

Good communication in the work place is vital. This webinar is designed for both Personal Assistants and individual employers to help everyday conversations feel clearer and more confident. It offers simple tips on how to plan, structure, and listen well, so that discussions become easier, more meaningful, and more effective for everyone involved.

Skills for Care webinar: Understanding your responsibilities as an employer of Personal Assistants (PA's)

Being an employer of Personal Assistants comes with important responsibilities. At Purple Direct Payment Support Service, our Employment Advice and Guidance team is here to help — and the Skills for Care webinar offers additional support with examples of good practice. The webinar provides a clear overview of what the role of an employer involves, guidance on where to find further resources, and a questions and answers section towards the end.

These are free pre-recorded webinars that can be watched in your own time at your convenience.

Interviewing a Personal Assistant

When deciding who to interview, start by checking which applicants meet your Job Description (what the job involves) and Person Specification (the qualities and skills you're looking for).

A good Personal Assistant is more than someone who can complete tasks – they should be someone you feel comfortable with, who listens, respects your boundaries, and can be trusted to support you in the way that works best for you.

You can decide which skills are essential based on your own needs and preferences.

Here are some examples of skills to consider when selecting a Personal Assistant. It is helpful to include a mix of “Soft Skills” and “Hard Skills”.

Soft Skills – Examples:

Personal qualities and ways of interacting with others that support with effectively offering care.

- Empathy – understanding and being sensitive to your needs.
- Communication – being able to listen, explain, and share information clearly with you, or a Representative in the way that is most helpful.
- Patience – remaining calm in challenging situations.
- Problem-Solving – being resourceful and able to deal with any issues as they arise.

Hard Skills – Examples:

Specific, teachable abilities and knowledge useful to perform caregiving tasks.

- First Aid Certification – confidence in responding to minor injuries or emergencies.
- Healthcare Knowledge – understanding of specific conditions, medications or treatments (if relevant to your care).
- Physical Assistance Techniques – being able to support safe moving and handling.
- Record Keeping – accurately keeping notes or care records.

Professional or general life experience that will support with the role

A clearly expressed ambition to care and improve the lives of others

The individual is available for the required times of work listed

Interviewing a Personal Assistant

Not every candidate will have worked as a Personal Assistant before, but that does not mean they lack ability. Look for experiences from other roles or life situations that show relevant skills.

For example:



Volunteering

demonstrates a genuine enjoyment of supporting others and contributing to community activities.



Internships or further study

shows commitment to learning, initiative, and willingness to gain new knowledge and skills.



Personal - Care experience

often shows strong organisation, empathy, patience, and the ability to manage responsibilities.



Customer service roles

highlight communication skills, problem-solving, and experience working with a wide variety of people.



Contacting Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)

If you are experiencing difficulties recruiting a Personal Assistant and would like to explore other ways of meeting your social care needs then we recommend contacting Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) directly on **0300 123 4042** to discuss your circumstances and explore the options available.

Each person is assessed on an individual basis, taking into account your specific, eligible social care needs.