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## The Use of Personal Budgets for Employment Support

May 2014

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A dark blue sphere with a white highlight on its upper left side, containing the word 'employment' in white, lowercase, sans-serif font. The sphere is centered between two large, semi-circular shapes: a dark blue one on the left and a light purple one on the right.

employment



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- In Control (<http://www.in-control.org.uk/>)
- Northamptonshire County Council (<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/>)
- Think Local Act Personal (<http://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/>)
- Wolverhampton City Council (<http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/>)

Whilst the funding organisations were kept up-to-date with the progress of the research, none were involved in the analysis or design of the research, in order to help ensure the independence of the research from any perception of influence from funding bodies.



## PART 1: FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH

### 1. Background

In March 2014 the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) published research<sup>1</sup> into employment support for disabled people, focusing particularly on people with learning disabilities or mental health conditions. The research covered Local Authority- and NHS-funded employment support in England.

As part of the research, information was sought about the use of adult social care Personal Budgets<sup>2</sup> (PBs) to purchase employment support.

Two key findings emerged:

- Only 28% of local authorities knew that people were using PBs to help them gain or retain paid work; 17% of authorities knew people weren't using PBs and the remainder didn't know or didn't respond.
- Of those who knew PBs were being used for employment support, 44% had no information about how people were actually using their budget and only one in eight (12%) said they knew how people's PBs were being used for employment support.

A 2013 national survey of 2,022 PB holders found that 82% of people with learning disabilities, 86% of people with mental health problems and 88% of people with physical impairments said that their PB made no difference to getting or keeping a job<sup>3</sup>. Together this evidence suggests a risk that the introduction of PBs in adult social care is not paying attention to, or giving priority to supporting people to gain or retain paid work.

If this is the case, despite paid work repeatedly being identified by disabled people as being a priority for them, as well as more generally a policy priority for national and local government, the move to PBs may result in a reduction, rather than increase, in people achieving the desired outcome of paid work.

Given the significant policy and delivery implications of this, NDTi has undertaken a short study to understand this issue further and, as a result, help to promote a debate about how PBs can be a way of supporting people to enter or remain in the world of paid work. Whilst this work has focused on the policy and delivery context in England, we believe that the findings will have relevance to other parts of the UK.

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<sup>1</sup> NDTi (2014), The Cost Effectiveness of Employment Support for People with Disabilities: <http://www.ndti.org.uk/major-projects/current/employment-support-for-disabled-people1/>

<sup>2</sup> Please note: throughout this report we use "Personal Budgets" to specifically mean Personal Budgets available through adult social care only

<sup>3</sup> Hatton, C., Waters, J. (2013), The Second POET survey of Personal Budgets holders and Carers 2013, London: Think Local Act Personal

## 1.1. The research questions

The research explores two questions:

1. To what extent are people using PBs to purchase support into paid work?
2. What factors encourage and discourage the use of PBs to help people gain or retain a job?

As such, it aims to provide significant added benefit to the social care and employment field by:

- Providing, for the first time, robust evidence on the extent to which Personal Budgets are being used to gain access to paid work
- Providing evidence on the processes through which people are using Personal Budgets for this purpose and thus develop learning and advice on how to do this more successfully
- Influencing English national policy in relation to the use of Personal Budgets to help people gain and retain work.

## 1.2. About this report

This report draws together data and information from three key sources:

1. Data from commissioners obtained through NDTi's original employment support study
2. Data collected through a specific provider survey regarding the use of adult social care Personal Budgets
3. Site visits and interviews with a sample of adult social care Personal Budget users, their families, the employment support providers, local commissioners and social care staff who have worked with personal budget holders.

First, we set the context within which employment support operates at both a national and a local level. Second, we describe how we went about this work and the methods adopted. Third, we share findings about the extent to which adult social care PBs are being used for employment support, by whom and the type of support they are being used to purchase. Fourth, we discuss what factors prevent or encourage the use of Personal Budgets for employment support. Finally, we make recommendations for the future based on what we have found.

## 1.3. Limits of this research

We believe this is the first piece of research dedicated to the question of the use of adult social care Personal Budgets for employment support.

We have clearly detailed in Section 3 the methods used and samples achieved through this research. All data and conclusions presented should be interpreted within the context of these

methods and sample size. We do not necessarily consider the results to be representative of the whole picture of the use of PBs for employment support. The findings and conclusions should be seen in the context of the small numbers of people and organisations that we were able to study and visit.

However, as that small number is a direct consequence of the limited use of Personal Budgets for employment support, we nonetheless think the results found present important, useful and reflective information to inform debate on the subject and to promote discussion on considering what should be done next on this topic.

Though this report focuses on Personal Budgets in adult social care, the advent of Personal Health Budgets suggests these findings and our recommendations should be of interest to the NHS as well as to colleagues in social care.



## 2. Policy context

### 2.1. Employment rates for disabled people

Increasing the numbers of disabled people in paid work, including people who have a learning disability and/or mental health problem, has been a policy priority for successive Governments<sup>4</sup>, most recently through the Disability and Health Employment Strategy (2013)<sup>5</sup>.

Disability Rights UK provides a detailed picture of the current employment picture facing disabled people in the UK<sup>6</sup>, summarised below.

Progress has been made over the last 20 years in reducing the gap between the employment rate of disabled and non-disabled people. Recent statistics for England show that 48.9% of disabled people are in employment compared to 78.0% of non-disabled people - an employment gap of 29.1%<sup>7</sup>. The employment gap in 2002 was 36.2%<sup>8</sup>.

Beneath these average rates are significant variations. For example, people with physical or sensory impairments typically have employment rates of between 47%-57%<sup>9</sup>. Only 6.9% of people with learning disabilities are in paid employment<sup>10</sup> and 7.2% of people with mental health problems on the Care Programme Approach are in employment<sup>11</sup>.

Disabled people's age also affects their employment chances. The employment rate of disabled people aged over 50, which is 41.0%, has increased at a faster rate than for non-disabled people<sup>12</sup>. Yet younger disabled people have seen their chances of employment decrease since 2001: their employment rate has reduced from 46.0% in 2001 to 36.0% in 2012<sup>13</sup>. Disabled young people aged 16-17 and aged 18-24 are far more likely not to be in

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<sup>4</sup> For example: Department of Health (2001), Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century, Department of Health (2009), Valuing People Now: A New Three-Year Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities, and HM Government (2009), Work, Recovery & Inclusion: Employment support for people in contact with secondary mental health services

<sup>5</sup> DWP (2013), Disability and Health Employment Strategy: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-disability-and-health-employment-strategy-the-discussion-so-far>

<sup>6</sup> Disability Rights UK (2013), Taking Control of Disability Employment Support

<sup>7</sup> Office for Disability Issues, Disability Equality Indicator B1: <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/disability-statistics-and-research/disability-equality-indicators.php>

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Office for Disability Issues, Disability Equality Indicator B2: <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/disability-statistics-and-research/disability-equality-indicators.php>

<sup>10</sup> Christie, A., Baines, S., Glover, C. and Hatton, C. (2013), Learning Disability Partnership Board Progress Reports, 2011/12. Improving Health and Lives Learning Disabilities Observatory

<sup>11</sup> HSCIC (October 2013), Monthly Mental Health Minimum Data Set (MHMDS) – October 2013

<sup>12</sup> Labour Force Survey Q2 2012, Appendix Table 40.2

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

employment, education or training (42.1% and 14.6% respectively) than non-disabled people (18.6% and 8.0% respectively)<sup>14</sup>.

The type of work and pay received by disabled people is also worse than for non-disabled people. There are fewer disabled people in higher levels of employment (49.4%) compared to non-disabled people (55.5%), and disabled people receive less hourly mean pay (£12.15 per hour) than non-disabled people (£13.25 per hour)<sup>15</sup>.

The Social Market Foundation showed in 2007 that the inability to bridge the employment gap between disabled and non-disabled people is affecting Britain's economic growth. It estimated that 'improving the skills of disabled people to world leading levels by 2020 would give a boost equivalent to 18 extra months of growth over 30 years, some £35 billion.'<sup>16</sup>

## 2.2. National government policy and practice

At a national level, government has established a number of programmes to support disabled people into employment, using a mixture of mandatory and non-mandatory approaches. These include the Work Programme and Work Choice.

For the Work Programme, Disability Rights UK notes that government figures show only 5.3% of new Employment and Support Allowance claimants had secured employment against a performance target of 16.5%<sup>17</sup>.

The Work Choice programme is focused specifically on disabled people whose needs cannot be met through other work programmes such as Access to Work or workplace adjustments. It has secured job outcomes for 32.7% of people who have been referred<sup>18</sup> (against a target of 55%). Again, Disability Rights UK notes, for example, that since 2011/12 Work Choice has supported on average, only 58 people with serious mental health problems per year to secure a job outcome.

## 2.3. Local government policy and practice

At a local level, both local authorities and NHS organisations commission supported employment services.

Recent research has shown that spending at a local level on employment support for disabled people decreased in 2012/13 after a period of sustained growth<sup>19</sup>. In total, 53% of local commissioners either spent the same (a real-terms cut) or decreased the amount spent on supported employment.

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<sup>14</sup> Labour Force Survey Q2 2012, Appendix Table 39.2

<sup>15</sup> Disability Rights UK (2013), Taking Control of Disability Employment Support

<sup>16</sup> SMF (2007), Disability, Skills and Work – Raising our Ambition

<sup>17</sup> DWP (July 2013), Statistical Summary of Work Programme Official Statistics

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/210226/work-programme-stats-summary-june-2013\\_v2\\_020713.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210226/work-programme-stats-summary-june-2013_v2_020713.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> DWP (2014), Work Choice starts and referrals – February 2014:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/work-choice-official-statistics-february-2014>

<sup>19</sup> NDTi (2014), The cost effectiveness of employment support for people with disabilities: <http://www.ndti.org.uk/major-projects/current/employment-support-for-disabled-people/>

Furthermore, only around one-third of funding invested in employment support is spent on evidence-based models. The rest is being spent on employment support service models for which there are little or no evidence that they achieve real job outcomes<sup>20</sup>. In those areas where the approach is evidence-based, the strategic and commissioning context and activity is such that the potential for good outcomes is being undermined.

The overall job outcome rate for locally commissioned supported employment services was found to be 38% at an average cost of approximately £8,000 per job outcome<sup>21</sup>. It is important to be aware of the caveats to these data<sup>22</sup> and to note that these averages hide considerable ranges. For example, the cost per job outcome ranged from between £208 to £57,640. Services that followed evidence-based models, however, were better value for money and more predictable: the job outcome rate was 43% at an average cost of approximately £2,800 (range: £870 to £4,900).

Furthermore, there appeared to be no relationship between the complexity of disability of those supported by the employment service and either the cost to support them or the cost of the job outcome achieved<sup>23</sup>. Similarly, there was no strong indication that it costs more to secure a new job than retain an existing job. Whilst evidence-based sites achieved good outcomes by focusing equally on retention and new jobs, non-evidence based sites that are achieving higher job outcome rates are generally doing so by focusing more on retention.

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> NDTi (2014), Insight: Employment support for disabled people: the relationship between investment and outcomes: [http://www.ndti.org.uk/uploads/files/Insights\\_20\\_Employment\\_support.pdf](http://www.ndti.org.uk/uploads/files/Insights_20_Employment_support.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> This finding only related to people with learning disabilities, as a reliable proxy indicator for complexity of disability/need could not be identified for people with mental health problems.



## 3. Methods

A mixed methods approach was adopted for this research in three phases, which we describe below.

### 3.1. Phase One: Online survey

For the first phase of the research we conducted an online survey which was distributed to providers of employment support. The main aims of the survey were to find out:

- The extent to which adult social care Personal Budgets (PBs) are being used for employment support through employment support providers
- Employment support providers' perceptions of the factors which encourage or discourage the use of PBs for employment support
- Further detail about the use of PBs including the type of support purchased, the income received, costing and payment mechanisms and the perceived outcomes of using PBs as a way to fund employment support.

The survey was distributed between November and December 2013 to providers of employment support through a number of channels. An email with a link to the survey was sent to members of the British Association for Supported Employment (BASE)<sup>24</sup>, a link to the survey was posted on the NDTi website, Twitter and Facebook page, and emails were sent to known contacts involved in employment support. Respondents to the previous research conducted by NDTi who had identified that PBs were being used for employment support were asked to forward the survey to their provider agencies.

The survey included 15 questions, with an additional 10 questions which were asked of those organisations who responded to say that they have received funding through PBs. A description of adult social care Personal Budgets was included in the introduction to the survey to ensure respondents were clear about the purpose of the survey and the type of Personal Budget the research refers to. The questions were primarily closed questions with some free text questions focusing on what factors encourage or discourage the use of PBs for employment support.

The survey questions are included in Appendix 1.

#### 3.1.1. Survey response

A total of 107 responses were received of which 58 were completed sufficiently to be used to answer the research questions.

Thirty six responses (62%) were from voluntary or community sector organisations, 16 responses (28%) were Local Authority providers, one was an NHS Trust, one was central

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<sup>24</sup> <http://base-uk.org/>

government, one was a private for-profit organisation and three were either from another type of organisation, or the organisation type was not given.

Responding organisations ranged in size in terms of the number of people they support, from 18 organisations (31%) that provide employment support to less than 100 people and five (9%) providing employment support to 1000 people or more in 2012/13.

Respondents were asked to provide an estimate of what proportion of the people they provided employment support for had learning disabilities, mental health problems, autism or physical or sensory impairments. Thirty one organisations (53%) reported that the majority of people using their service have a learning disability and 15 organisations (26%) reported that the majority of people using their service have a mental health problem.

In terms of the type of employment support provided by respondents, 86% provided individualised job support, 81% provided work preparation, 40% provided self employment support, 17% provided support through social firms, and 10% provided support through sheltered or industrial workshops.

We do not know whether respondents to the survey were representative of employment support providers. Comparing the organisations to those included in NDTi's previous research on employment support<sup>25</sup>, there was no statistically significant difference in terms of the mean number of people supported per organisation. Because the email message which was distributed to employment support providers introducing the survey referred to the use of PBs for employment support, providers who have received funding through PBs may have been more inclined to respond. Therefore it is possible that organisations who receive PB funding are overrepresented among the respondents.

### 3.2. Phase Two: Qualitative fieldwork

Through the responses from the survey, five sites where some use of PBs for employment support was identified were selected for more in depth qualitative fieldwork. The aims of this phase of the research were to find out:

- The processes and mechanisms involved for providers in accepting PB funding for employment support, including the costs, marketing and outcomes
- What factors encourage or discourage the use of PBs for employment support
- How PB holders make the decision to use their PBs for employment support – including information, support and advice they receive.

Fieldwork sites were initially intended to be selected based on identifying areas in the country where there appeared to be significant use of PBs for employment support, for example where we had received responses from several organisations in one area. Due to the minimal use of PBs for employment support that the survey revealed, it was difficult to identify fieldwork sites based on area, therefore sites were primarily based on individual organisations. The fieldwork sites were identified through the survey and selected from organisations who had indicated that they had received some funding through PBs, had more than one or two people using PBs and had indicated that they would be prepared to take part in further research.

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<sup>25</sup> *Op. cit.*

We experienced some difficulties in accessing organisations to carry out this stage of the research for a number of reasons. Firstly, the number of organisations both suitable for fieldwork and who indicated willingness to take part in the next stage was small. Secondly, two of the organisations we initially contacted declined to take part due to competing priorities for their time. Four organisations identified through the survey agreed to take part, as well as a further two organisations which had not responded to the survey but about which we were informed through other sources. In total we visited five sites, which included six employment support providers. Two sites were located in the South West, one was in the South East and two were in the Midlands.

At each site we aimed to interview:

- Individuals with direct experience of using a PB for employment outcomes
- Family members or carers of an individual with direct experience of using a PB for employment outcomes
- The manager (or equivalent) of the employment support provider organisation
- An employment support worker (or equivalent) who has had direct experience of supporting someone to use a PB for employment outcomes
- A commissioner of the employment support service(s)
- A care manager / social worker / team manager who has had direct experience of supporting someone to use a PB for employment outcomes
- A representative from a third party organisation who helps support people to use PBs, e.g. brokerage organisation or a User-Led Organisation.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to interview each of these for each site. However, in total we spoke with 32 people as follows:

- 6 people who had used Personal Budgets for employment support
- 6 family members of people who had used PBs for employment support
- 7 employment support providers
- 3 employment support workers / job coaches
- 5 commissioners
- 4 care managers / social workers
- 1 third party support organisation.

Potential respondents were given information sheets detailing the purpose of the research, why they had been asked to participate and making it clear that participation was voluntary and responses would be confidential and anonymous. Interviews were asked to sign a consent form confirm that they agreed to participate. Interview topic guides are included in Appendix 2.

### 3.3. Phase Three: Use of Personal Budgets beyond employment support providers

Individuals can use their PBs to help them gain or retain a job without accessing the support of a recognised employment support provider. A third phase of this research which ran alongside the survey and fieldwork was to seek to identify some examples of how people are using PBs for employment support in alternative ways.

Rather than making an attempt to quantify the extent to which PBs are being used outside of employment support services we aimed to discover examples of how it was happening. We contacted 36 User Led Organisations (ULOs), as a main source of support to people using PBs, to ask them whether they had supported anyone to use their adult social care PBs to support them gain or retain a job other than through an employment support service. We received a response from seven ULOs but none of these had supported anyone using a PB for employment support.

We made contact with people involved in four Right to Control (RtC) pilot areas to discuss the use of adult social care budgets for employment support in RtC areas. However, all of these reported that while RtC pooled budgets had been used innovatively for employment support<sup>26</sup>, none of these that they were aware of included adult social care PBs.

We were also aware anecdotally that a number of families were using PBs to develop and access working opportunities for their young son or daughter without using the help of employment support providers. It was not possible in the resources available to determine how prevalent this is, but instead we aimed to identify some examples of where this was happening and how. Through existing contacts, and through contacts we made through the research, we conducted three interviews with individuals using a PB in alternative ways: one with a PB holder and two with parents of PB holders. In addition we spoke to one person who had attempted to set up a social enterprise funded by PBs which had not been successful, and another person from an organisation who had worked with people who had used their PBs to set up micro-enterprises.

### 3.4. Research ethics

The research was approved by NDTi's research ethics approval process, which is guided by the Social Research Association's ethical guidelines.

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<sup>26</sup> See, for example, "Right to Choose: Right to Control delivers better employment outcomes for disabled people", Breakthrough UK: <http://www.breakthrough-uk.co.uk/OurServices/policy/blog/choice>



## 4. The extent to which Personal Budgets are being used, by who and for what

In this section<sup>27</sup> we present and discuss the results of the survey about the extent to which adult social care Personal Budgets (PBs) are being used for employment support. We also present information on who is using PBs in this way and what they are being used for.

### 4.1. The extent to which Personal Budgets are being used for employment support

A key purpose of the research was to get further information about the extent to which adult social care PBs are being used for employment support, which we discuss below.

#### 4.1.1. Number of employment support providers receiving funding through Personal Budgets

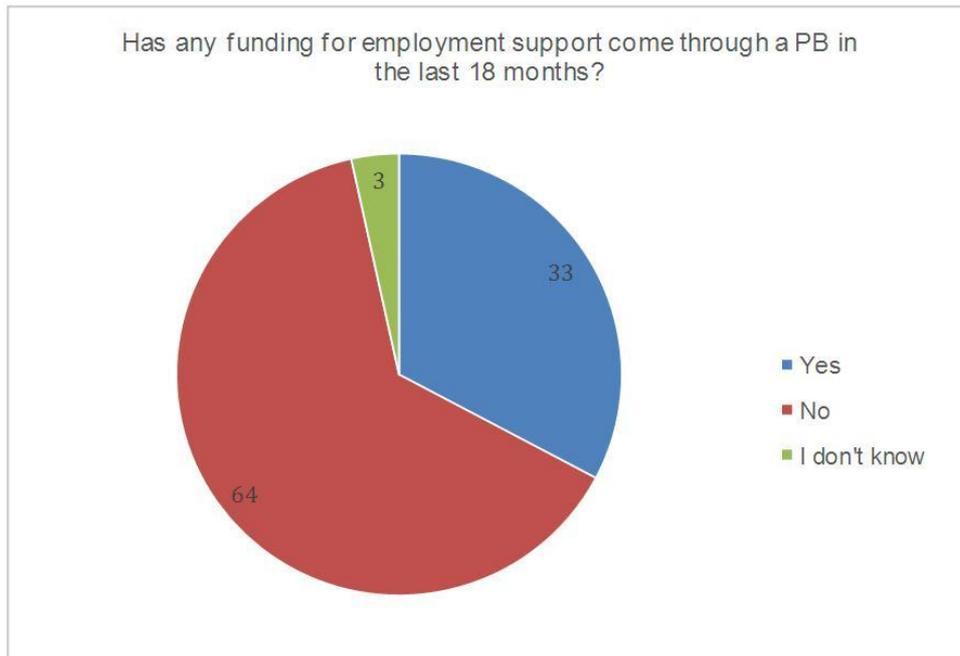
Survey respondents were asked whether any of the funding for their supported employment service came through a PB in the last 18 months. Thirty seven of the organisations (64%) reported that they had not received funding through a PB in the last 18 months. Nineteen of the organisations (33%) reported that they had received funding through a PB in the last 18 months. Two organisations (3%) reported that they did not know.

The survey results therefore suggest that PBs are being used to purchase employment support in only around a third of employment support providers. . As highlighted above, this is based on a relatively small number of responses and as organisations that receive PB funding may be more inclined to respond to the survey, we believe that this is more likely to be an overestimate than an underestimate.

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<sup>27</sup> This section includes survey returns from four providers in Scotland and two providers in Wales. Responses from these organisation are typical of all responses we received. Our fieldwork was based in England only.

**Figure 1: Proportion of employment support providers who have received funding via PBs in the last 18 months**



The low level of use of PBs for employment support revealed in the survey was also confirmed in our contact with ULOs and RtC pilot areas. None of the seven people we contacted in ULOs were aware of any examples of PBs being used for employment support, and none of the people involved in the four RtC areas that we contacted were aware of any examples of adult social care PBs being used for employment support<sup>28</sup>.

#### **4.1.2. Number of people using Personal Budgets to purchase employment support**

As well as there being few organisations who receive any PB funding, where it is happening, the numbers of individuals using PBs to purchase employment support in each organisation is low. Respondents were asked to report the number of people who used PBs to purchase employment support from their organisation in 2012/13, and since April 2013. Seventeen of the 19 organisations provided information about 2012/13 and 14 provided information since April 2013. The results are summarised in the table below.

<sup>28</sup> There are examples, however, of where pooled RtC budgets are being used innovatively for employment-related outcomes. See RtC evaluation findings here: <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/odi-projects/right-to-control-trailblazers/research-and-statistics.php>

**Table 1: Number of people using PBs to purchase employment support**

	<b>2012/13 (N=17)</b>	<b>Since April 2013 (N=14)</b>
<b>Sum across all organisations</b>	104	131
<b>Range</b>	0 to 30	1 to 49
<b>Mean</b>	6.1	9.4
<b>Median</b>	3	3
<b>Number of organisations with &gt;10</b>	3	3

In 2012/13 across all 17 organisations, a total of 104 individuals purchased employment support with a PB, with a mean of 6.1. As the mean is affected by a very small minority of organisations with a larger number of people using PBs, the median of 3 individuals provides a better reflection of the average number of PB users per organisation. Since April 2013 a total of 131 individuals purchased employment support with a PB and again, the median average was three. Just three organisations in 2012/13 and since April 2013 had more than 10 people using PBs to purchase employment support. These figures emphasise that as well the use of PBs for employment support happening in just a minority of organisations, where it is happening, the numbers are very low.

Of the 14 organisations that provided information about the numbers using PBs in both years, five reported the same number in each year, nine reported an increase from 2012/13 to April 2013, and none reported a decrease. There thus may be a slow growth in numbers, albeit from a very low base.

Overall we can conclude that the findings indicated in the SSCR-funded employment support research are confirmed and there is limited use of PBs being used to support disabled people to people gain or retain a job.

#### **4.1.3. Current and future demand for employment support via a Personal Budget**

We were interested in finding out how employment support providers were experience demand from PB holders for their support.

While 26% of the 58 responding organisations reported an increase in demand, 17% reported no change in demand and 2% reported a decrease in demand. What is particularly interesting is that 25 of the organisations (43%) reported that they had never been asked to provide employment support through a PB. This suggests that demand from PB holders is not a significant factor driving the use of PBs for employment support.

## 4.2. Income received by organisations through PBs

Information from the survey about the income organisations received through PBs was relatively limited with seven of the 19 organisations that did receive PB funding either not answering the question or stating that they did not know. Of the 12 organisations that did provide information there was a wide range of income reported, with five organisations receiving less than £5,000 income from PBs in 2012/13 and one organisation receiving between £100,000 and £200,000.

**Table 2: Income received via PBs**

	<b>Income received from PBs 2012/13 (N)</b>	<b>Income received from PBs 2012/13 (%)</b>
<b>None</b>	2	11
<b>Less than £5,000</b>	5	26
<b>£5,000 to £9,999</b>	1	5
<b>£10,000 to £24,999</b>	2	11
<b>£25,000 to £49,999</b>	1	5
<b>£100,000 to £200,000</b>	1	5
<b>Not given</b>	4	21
<b>Don't know</b>	3	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>

Providers were asked how they costed employment support for people using PBs in their organisation. Nine providers reported that they have an hourly rate and people are charged dependent on the number of hours of support they receive, four providers reported that the cost is worked out for each individual dependent on the support they require, and one provider reported that they have a set rate per person.

The fieldwork revealed some examples of these different ways of costing employment support. One organisation in the Midlands has a structured process of employment support which includes work preparation, work placement, job search support and in-work support. They have calculated the cost of the full process and worked out a set monthly cost for their support. Another organisation in the Midlands offers both one to one support and group support and the cost is worked out for each individual based on how many hours of each type of support is needed per week.

PBs can be taken as Direct Payments (where money is transferred directly to the individual or family to spend) or the council can manage the PB on behalf of the individual. The survey revealed that both forms of payment are being used to purchase employment support: seven organisations reported that they receive PB payments mainly through Direct Payments, three organisations reported that the PBs are mainly council managed and six organisations reported that the PBs are both council managed and Direct Payments. The fieldwork revealed similar results with some organisations receiving Direct Payments only – using a variety of

different payment mechanisms, including pre-payment cards – and other receiving a combination of Direct Payments and payments directly from the Council.

Eight of the organisations provided sufficient information about the numbers of people using PBs in 2012/13 and the income received from PBs in 2012/13 to calculate an estimated income per PB user. The lowest income received was £500 per PB user (reported by two organisations). The largest income received was £5,333 per PB user, and the mean income received per PB user was £2,744<sup>29</sup>. Half of the 16 organisations that responded to the question about whether they have factored in income from PBs into their 2014/15 have factored PB income in and half have not.

Findings from the fieldwork revealed mixed views towards the risks involved with PB income as a source of funding. One organisation has been set up and modelled around PB income being their primary source of funding. The manager of this organisation feels that an income stream which is attached to the individual is more dispersed and less risky than block contracts or grants.

“It is the only way for us. It is where we want to be – we only accept individual funding arrangements. We don’t want to go back to a contract - we feel more secure as the funding is spread across our members and we don’t have just one customer any more” – Provider

However, another organisation operating in the same area held the opposite view. Although they had had several individuals using PBs over the last few years they had also experienced gaps with no PB income. As a result PB income was seen as risky and not reliable enough to factor into their business plan for the coming year:

“We don’t include PB income in our business plan, we’re very cautious about it, we only put income on the business plan that we can be confident about – like Work Choice and Transitions – and we can’t be confident about PB income” – Provider

### **4.3. Where Personal Budgets are being used and by who**

This section looks at what type of organisation PBs are being used in and what type of employment support is being purchased.

#### **4.3.1. Type of employment support organisation**

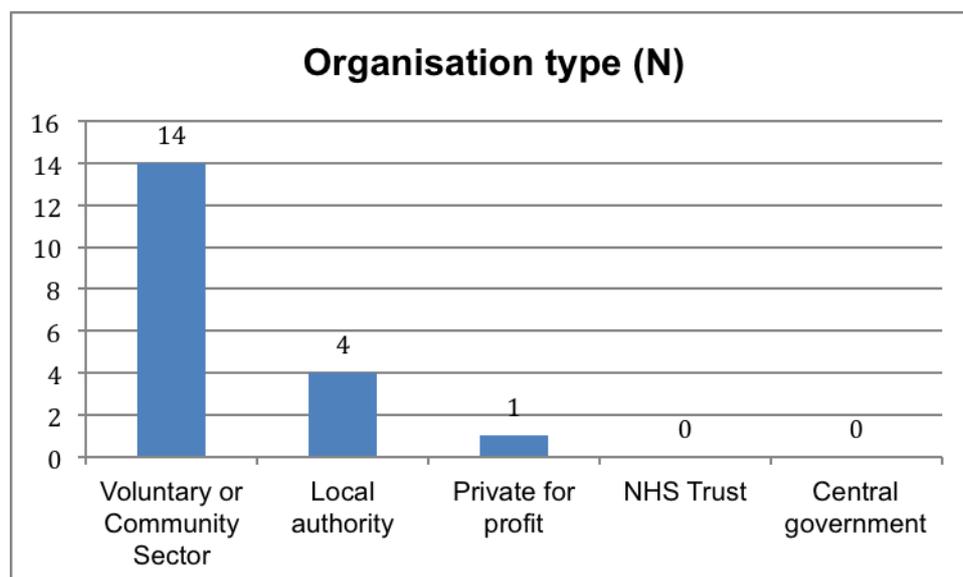
The survey responses suggest that PBs are primarily being used to purchase employment support through voluntary and community sector organisations.

Of the 19 organisations which stated that they have received some funding through a PB in the last 18 months, 14 were voluntary and community sector organisations, four were Local Authority providers and one was a private for-profit organisation.

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<sup>29</sup> It is interesting to note that this figure is very close to the average costs of securing a job outcome in the best practice sites identified through NDTi’s research - £2,818. See NDTi (2014).

**Figure 2: Type of employment support organisation receiving PB funding**



#### 4.3.2. Size of employment support organisation

As illustrated in the table below it appears that PBs are primarily being used for employment support in organisations which provide employment support to smaller numbers of people. Seven of the 19 organisations provided employment support for less than 100 people and five of the organisations provided employment support for between 100 and 299 people. However, PBs are also being used in very large organisations – three of the organisations provided employment support for 1000 people.

**Table 3: Size of employment support provider receiving PB funding**

	<b>Numbers employment support provided for in organisations using PBs (N)</b>	<b>Numbers provided employment support for in organisations using PBs (%)</b>
<b>Less than 100</b>	7	37
<b>100-299</b>	5	26
<b>300-499</b>	1	5
<b>500-999</b>	0	0
<b>1000 or more</b>	3	16
<b>Don't know</b>	1	5
<b>Not given</b>	2	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>

#### 4.3.3. Who uses Personal Budgets for employment support

Respondents were asked to provide an estimate of what proportion of the people using PBs in their organisation had learning disabilities, mental health problems, autism or physical or sensory impairments.

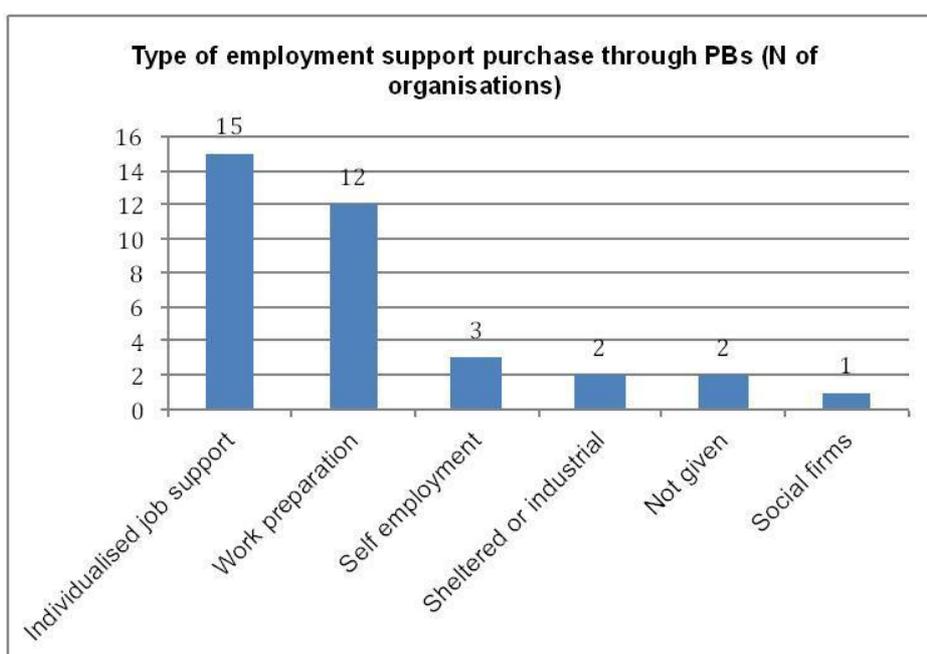
Of the 14 organisations that responded (one did not know and four did not answer) 11 organisations reported that the majority of people using PBs in their organisation had a learning disability, two organisations reported that the majority of people using PBs in their organisation had a mental health problem, and one organisation reported equal numbers of people with a learning disability and autism.

Because the numbers are small, it is difficult to draw any wider conclusion about how representative this picture of PB use by impairment group might be.

#### 4.3.4. Employment support type purchased through Personal Budgets

The survey suggests that PBs are primarily being used for individualised job support and work preparation. 15 of the 19 organisations reported that people are using PBs to purchase individualised job support and 12 organisations reported that people are using PBs to purchase work preparation support. Three organisations reported that people are using PBs to purchase self-employment support.

**Figure 3: Type of employment support purchased through PBs**



During the fieldwork we came across a number of different types of employment support individuals were using their PBs to purchase, including:

- The support of a job coach for work preparation
- Support around preparing for work – building confidence and accessing voluntary work
- The support of a job coach for individualised job support
- Support setting up and maintaining a small business
- Unpaid work experience in sheltered workshops.

In addition the interviews with PB holders and parents using PBs outside of employment support providers used PBs to purchase:

- Personal Assistant (PA) support in employment
- PA support in self employment
- The cost of courses and equipment to prepare for work.

#### **4.3.5. How support funded through PBs compares to support funded in other ways**

We were interested in respondent's views on how employment support provided through a PB compares to employment support funded in other ways. As asking for detailed data to enable us to compare job outcome rates was too onerous for a short survey, respondents were asked whether they thought people using PBs were more, less or just as likely to gain or retain a job than other people who their organisation supports.

Eight of the 17 organisations that provided a response thought that those using a PB for employment support were more likely to gain or retain a job than others. One provider commented:

“It fosters a closer working relationship with the person, and families.”

Eight respondents thought that those using a PB for employment support were just as likely to gain or retain a job as others. Comments included:

“We are offering the same support as on block contracts.”

“It is hard to say as individuals who receive a Personal Budget get a tailored service but they have a low budget due to their ability and thus cannot purchase many hours of support.”

One respondent thought that those using a PB for employment support were less likely to gain or retain a job than others. Unfortunately no further comments were provided by this respondent to explain the reasons for this and they did not give permission to contact them so we were unable to follow this up to explore the reasons.

The response from providers of employment support in the fieldwork was largely positive about the use of PBs as a form of funding compared to other forms of funding.

“We can work more flexibly according to need; we don't have to be accountable to a service spec – we can be more outcome focussed.”

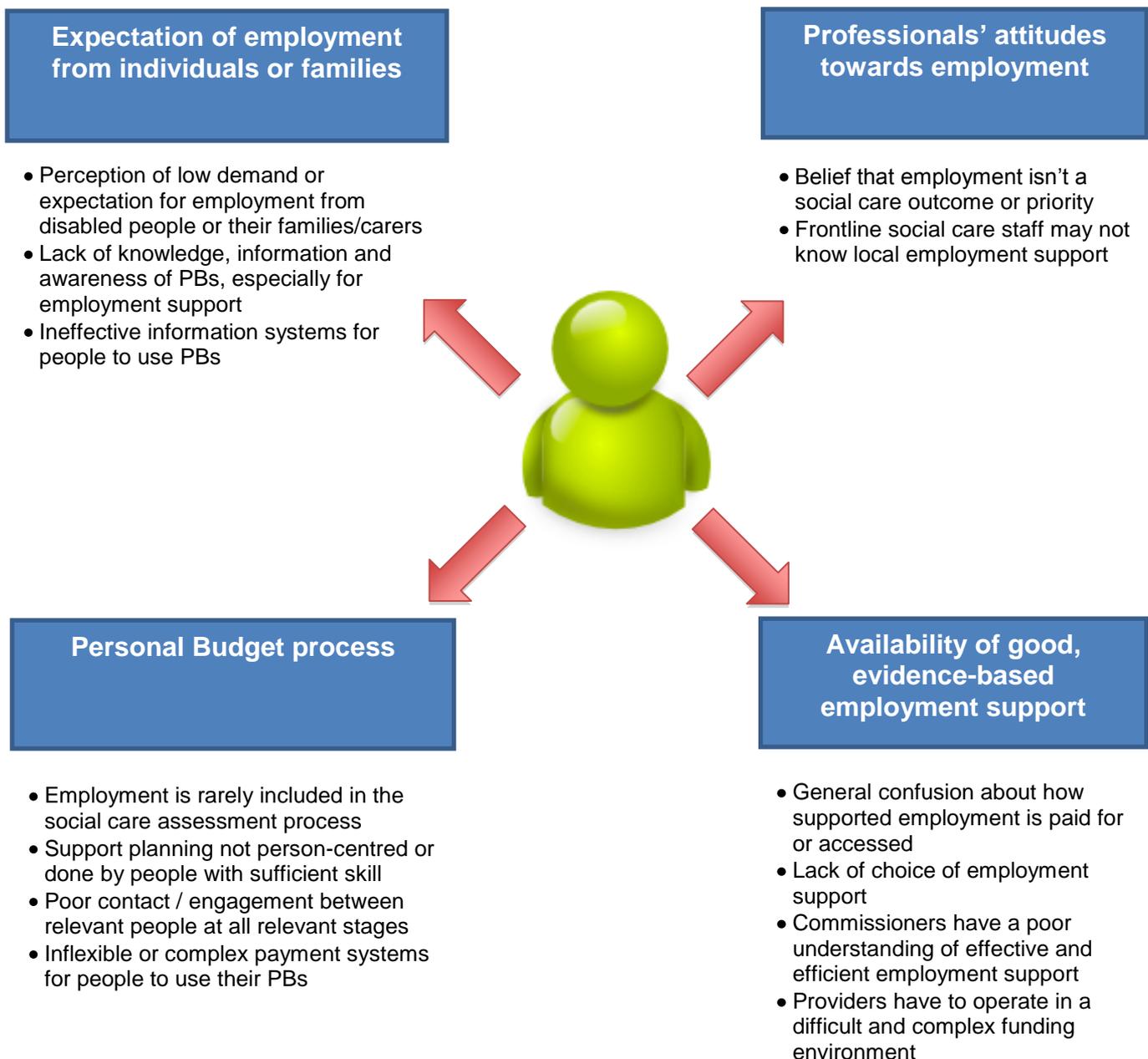
“It's better than Work Choice because Work Choice is time limited and then people have to work at least 16 hours a week. Funding through PBs is better because it's person centred – it can be longer term if people need it, and an outcome could be say four hours of work, and then maybe they can gradually build it up. For some people who have never worked, 16 hours isn't likely to start with, it can take a long time to get to that stage – PBs provide more flexibility for the individual.”



## 5. Factors that prevent or encourage greater use of Personal Budgets for employment support

In this section we identify and discuss the factors that prevent or encourage the use of adult social care Personal Budgets for employment support. These are summarised in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Personal Budgets for employment support: what are the barriers?



## 5.1. Demand from the individual and/or their family for employment

A clear finding in both our survey and fieldwork is a perception of **low demand or expectations** for employment from disabled people themselves or their families / carers.

“They [the person or their family] don’t always see employment as a realistic option” – Local Authority representative

“The person who should be at the centre of the planning may not have much of a say around their employment needs because they and their circle of support have no prior experience of this or believe this can become a reality” – VCS provider

“I think in some ways all of this has come too late for [my son]. He waited too long. He grew up thinking he couldn’t work – culturally he had no vision that he could work. I think that’s the same for a lot of people with learning disabilities. There needs to be a focus on employment as soon as people leave school, to change this belief” – Parent of a PB holder

Indeed, in the few cases we came across in the fieldwork of people using PBs for employment support, the presence of their aspiration for employment is a key element in securing and using the PB for employment outcomes. Our fieldwork suggests that everyone who had a PB for employment support had had employment as an ambition or aspiration for a long time. We did not identify them being used with and for people who were ambivalent about achieving paid work. This is especially the case for younger people who are in the transition from children’s social care services to adult services, and where the expectation of employment had been encouraged. For example, in one area someone who used a Personal Budget for employment support had been in regular contact with their employment support provider from the age of 16.

When people are found to be eligible for social care support, the amount of support they get is limited. As a result, **people have to make a choice about where and how to spend their Personal Budget**. Again, the surrounding culture means there is often a preference expressed for social and leisure activities rather than employment support:

“There is a whole culture of how people spend [their] time – if [they’re] offered horse riding or pot washing, many will choose the short-term fun without looking at the longer-term benefits [of work]” – Local Authority

This view is also reinforced by the difference in the costs of types of support available:

“You can buy social and leisure support for £7.50 an hour, however the majority of employment support costs £25 per hour. Thus people choose to have longer support sessions” – VCS provider

If processes are followed correctly then considerations of this type should not occur: if employment is identified as an outcome in a support plan, then the budget agreed to meet that outcome must be spent on that. However, as is outlined in Section 5.3, the processes do not work as they should.

There is a **general lack of knowledge, information and awareness of PBs**. As well as a lack of information about PBs in general (highlighted, for example, in the report of the

Personalisation Outcomes Evaluation Tool 2013<sup>30</sup>), there is a specific lack of awareness that PBs can be used for employment support<sup>31</sup>.

“I do not think the fact that Personal Budgets can be used towards employment support is very widely known. I think most people feel that Personal Budgets are to be used for personal support only” – VCS provider

It is felt that PB holders are not being made aware of the support that is available to make employment a realistic aspiration:

“Young people / adults are not being made aware of employment being a possibility or the support that is available in this area presently. The number of young people and adults we are working with definitely highlights that there is a high demand but that the options, opportunities and information about employment being an aspiration which is realistic for people with learning disabilities are not explored and appropriate support not accessed. The demand for this would be much higher if people were aware of it at an early stage and how to access it” – VCS provider

It is not atypical for it to be **thought by all groups that PBs cannot be used for employment support-related activity**:

“My understanding was that the Right to Control was the only pot of money that a person could [use to] buy in specialised employment support” – VCS representative

Indeed, there is a perception that only JobCentre Plus (JCP) / Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) should be “doing employment”:

“Surely supported employment should come via Work Choice or Access to Work and not an adult social care budget?” – VCS response

The general **information systems available for people to use Personal Budgets are not particularly effective**. In one fieldwork site, a support planner / broker was asked how they would support someone who had identified employment to look for such support:

“Signposting such as [employment provider], or others from council-approved day opportunities framework. Go to [our] online directory and search for “employment”” – Local Authority

Such a search generates a list of 58 results, only 17 of which are directly related to training and employment. The remaining results relate to items such as day care, housing support or “things to do”.

Amongst people looking for employment support and their families, there remain many **worries about the relationship of employment and benefits**. Many people continue to be concerned that gaining employment will affect their benefits status, especially in the current context of welfare reforms.

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<sup>30</sup> Hatton & Waters (2013), The Second POET survey of Personal Budgets holders and Carers 2013, London: Think Local Act Personal

<sup>31</sup> There is also occasionally a misunderstanding about what employment support is, and so questions as to whether PBs should be used to pay for it. Some people think “employment support” is the same as people making a financial contribution to go to work, which it isn’t. “Employment support” is the process of support to gain or retain employment, rather than actual work itself.

## 5.2. Professionals' attitudes towards employment

The lack of aspiration or expectation about employment, and the confusion about whether PBs can/can't be used for employment support, is supplemented by perceptions amongst care professionals that **support and care plans should focus on health and social care needs**.

There is evidence from our fieldwork that **social workers do not think of employment as a social care outcome**<sup>32</sup>. The focus of adult social care is on keeping people safe. Associated with this is a sense that people who are eligible for social care (people almost exclusively with "critical" or "substantial" needs) first should have their personal care and safeguarding needs addressed (and perhaps underpinned by an associated perception and/or prejudice that they "can't work").

"Personal Budgets are not adequate for supported employment if clients have multiple needs. The money will get used for their other needs first" – Social Worker

"When social workers have been asked for funding [for employment] it has, to date, always been refused, despite compelling arguments. We have also taken questions [about] individuals to service manager level and, due to budget constraints, these have always been refused" – Local Authority provider

Even when it is understood that PBs can be used for employment support, it is very typical for **employment support not to be considered a priority** – instead it is sometimes thought of as an "optional extra" for social care, especially at a time of funding cuts.

"People [who are eligible for social care] have complex difficulties, many of which need to be addressed before employment is a priority for them" – Local Authority response

Several sources highlighted their experiences of social workers and other Local Authority workers not promoting employment as a social care outcome:

"Brokers are not promoting employment as a viable option. Social workers who are often the broker, often do not realise the potential of that individual and so don't even consider a referral to supported employment" – VCS provider

"I just think employment is not on the agenda for people who work with people with learning disabilities" – Parent of PB holder

"[Social workers] don't seem particularly interested in supporting [my son] getting a job. You get the feeling that in a lot of cases it's self-perpetuating and that helping them get a job isn't part of their remit" – Parent of PB holder

As one Local Authority representative said during the fieldwork:

"Perhaps the Council doesn't proactively push employment?"

This lack of focus on employment as a social care outcome is reinforced by the ambivalent nature of current national policy and regulation – some policy is explicit about employment opportunities, whilst other policy has an adverse impact on both employment and

<sup>32</sup> This finding echoes conclusions found in the *Jobs First* evaluation. See Stevens, M. & Harris, J. (2013), *Jobs First Evaluation: Final Report*, London: Social Care Workforce Research Unit, King's College London.

organisations that can support it. This has a knock-on effect to local authorities, which in turn impacts on social workers and what they have to do on a day-to-day basis.

Compounding this sense of employment as a lower social care priority is the fact that **social workers may not know about employment support that is available locally**. One provider put the limited use of PBs for employment support down to the lack of care management teams' knowledge of employment provision.

The current pressure of social workers' large caseloads can also be a contributory factor: some social workers in our fieldwork suggested they were "too busy", rather than "unwilling", to consider employment support.

Whilst the lack of information and awareness exists both for service users and the VCS representatives, it is especially pertinent if the lack of awareness or engagement is through social workers because they are the gateway to Personal Budgets.

"There is a general sigh in the team that social workers have been asked to do [Personal Budgets]. It is seen by many as more paper pushing – seen as a fad by government. I personally don't think that but it is a response I hear and I know it has not had the best start with all the budget cuts" – Social Worker

A common theme to emerge from the fieldwork is that in the instances where PBs are being used for employment support, this has either been instigated by a demand from family members, or through promotion and marketing of employment support providers, and *not* through encouragement of the social workers.

"The social worker agreed to include employment on the support plan readily enough but that was because we pushed for it – they're not interested, nobody is interested, it's all come from us..." – Parent of PB holder

"We had to pursue it ourselves. There was no assigned social worker. We researched it. Her person centred plan was started but went missing. There is no consistency – we had to keep repeating everything when [our daughter] was in transition. There was not much discussion about work at school and there was no social worker at transition review nor a Connexions worker who knew anything about [our daughter]. We have had to do most of the planning" – Parent of PB holder

Providers can also be a good source of expectation. We heard several examples of where the provider undertook general promotional work around employment options:

"Worked with people ahead of adult social care – i.e. at college and before eligible – to help raise aspirations of employment and presumption of employment" – Provider

"I have done talks to social workers in the past. I use Mencap's local newsletter, talk to parent-carer groups at schools" – VCS provider

"We market our employment support services generally at parents evenings. We've tried to promote [employment support project] to social services, parents, carers and people involved with transitions" – VCS provider

Such work included promoting different options for accessing employment support, including dedicated marketing materials on using Personal Budgets for employment outcomes.

### 5.3. The Personal Budget process

The general picture of barriers to using Personal Budgets for employment support highlighted in Figure 4 is repeated at a practical level in the Personal Budget process: there is no focus on employment in assessment, *therefore* no resources are allocated to employment through the RAS, *therefore* there is no money to use in support planning for employment, and *therefore* people don't access employment support through a Personal Budget.

Below we discuss further some of the practical barriers the process of securing a Personal Budget creates, both generally and specifically for employment support.

**PBs are provided for only when someone is FACS eligible**, typically critical or substantial. This means that some people who could benefit from employment support are not receiving a PB to fund it:

“Sometimes we meet someone who's not getting social care support [and] we think they should be and could get it for employment support. We advise them to go to social services and then they get assessed and they're not critical or substantial so they don't get any help” – VCS provider

If people are not eligible then they would be referred to JobCentre Plus (JCP) and Work Choice. This view is reinforced by JCP themselves:

“Customers who may access Personal Budgets as a rule do not access JCP provision” – Central Government representative

Yet through JCP people with learning disabilities or mental health problems very often don't get the specialist support they need to gain employment, meaning they are falling through the gaps.

Even for those people who are eligible for social care support, **employment is rarely included in the assessment process**, which means it's not reflected in the Resource Allocation System (RAS). This means little or no money is allocated (even indicatively) for employment support for individuals. Similarly, it rarely features as a desired outcome.

People we spoke with during the fieldwork noted that effective support planning can be a way of overcoming this. However, they also noted occasions where:

- **Support planning is broadly not person-centered** and therefore employment is not reflected in or added to support plan
- Any **support planning or brokerage team, where they exist in the first place, is typically not sufficiently skilled in drawing out employment outcomes**, so either (a) doesn't include it, or (b) if it's there may not think creatively
- **There may be no dedicated support planning or brokerage support in the first place.**

**There is a lack of contact and engagement between relevant people at all relevant stages:** at assessment, planning and review stages and between users, their families, social workers, brokers and any panel processes with local employment providers. Providers highlighted that they very often didn't know what other support existed around the people they were working with, which made it difficult to have person-centred approach.

“There is less information exchange with social workers than there was so we don’t tend to know what stage the process is at. Last year we had someone whose Personal Budget had been approved but we didn’t get told... The panel that approves the Personal Budgets has a changing membership and they don’t always understand what we do. It is very bureaucratic and they can come back with silly questions that delay the process of approval” – Provider

“I’m not sure if there will be a review unless we ask for one. The reviews seem *ad hoc*: sometimes they’ve left it for more than a year, sometimes they do it really quickly, other times finance department ask for every little bit of paper. When they do an annual review it’s almost like a drive-by audit. Nobody has looked at the outcomes” – Parent of PB holder

“They are supposed to be reviewed annually. They have often stayed similar, with not much changing in terms of what the money is for... [My children] don’t have social workers at the moment – we had the review, then once the support plan was in place and the budget agreed we got a letter saying they no longer have an allocated social worker. I suppose that next time the reviews are due they’ll get another social worker” – Parent of PB holders

Sometimes care reviews were instigated by providers rather than social workers:

“I get invited to some reviews if the person has a personal budget but it is mainly me who has gone to them (social work team) to ask for a review” – Voluntary Sector Provider

Similarly, and where they exist in the first place, there is a lack of contact and/or engagement with any third party Personal Budget support services

There are **inflexible payments systems** (such as pre-paid cards, multiple invoicing arrangements, or the option for managed budgets only) that reduce people’s ability to flexibly use Personal Budgets in the way they were originally intended.

There are also concerns about people managing their Personal Budget, including the associated **complexity of payment mechanisms each month for users and/or their families**. This is something felt by both users and care staff alike:

“One thing that could improve Personal Budget process? A separate agency who could do all banking and monitoring responsibilities” – Local Authority representative

“Some families are reluctant to set up a bank account and there are no Individual Service Funds so we have to have cheques or BACS payments from parents” – Provider

“It’s a nightmare. The council handled it until January and that was fine. But then they said everyone had to be responsible for their own budgets... It’s so stressful. I just want them to take the responsibility back” – Parent of PB holder

Providers of employment support face similar problems: typically they are now administering individual payments rather than block contracts. For example, it is normal for a provider to submit at least 13 invoices per year per person to the Local Authority (i.e. one every 4 weeks). One provider recently decided against bidding for a further supported employment

contract because the potential complexity and bureaucracy of reporting arrangements was too burdensome for the potential income.

Finally, there can be **often ill-informed concern and misperceived risks about what Personal Budgets are being used for** which affects the likelihood of PBs being allocated in the first place. This concern can also extend to how providers respond to Personal Budgets. For example, some concern was expressed in one of our fieldwork sites that providers might abuse individual service fund arrangements, despite a lack of evidence that this had actually happened. Indeed, in another fieldwork site, we heard a provider describe how two occasions they had proactively supported people to move away from their service as it was in the interest of the individuals concerned despite the provider losing associated income.

## 5.4. Availability of good, evidence-based employment support

The picture of supported employment in any given area is often difficult to draw. There is **general confusion about how supported employment is paid for**. It is thought to be provided by and funded through a variety of different avenues:

“All employment support programmes are run through the Work Choice Contract” – Central Government representative

“Right to Control pilot funds employment support through DWP Personal Budget” – Central Government representative

“[We have a] block contract, but people who have Personal Budgets have them top sliced to pay for the service” – VCS provider

“We are block funded by [the Local Authority] and receive most of our referrals directly from Adult Services” – VCS provider

There is **often confusion about whether a service can only be accessed via a PB or whether it is already block funded** in a different way such that users themselves don't need to pay for employment support. This is further complicated by the continuing provision of in-house employment support providers by local authorities, or those that have been “spun off” into social enterprises<sup>33</sup>. In both cases there is confusion about whether PBs can be used to access such employment services.

There is felt to be **a lack of choice of employment support providers**:

“As far as I know [we] are the only employment support provider for people with learning disabilities listed on [the] system, so if they identify employment support as an outcome, it would come to us. That's not really ideal: people should have a choice” – VCS provider

“There is not a lot of choice of specialist provision, especially on the employment side” – Social Worker

“It's difficult because [my son] does like what he does, but he's really keen to get real paid work, too. It's good what he does at [provider of sheltered employment] in some

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<sup>33</sup> We noted in the fieldwork that such common history between the Local Authority and the provider organisation can often mean good working relationships between the two.

ways, but it's not real work. I kind of think if they could give the money to a proper employer to give him the chance to get proper work experience, in a real job, it would be better" – Parent of PB holder

Even if there is a well-developed local market, as we saw in at least two of our fieldwork sites, **there may not be enough awareness or promotion of the options available** (see Section 5.1).

As shown in Section 2.3, **the strategic and commissioning context and activity in which employment support operates is such that the potential for good outcomes is being undermined**. For example, there is very little useful data collected about the job outcomes that are being achieved in local areas. Similarly, commissioners rarely speak with employment support providers to understand how to develop a service that will best work locally.

**Employment may not be included within service specifications of social care commissioners**. This can lead to existing providers who work with the Council (for example, within framework agreements) being asked to undertake employment support, even though they only provide care and support. One result of this is that they provide employment *activity* rather than employment *support*.

However, we met one commissioner who has employment within a wider inclusion brief and where employment was seen as a social care target. Despite providing training to social care staff on good supported employment, the practice on the ground did not suggest that employment was seen as a priority nor the support provided adequately monitored through reviews.

Such scenarios generate wider questions about what somebody might be purchasing with their Personal Budget: are they purchasing the *process* of employment support, or a successful job *outcome*? People we spoke with have different views on what the point of employment support should be including, for example, family carers who only want activity rather than a job outcome, because:

"You can't 'buy' a job" – Parent of PB holder

There are mixed feelings about whether it is possible and how easy it is to cost employment support: **some providers think it is difficult to give unit costs for employment support** (for example, by the hour) whilst others have already done this.

On the purchasing side, **commissioners think that employment support is expensive, and only see certain parts of employment support as valid costs**, rather than the whole range of activities that need to be in place for effective employment support. Related to this is the fact some providers may not have built in these 'additional' costs into their unit costs of employment support. Others have, but find this adds to the impression that employment support is 'expensive' compared to other types of support.

**Providers have a variety of funding arrangements in place**. A typical arrangement was one described by a provider in the Midlands where funding was from a mixture of sources including the NHS, Local Authority, Personal Budgets and self-funders.

Similarly, **there is typically a mixture of funding mechanisms in place**. In one area there was a mixture of block contract and personalised funding arrangements, i.e. Personal Budgets. The block contract included things like employer profiling and workplace analysis,

marketing, and proactive job seeking. The personalised funding included the same sorts of activities but for a longer period of time or more intensively (enabling, for example, a more personalised approach, such as pictorial job searching and more engagement with the family).

In another area, there was a block contract between the commissioner and the provider, but most of the people using the service were aware there was an amount of money associated with their support, i.e. an Individual Service Fund (ISF). In this case, people had the option to use their allocation in whatever way they wanted to. Most people didn't use this choice or flexibility to move on, though there were two occasions (of around 40) where this had happened. In both of these cases, it tended to be movement originated by the provider rather than the individual themselves.

In one area of our fieldwork we heard of the very recent introduction of direct payments for everyone accessing supported employment service, via the review process. The rationale for this change wasn't clear and its impact was minimal: one-third of all people receiving a Personal Budget had been reviewed and placed on a Direct Payment but, of these, only "one or two" had used their Direct Payment to use different employment support.



## PART 2: DISCUSSION and RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

“Based on our experience, I would recommend another family to go down the Personal Budget route if the person needs tailored employment support” – Parent of a Personal Budget holder

### 6. Discussion

Below we discuss NDTi’s interpretation of and views on the findings from this research.

Employment is a social care outcome<sup>34</sup>. Having a job has proven benefits for people, the communities they live in, and for the taxpayer more generally<sup>35</sup>: it contributes to everyone’s wellbeing.

The Care Act’s shift to principles of wellbeing and recognition of the role that employment plays acknowledges this. As a result, local authorities with social service responsibilities must ensure they have a focus on employment. Ways in which they can do this include incorporating employment as a theme into their strategies and plans that will make the Care Act a reality in their local area, as well as include it in practices, processes and products that support their work.

Adult social care Personal Budgets are one mechanism by which this can be achieved.

There are mixed views about whether PBs should be used for employment support. This work shows that where PBs are being used for employment support there are positive stories about how they have enabled employment outcomes for people. This report also shows ways in which PBs have been implemented locally such that they make no difference to employment outcomes and/or create additional bureaucracy. However, it can also be seen that these circumstances were a function of the way in which PBs for employment support were implemented rather than a fundamental problem with the idea of PBs for employment

<sup>34</sup> As highlighted in Section 1.3, with the advent of Personal Health Budgets, our findings and recommendations are equally applicable to the NHS: employment is also a health outcome.

<sup>35</sup> See, for example:

- Beyer, S. (2008) An Evaluation Of The Outcomes of Supported Employment in North Lanarkshire. Welsh Centre for Learning Disabilities, Cardiff University
- Coutts, P., Durie, S. (2011), An Evaluation of Social Added Value for Real Jobs, the Action Group, Edinburgh. Social Return on Investment (SROI) Analysis, the Scottish Government, Employability and Tackling Poverty Division
- Kilsby, M., Beyer, S. (2010), A Financial Cost: Benefit Analysis of Kent Supported Employment. Establishing a Framework for Analysis. An Interim Report, Kent County Council, Maidstone
- NOW Project (2009) Our Impact 2008–2009 SROI, NOW Project, Belfast. [www.nowproject.co.uk](http://www.nowproject.co.uk)
- OPM (Office for Public Management) (2011), IAPT Employment Support Services in London: Assessment of the Economic Impact, Working for Wellness

support. Such findings reflect those regarding the introduction and roll-out of PBs in social care more generally.

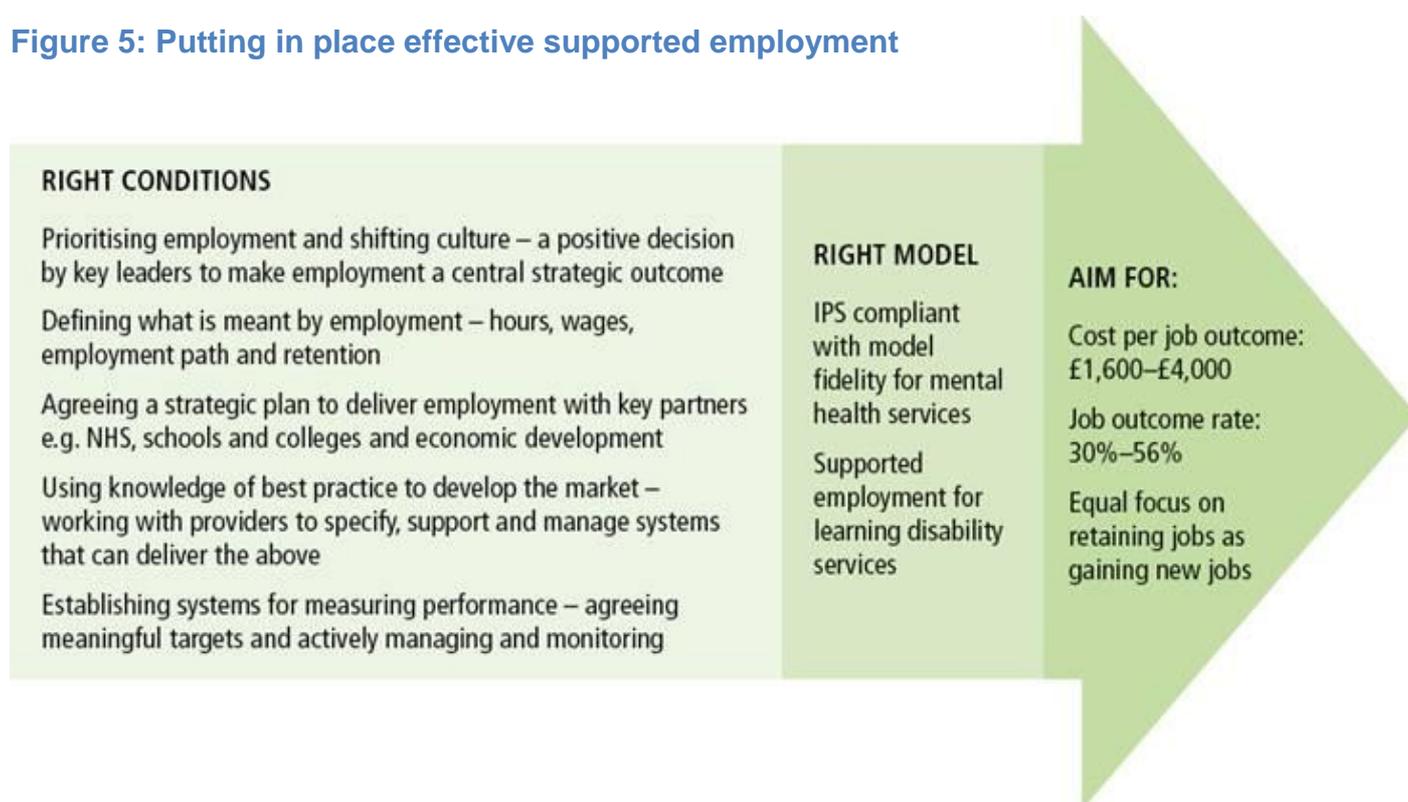
Where issues with the implementation of Personal Budgets for employment support have been dealt with, they can and do work. We therefore feel it should be the priority to ensure employment support can be accessed through adult social care Personal Budgets and to deal with any problems that arise in implementing this, rather than abandon the idea altogether.

## 7. Key recommendations

How can this be done?

At the moment, we know the role of local authorities in supporting employment outcomes through adult social care isn't as good as it could be<sup>36</sup>. We do know, though, that a combination of the right conditions and the right supported employment model can address this – see Figure 5 below.

**Figure 5: Putting in place effective supported employment**



We also know that employment support should be available for everyone in a local area, including people with social care needs who nevertheless aren't eligible for social care support.

Therefore, our core recommendation is that there should be supported employment provision universally available and accessible for everyone in a local area. This should be the right model of employment support and should exist within the right local approach (see Figure 5).

<sup>36</sup> NDTi (2014), The Cost Effectiveness of Employment Support for People with Disabilities: <http://www.ndti.org.uk/major-projects/current/employment-support-for-disabled-people/>

Such local supported employment should be funded via a mixed provision of core funding (through, for example, a contract) with the addition of Personal Budgets. This is rather than solely funding supported employment provision by a contract or by Personal Budgets alone.

In practice, our suggestion is that this could be done broadly as follows:

- The core funding covers those elements of effective supported employment which, alongside working with individuals, also include (but isn't limited to) employer engagement, promotion and marketing.
- Personal Budget funding can then cover the direct cost of the personalised support, including more intensive support or support for a longer period of time.

(Please note: this suggestion is intended as a starting point for discussion, rather than introducing any firm differentiation between what is or is not funded through core funding and Personal Budgets.)

In addition to our core recommendation, below we make a series of key recommendations below for all relevant levels of stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of adult social care PBs to secure employment outcomes. The full set of recommendations is included in Appendix 3.

These recommendations are primarily specific to the question of adult social care PBs for employment support, rather than the more general question of how to successfully implement Personal Budgets in adult social care.

## 7.1. Encouraging demand for employment

### 7.1.1. Key recommendations for national organisations

These recommendations are for organisations such as the Department of Health, Department for Work and Pensions, Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS), Healthwatch England, the Local Government Association, Public Health England and the British Association for Supported Employment (BASE).

- Use every opportunity to promote employment as the norm for disabled people
- Establish clear criteria for supported employment for people with learning disabilities
- Specifically include employment in documentation that supports implementation of the wellbeing requirements of the Care Act

### 7.1.2. Key recommendations for local authorities and providers

These recommendations are for all relevant people within local authorities (including Councillors and relevant portfolio holders, senior leaders, commissioners, social workers and independent support planners / brokers) and local supported employment providers.

- Focus on young people coming through transition from children's services to adult services, as part of the "Local Offer", such that the presumption of employment should be introduced as early as possible. Options for encouraging this can include work-based learning (WBL), traineeships and internships.

- Ensure greater encouragement from social workers that employment is a viable option, with an explanation of how a Personal Budget could be used in individual cases
- Establish appropriate partnership links between people in social care, employment support providers, schools and further education establishments to promote an understanding, and use of employment support that is in line with evidence and best practice

### **7.1.3. Key recommendations for individuals**

These recommendations are for groups including people with learning disabilities or mental health problems, their families / carers, user-led organisations, other representative and VCS organisations.

- Think about employment as early as possible, including talking with your school, children’s social worker and any other professionals involved in planning the transition from children’s to adults services by using the work arising from the Preparing for Adulthood Programme<sup>37</sup>
- Get information about the employment support provision locally so you can see what is on offer and consider asking for an employment support organisation to attend your transition or social care review.

## **7.2. Professional engagement with employment**

### **7.2.1. Key recommendations for national organisations**

- Promote that the definition of wellbeing referred to in the Care Act explicitly includes employment
- Ensure professional education and training includes reference to employment as a social care outcome
- Promote evidence on the benefits and cost-effectiveness of employment for people themselves, the communities they live in, and for the taxpayer more generally.

### **7.2.2. Key recommendations for local authorities and providers**

- Explicitly recognise and promote that employment is a social care outcome
- Understand employment as a preventative approach with employment seen as key for young people in transition to adulthood
- Actively promote what employment support services are available locally, for example through inviting providers to meet with social work teams. Another option is to ensure employment support providers are included in local “market place” events

### **7.2.3. Key recommendations for individuals**

- Recognise that PBs can be used to access employment support and ask your social worker / key contact about this as part of your assessment, care planning or review processes

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<sup>37</sup> [www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk](http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk)

## 7.3. Improving the Personal Budget process

### 7.3.1. Key recommendations for national organisations

- Promote PBs as an option for purchasing employment support in a variety of ways and to all relevant groups, including: (a) users, (b) families/carers, (c) social workers, (d) brokers/support planners, (e) JCP staff, (f) local partnership board etc.
- Promote and share best practice materials relating to the PB process

### 7.3.2. Key recommendations for local authorities and providers

- Acknowledge that all people with social care needs, and not just people who are FACS eligible, can and should access employment support services
- Ensure employment is a specific outcome that is considered, raised and documented in the assessment process
- Ensure better engagement and coordination of all relevant parties for someone's employment support, including social workers, planners/brokers and employment support providers

### 7.3.3. Key recommendations for individuals

- Ask or find out about what independent, third-party support services are available that can provide support in managing your PB
- Ask about what other outcomes have been achieved by the employment support provider for people in similar circumstances in order to help informed choice.

## 7.4. Ensuring good, evidence-based employment support is available

### 7.4.1. Key recommendations for national organisations

- Follow the example of Right to Control and work together to consider the local pooling of employment-related budgets around an individual, such as DWP monies (AtW, Work Choice) and PBs.

### 7.4.2. Key recommendations for local authorities and providers

- Explore the cost-benefit of using employment support services in the longer-term, including developing examples of where PBs for employment have led to longer-term savings
- Understand that the cost of employment support is quantitatively different to the cost of traditional care and support: comparing the two is not comparing like with like
- Capture data and information about how many people are using their PB for employment support, what they are using it for and the difference this is making

### 7.4.3. Key recommendations for individuals

- Highlight good employment support practice from other areas to your local commissioner
- Raise the issue of employment support at relevant opportunities, such as the local Health & Wellbeing Board or Partnership Board, or through your local HealthWatch.



## Appendix 1: Survey on Personal Budgets for employment support

*Below is the survey described in Section 3.1 of the report.*

The National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) is conducting some research into the use of Personal Budgets to support disabled people into paid work or to retain employment they already have.

A Personal Budget is money from adult social care that is allocated to individuals to pay for care or support to meet their assessed needs.

Although one of the outcomes that people can use Personal Budgets to achieve is support getting or retaining paid work, evidence suggests that Personal Budgets are NOT currently being significantly used in this way. This suggests that individuals may be missing out on support that they would like, and that employment support organisations may be missing out on a potential source of funding.

We want to hear from providers of employment support about the use of Personal Budgets in their organisation. We are interested in finding out whether Personal Budgets are being used, how they are being used, and if they are not being used what the reasons are. We would be grateful if you could help us by completing this survey which should take around 10-15 minutes. It will help you fill in the survey quickly if you have figures of the overall number of clients and service costs to hand before you start. The deadline for the survey is Tuesday 10th December.

Individual responses will be kept confidential within the NDTi and will not be shared with any other organisation or the funders of this work without your consent. Any comments referred to in the findings reports will be anonymised. Summarised findings will be shared publicly, including with our funding partners and all organisations who have returned this questionnaire.

If you have any questions about the research or the survey, please contact Naomi Harflett, Researcher at NDTi at: [naomi.harflett@ndti.org.uk](mailto:naomi.harflett@ndti.org.uk).

This is the first stage of a research project jointly funded by Think Local Act Personal, Remploy, In Control, Wolverhampton City Council, Northamptonshire County Council and NDTi. NDTi is grateful for the support of the funders of the research and to the British Association for Supported Employment (BASE) for help distributing the survey.

If you are happy to help us with this research, please select next. Thank you very much for your help.

**About the research**

We would like to start by finding out about your organisation and the employment support it provides. If your organisation is part of a large or national organisation with regional or local offices please answer the following questions with information about your regional or local office.

1. What is the name of your organisation?
2. What is your job role or title?
3. Which of the following organisation type best describes your organisation?
  - Voluntary or Community Sector (including user led organisation)
  - Private for profit
  - Local Authority
  - NHS Trust
  - Other (please specify)

4. Which Local Authority area/s does your organisation provide employment support in?

Please list all local authorities that you provide support in.

**About the employment support your organisation provides**

5. Roughly how many people did your organisation provide employment support for in the financial year 2012/13? If you don't know please state this.
6. Of the people your organisation provides employment support for, roughly what percentage have: (We recognise that someone may have for example a learning disability and a mental health problem so these will not necessarily add up to 100)
  - Learning disabilities
  - Mental health problems
  - Autism
  - Physical or sensory impairments
  - Other disability or impairment (please state)

7. What type of employment support does your organisation provide? Please select all that apply.

- Individualised job support – Targeted support focused on finding and/or retaining a job including Individual Placement and Support or Supported Employment i.e. place and train
- Self employment – Targeted support focused on self employment
- Work preparation – Developing skills needed to help people gain paid work e.g. college courses, day centre based work preparation, CV preparation, interview skills, apprenticeships, traineeships, internships

- Sheltered or industrial workshop Long term employment or job preparation in a sheltered and/or unpaid environment designed for disabled people, day centre based work activity
- Social firms – Long term employment or job preparation where the 'product' has a social mission, interacts with or contributes to the community with an aim to become financially viable
- Other (please specify)

8. Roughly what was your total annual spend on employment support including overheads in the year 2012/13? If you don't know, please state this.

9. A Personal Budget is money from adult social care that is allocated to individuals to pay for care or support to meet their assessed needs. In the last 18 months has any of the funding for your supported employment service come through a social care Personal Budget?

- Yes (goes to question 10)
- No (goes to question 20)
- I don't know

#### **About the use of Personal Budgets for employment support**

We are interested in finding out more about how people are using Personal Budgets to purchase employment support.

10. Roughly how many people used Personal Budgets to purchase employment support in your organisation: (If you don't know, please state this)

- In the financial year 2012-13?
- Since April 2013 to date?

11. If your organisation provides employment support in more than one Local Authority and you have the data, can you provide a breakdown of how many people used Personal Budgets for employment support in each Local Authority: (If you don't know please state this)

- In the financial year 201213
- Since April 2013 to date

12. Of the people who use Personal Budgets to purchase employment support in your organisation, roughly what percentage have: (If you don't know please state this)

- Learning disabilities
- Mental health problems
- Autism
- Physical or sensory impairments
- Other disability or impairment (please state)

13. Are any of the people who have used Personal Budgets to purchase employment support in your organisation over the traditional age for retirement?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

14. What type of employment support are people using Personal Budgets to purchase in your organisation? Please select all that apply.

- Individualised job support – Targeted support focused on finding and/or retaining a job including Individual Placement and Support or Supported Employment i.e. place and train
- Self employment – Targeted support focused on self employment
- Work preparation – Developing skills needed to help people gain paid work e.g. college courses, day centre based work preparation, CV preparation, interview skills, apprenticeships, traineeships, internships
- Sheltered or industrial workshop Long term employment or job preparation in a sheltered and/or unpaid environment designed for disabled people, day centre based work activity
- Social firms – Long term employment or job preparation where the 'product' has a social mission, interacts with or contributes to the community with an aim to become financially viable
- Other (please specify)

15. Considering all of the people your organisation provides employment support for, do you think that those using a Personal Budget to purchase employment support are:

- More likely to gain or retain a job than others
- Less likely to gain or retain a job than others
- Just as likely to gain or retain a job than others
- I don't know

Please comment if you want to provide further details, including whether your organisation collects data to measure outcomes in this way.

### **The use of Personal Budgets for employment support costs and finances**

16. Roughly what was the total income you received through Personal Budgets in the financial year 2012-13? If you don't know, please state this.

17. Have you factored in income from Personal Budgets into your business plan for 2014-15?

- Yes

- No
- I don't know

18. How do you cost employment support to people using Personal Budgets? We recognise this can be a complex calculation, so please select the most accurate description of your approach.

- We have an hourly rate and people are charged dependent on the number of hours of support they receive
- We have a set rate per person that we have determined
- We have a set rate per person that reflects other benchmarks, e.g. Local Authority, DWP
- The cost is worked out for each individual dependent on the support they require
- Other (please specify)

19. Personal Budgets can be taken as Direct Payments (where money is transferred directly to the individual or family to spend) or the council can manage the Personal Budget on behalf of the individual. When Personal Budgets are being used to access the employment support you provide, are they:

- Mainly council managed Personal Budgets
- Mainly Direct Payments (individual or family)
- Both council managed and Direct Payments
- I don't know
- If you provide employment support in more than one Local Authority please comment if there are variations between the local authorities

### **Reasons why Personal Budgets are not being used in your organisation**

20. You have told us that Personal Budgets are not currently being used to purchase employment support in your organisation. Do you have any thoughts about why this is?

### **Your views on the use of Personal Budgets for employment support**

Finally, we are interested in finding out why the use of Personal Budgets for employment support appears to be limited. We would value your views on this subject.

21. What factors do you think discourage greater use of Personal Budgets to purchase employment support?

22. What changes do you think would encourage greater use of Personal Budgets to purchase employment support?

23. Which of the following best describes how your organisation has experienced demand for employment support from Personal Budget holders in the last 18 months?

- We have experienced an increase in demand
- We have experienced a decrease in demand
- We have not noticed any change in demand
- We have never been asked to provide employment support through a Personal Budget
- I don't know

Please comment if you want to provide further details, e.g. if there are variations in the different local authorities you provide employment support in

24. Where do you get your information about Personal Budgets, how they work and what they can be used for from? Please select all that apply.

- Local authority/NHS commissioners
- Sector umbrella organisations
- Voluntary and Community Sector organisations
- Nationally available materials and publications
- Individual Personal Budget holders
- An individual within your organisation
- We don't get information about Personal Budgets
- Other (please specify)

25. Do you have any further comments to make about the use of Personal Budgets for employment support?

#### **Further research and contact**

Thank you very much for completing this survey and contributing to knowledge in this area. We are keen to share the results of this research.

26. Would you be interested in receiving information about the findings from this research?

- Yes, please
- No, thank you

27. In the next stage of this research we will be identifying areas where there appears to be significant use of Personal Budgets for employment support to find out more detail about how it is working. Would you be happy to be contacted about the possibility of being involved in this next stage of research? Please note that by agreeing to being contacted you are not committing to taking part.

- Yes, I'd be happy to be contacted
- No, thank you

28. Please can you provide your contact details:

- Name
- Email address

Finally, you may be interested in some other research NDTi have been conducting about the effectiveness of employment support for disabled people. NDTi have been granted funding from the National Institute for Health Research's School of Social Care Research to carry out a two year study into the cost effectiveness of different models of employment support for disabled people. Further details and reports of the findings can be found on our website [www.ndti.org.uk/majorprojects/employmentsupportfordisabledpeople/](http://www.ndti.org.uk/majorprojects/employmentsupportfordisabledpeople/) which you will be directed to when you select "done".



## Appendix 2: Fieldwork topic guides

Below are the topic guides used for fieldwork interviews with a range of stakeholders. Before each site visit an accessible information sheet was shared with the participant about the research. Before each interview we checked that this information had been seen and a consent form was signed.

### **A2.1: The use of Personal Budget for employment support: Questions for family members**

1. How long has \_\_\_\_\_ (named individual) had Direct Payments/Personal Budget?
2. Was it difficult to get a Personal Budget/Direct Payment?
3. Why was that?
4. Does the budget cover just employment support or other things as well? (please specify what else it covers)
5. What made you think of using Personal Budget/Direct Payment for employment support for \_\_\_\_\_?
6. In what way is the PB used to support \_\_\_\_\_ get or keep a job?
7. Did \_\_\_\_\_ have any career or employment support at school? E.g. careers advice, work experience, vocational training, voluntary or community work.
8. If yes, was this helpful?
9. IF YES, did this influence this influence your thinking about using the Direct Payment/Personal Budget for employment support?
10. Who helped you plan the support for \_\_\_\_\_? (independent broker, someone from council, relatives, other)
11. What is \_\_\_\_\_ currently doing work wise?
12. Does s/he enjoy the work/looking for a job?
13. How many hours a week does s/he work?
14. If relevant, how does s/he get to work?
15. [If applicable] Their job coach is \_\_\_\_\_. Is that right?
16. Does \_\_\_\_\_ get on well with him/her?

17. Did \_\_\_\_\_choose him/her?
18. Did you get a say over who the job coach /supporter was going to be?
19. What kinds of things has (job coach/supporter) done to support \_\_\_\_\_ into work?
20. What are your aspirations for \_\_\_\_\_ in terms of working in the future?
21. How many hours of employment support can you afford out of the Direct Payments/Personal Budget money?
22. Is it enough support?
23. If NO, what additional support do you think is needed?
24. Who deals with the money side of things?
25. What is involved?
26. How much monitoring is there of the way the money is spent?
27. Do you find it /difficult to manage the money?
28. What aspects of the arrangements are working well?
29. What could be improved?
30. Would you recommend another family went down the Personal Budget route for employment support?
31. Is there anything you would like to add?

#### **A2.2 Questions for social workers / care managers / brokers**

1. Please tell us about your role. (Client group, area covered, functions of post, who employs you.)
2. How long are you typically involved with clients at the moment?
3. How long have Personal Budget been in operation locally?
4. How easy would you say it is for people to get a Personal Budget if they are eligible for adult social care services?
5. Can you just talk us through the steps that people have to go through to get a Personal Budget?
6. How long have people been able to use them for employment support?
7. How many people have you helped to use a Personal Budget in this way?
8. What help do individuals and families get to help them decide on how to spend their Personal Budget?
9. What additional advice, guidance or signposting do they tend to need?

10. What sort of support might you offer to someone using a Personal Budget for to find or keep a job?
11. What kinds of outcomes would you be looking for a person who is using a Personal Budget for employment related support?
12. How do most people handle the money in relation to their Personal Budget?
13. Does the amount people get as a Personal Budget generally provide enough for optimal support?
14. If No, what are the issues?
15. What sort of monitoring goes on in relation to Personal Budgets?
16. From what you have seen with the individuals who are using their Personal Budget for employment, how well do you think it seems to be working?
17. How well do you think the current arrangements are working for the council?
18. How well do you think the current arrangements are working for Personal Budget holders' families?
19. If appropriate, what do you think could make the arrangements better for a) the council b) the budget holders?
20. What is the benefit of a Personal Budget for the individual/family?
21. Do any of them say they find it onerous?
22. What do you see for the future of Personal Budgets?
23. What effect do you think the use of Personal Budgets has been on providers of supported employment locally?
24. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

### **A2.3 Questions for commissioners**

1. Please tell us about your role(s)
2. How long have Personal Budget been in operation locally
3. How many people have Personal Budgets in \_\_\_\_\_?
4. Of those, how many are using them for employment support?
5. How easy was it to give people Personal Budgets that they could use for employment? Were there any barriers to overcome?
6. Can you just talk us through the steps that people have to go through to get a Personal Budget?
7. What kinds of specific outcomes do you expect to see on a support plan before it is approved?

8. What help do individuals and families get to help them decide on how to spend their Personal Budget?
9. Is there a Direct Payments/ Personal Budgets support service locally and if yes, what services does it offer?
10. What options are there for people in terms of who holds the money? (Are all Personal Budgets handled as Direct Payments or are some individual service funds?)
11. Does the amount people get as a Personal Budget generally provide enough for optimal support?
12. If No, what are the issues?
13. How does the council monitor the supported employment provided to someone with a Personal Budget?
14. How well do you think the current arrangements are working for the council?
15. How well do you think the current arrangements are working for Personal Budget holders?
16. If appropriate, what do you think could make the arrangements better for a) the council b) the budget holders?
17. What is the benefit of a Personal Budget for the individual/family?
18. Do any of them say they find it onerous?
19. What effect do you think the use of Personal Budgets has been on providers of supported employment locally?
20. What do you see for the future of Personal Budgets?
21. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

#### **A2.4 Questions for providers / support services**

1. How many people does [Provider] work with who have Personal Budgets?
2. How long have Personal Budgets been used for employment support in the organisation?
3. Can you tell us about why Personal Budgets came to be used in your organisation? (What or who were the drivers? LA/Commissioners? Demand from individual Personal Budget holders? As an alternative funding stream?)
4. Can you tell us about the process you went through to set up the Personal Budget system or model you have in place? How did you decide on it? Were there difficulties or problems? Did you try other ways?
5. How do you cost the employment support provided to Personal Budget holders? Hourly/set rare etc.? What is this based on?

6. How easy was it for people to use Personal Budgets for employment? Were there any barriers to overcome?
7. Can you talk us through the steps that people go through if they have a Personal Budget and come to you for support to find or keep a job?
8. What type of employment support do Personal Budget holders purchase from your organisation?
9. [If applicable] How do you select their job coach or supporter? What criteria do you use?
10. Does the amount people get as a Personal Budget generally provide enough for optimal support?
11. If No, what are the issues?
12. How does the support offered/funded by a Personal Budget compare to support offered to service users/clients funded in other ways?
13. What kinds of specific employment outcomes are you expected to achieve (according to the support plan?)
14. How do the outcomes (in terms of gaining or retaining jobs) of people using Personal Budgets compare to the outcomes achieved by service users/clients funded in other ways?
15. What help do individuals and families get to help them decide on how to spend their Personal Budget?
16. What is the role of care managers in advising or facilitating the use of Personal Budgets for employment support?
17. Is there a Direct Payments/ Personal Budgets support service locally and if yes, what services does it offer?
18. If yes, does [Provider] provide information to this service on what it can offer to clients?
19. What options are there for people in terms of who holds the money? For example, are you ever paid directly by the council for an individual?
20. How do you market yourselves to holders of Personal Budgets?
21. How do you monitor the supported employment provided to someone with a Personal Budget?
22. Are you or the job coach expected to attend the review meeting?
23. How well do you think the current arrangements are working for [Provider]?
24. How well do you think the current arrangements are working for Personal Budget holders who use the money for employment support?

25. If appropriate, what do you think could make the arrangements better for a) [Provider]  
b) the budget holders?
26. What do you see as the benefit of a Personal Budget for the individual/family?
27. Do any of them say they find it onerous?
28. How do you see the use of Personal Budgets for employment support in your organisation in the future? Increasing/decreasing? What are the reasons?
29. Is there anything else you want to tell us?



## Appendix 3: Full set of recommendations

In addition to our core recommendation of Section 7 and associated key recommendations for each level of stakeholders, below is the full set of recommendations to ensure the successful implementation of adult social care PBs to secure employment outcomes.

These recommendations are primarily specific to the question of adult social care PBs for employment support, rather than the more general question of how to successfully implement Personal Budgets in adult social care.

Note: \* indicates a key recommendation included in Section 7.

### A3.1. Encouraging demand for employment

#### A3.1.1. Recommendations for national organisations

These recommendations are for organisations such as the Department of Health, Department for Work and Pensions, Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS), HealthWatch England, the Local Government Association, Public Health England and the British Association for Supported Employment (BASE).

- Use every opportunity to promote employment as the norm for disabled people\*
- Continue to regularly promote and publish the employment-related outcome measures included in the Adult Social Care, Public Health, and NH Outcomes Frameworks
- Establish clear criteria for supported employment for people with learning disabilities\*
- Specifically include employment in documentation that supports implementation of the wellbeing requirements of the Care Act\*
- DWP needs to recognise limitations of its current work offerings, especially for people with learning disabilities or mental health problems, and that local provision can be a better way of supporting people
- Support the roll-out of National Occupational Standards for Job Coaching<sup>38</sup>, thus promoting being a job coach as a desirable career path.

#### A3.1.2. Recommendations for local authorities and providers

These recommendations are for all relevant people within local authorities (including Councillors and relevant Portfolio holders, senior leaders, commissioners, social workers and independent support planners / brokers) and local supported employment providers.

- Focus on young people coming through transition from children's services to adult services, as part of the "Local Offer", such that the presumption of employment should be

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<sup>38</sup> See <http://base-uk.org/policy/national-occ-stds>

introduced as early as possible. Options for encouraging this can include work-based learning (WBL), traineeships and internships for those who will not go on to further education\*

- Ensure greater encouragement from social workers that employment is a viable option, with an explanation of how a Personal Budget could be used in individual cases\*
- Ensure greater encouragement from supported employment providers to have high aspirations for people they support so they are genuinely better off by working sufficient hours
- Support to parents/families/carers to recognise employment as a realistic option
- Establish appropriate partnership links between people in social care, employment support providers, schools and further education establishments\*
- Ensure people are provided with relevant information regarding the link between work and benefits, including a “Better Off” in work calculation or by a clear referral process to the local Citizens Advice Bureau or equivalent.

### **A3.1.3. Recommendations for individuals**

These recommendations are for groups including people with learning disabilities or mental health problems, their families / carers, user-led organisations, other representative and VCS organisations.

- Think about employment as early as possible, including talking with your school, children’s social worker and any other professionals involved in planning the transition from children’s to adults services by using the work arising from the Preparing for Adulthood programme\*.

## **A3.2. Professional engagement with employment**

### **A3.2.1. Recommendations for national organisations**

- Promote that the definition of wellbeing referred to in the Care Act explicitly includes employment\*
- Ensure professional education and training includes reference to employment as a social care outcome\*
- Promote evidence on the benefits and cost-effectiveness of employment for people themselves, the communities they live in, and for the taxpayer more generally\*.

### **A3.2.2. Recommendations for local authorities and providers**

- Explicitly recognise and promote that employment is a social care outcome\*
- Reflect throughout the social care process things that people identify as being important to them, such as employment, rather than just prioritising only care and support needs
- Understand employment as a preventative approach (with employment seen as key for young people in transition to adulthood)\*

- Actively promote what employment support services are available locally, for example through inviting providers to meet with social work teams. Another option is to ensure employment support providers are included in local “market place” events\*
- Recognise that employment support is provided by agencies other than DWP / JCP and that this other provision may be more appropriate for people who want personalised support.

### **A3.2.3. Recommendations for individuals**

- Recognise that PBs can be used to access employment support and ask your social worker / key contact about this as part of your assessment, care planning or review processes\*.

## **A3.3. Improving the Personal Budget process**

### **A3.3.1. Recommendations for national organisations**

- Promote PBs as an option for purchasing employment support in a variety of ways and to all relevant groups, including: (a) users, (b) families/carers, (c) social workers, (d) brokers / support planners, (e) JCP staff, (f) local partnership board etc.\*
- Promote and share best practice materials relating to the PB process\*.

### **A3.3.2. Recommendations for local authorities and providers**

- Acknowledge that all people with social care needs, and not just people who are FACS eligible, can and should access employment support services\*
- Ensure employment is a specific outcome that is considered, raised and documented in the assessment process\*
- Ensure funding is allocated through the RAS, where appropriate, specifically for identified employment outcomes
- Ensure better engagement and coordination of all relevant parties for someone’s employment support, including social workers, planners/brokers and employment support providers\*
- Continue to promote PBs, including their use for employment support. This can be done through providing examples of how PBs for employment support have worked and the difference they have made
- Ensure there is as much flexibility in the use of PBs as possible, including explicitly for employment support
- Ensure all social work and other frontline practitioner training continues to cover the use of PBs, including for employment support
- Put in place dedicated communications sessions on the possibility of using PBs for employment support
- Ensure all options for managing and using a PB, including as a Direct Payment, are available and offered to individuals.

### **A3.3.3. Recommendations for individuals**

- Ask or find out about what independent, third-party support services are available that can provide support in managing your PB\*
- Ask about what other outcomes have been achieved by the employment support provider for people in similar circumstances in order to help informed choice\*.

## **A3.4. Ensuring good, evidence-based employment support is available**

### **A3.4.1. Recommendations for national organisations**

- Follow the example of Right to Control and work together to consider the local pooling of employment-related budgets around an individual, such as DWP monies (AtW, Work Choice) and PBs\*.

### **A3.4.2. Recommendations for local authorities and providers**

- Explore the cost-benefit of using employment support services in the longer-term, including developing examples of where PBs for employment have led to longer-term savings\*
- Understand that the cost of employment support is quantitatively different to the cost of traditional care and support: comparing the two is not comparing like with like\*
- Support the introduction of employment support providers if no current providers exist
- Consider including relevant targets in contracts for employment support paid for via PB
- Ensure there is a platform for commissioners and providers from all sectors (including the VCS) to discuss and work together on the local employment picture
- Ensure PBs can be used to support self-employment as an option
- Capture data and information about how many people are using their PB for employment support, what they are using it for and the difference this is making\*
- Ensure all options for managing and using a PB, including as a Direct Payment, are available and offered to individuals
- Minimise the bureaucracy that employment support providers face in their invoicing arrangements.

### **A3.4.3. Recommendations for individuals**

- Highlight good employment support practice from other areas to your local commissioner\*
- Raise the issue of employment support at relevant opportunities, such as the local Health & Wellbeing Board or Partnership Board, or through your local HealthWatch\*.