Dudley
Metropolitan Borough Council

Fact Sheet 5 Keeping Safe.

If you decide to use your Personal Budget through Direct Payments to employ your own Personal Assistant/s it is important that you are able to trust them.

We have teamed up with A4e to help you if you are choosing people to care for you in your own home.

It is important to follow the advice in this Fact Sheet even if you are going to employ family members or people who have been recommended to you.

It also contains information on what to do in situations where employing agency staff and what you need to know and consider when choosing your own carers, with advice on what you should do if you are unhappy with a person you employ to support you. It also tells you more about Dudley's Safeguard and Protect Procedures, including some useful contact numbers.

1. What do I need to know?

You need to know that those around you will not:

- Abuse you in any way
- Steal from you
- Deliberately fail to carry out their duty to care for you
- Discriminate against you

2. What can I do to ensure I am safe when choosing my own carers?

2.1 We recommend that you interview any potential carers and for safety reasons where possible, we would also suggest that this is done in a separate location away from your home with somebody there to assist you (if you don't know of anyone then A4e can assist)

2.2 When you have decided who you would like to employ, ask for two references including one from their most recent employer. Make contact with these people to find out what they have to say.

2.3 If you are happy with these references you should arrange to have a Criminal Records Bureau check done on your potential employee. This check will identify if someone has been barred from working with vulnerable adults or children. (If you have children in the house under 16 living with you then we will insist that a Criminal Records Bureau check is done on any potential

carers). To find out more on Criminal Bureau checks please contact A4e.

2.4 Always ask if agency carers have been checked with the Criminal Records Bureau

2.5 You can find out more on how an agency performed in their inspections by visiting the official website of the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Their website address is www.cqc.org.uk or you can telephone them on 03000 616161.

3. What should I do if I am unhappy with the person I employ to look after me?

3.1 Always remember you have the right to question anything that you are not happy with.

3.2 f you are unhappy with any aspect of you staff member's conduct or behaviour you can talk about this with your A4e Independent Living Advisor.

3.3 Your Independent Living Advisor can help to arrange a meeting with your staff member, but if you don't feel able to discuss your concerns with the person in question your Independent Living Advisor can do this for you.

3.4 If you still don't feel confident that things have improved your Independent Living Advisor can let you know about any disciplinary procedures you can use. In some cases this can lead to dismissal of a staff member.

3.5 Alternatively, if you are unhappy with a member of staff from an agency, A4e can help you to explain the problem to the agency manager and if necessary arrange for a new member of staff to support you. You can also change to a different agency.

4. What do I need to know about Dudley's Safeguard and Protect Procedures?

4.1 If you or anyone that you know is suffering from any kind of neglect or abuse then report it immediately to a Social worker, A4e or the Direct Payments Team (the contact numbers are at the end of this Fact Sheet).

4.2 The council has a duty to investigate any allegations of abuse of vulnerable adults, including people who receive Direct Payments.

4.3 Training free of charge is available on how to identify abuse and what to do if you think it is happening. You may want to attend this

training yourself. You could ask a relative or friend to attend with you or on your behalf or you may want to ask your Personal Assistant to attend.

For more information please contact Julie Totney on 01384 813125 or email: **Julie.totney@dudley.gov.uk**

Please contact Dudley Direct Payments Team or A4e if you need more help or information. Remember we are here to support you and you should share your concerns with a professional if you are unhappy with a situation.

Important phone numbers:

A4e
01384 215426

Dudley Direct Payments Team
01384 813465

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Team
01384 818543