

Direct Payments and Self-Assessment

..will they meet needs more effectively

The *other* CPA

Centre for Policy on Ageing

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The Green Paper

putting people in control: improving assessment,
direct payments and individual budgets

- direct payments
- self-assessment

Self-assessment

- self-assessment is an assessment that is completed by the subject of the assessment without the immediate involvement of a professional
- increased user involvement
- important component of Single Assessment Process
 - refer to the CPA SAP resource
<http://www.cpa.org.uk/sap>

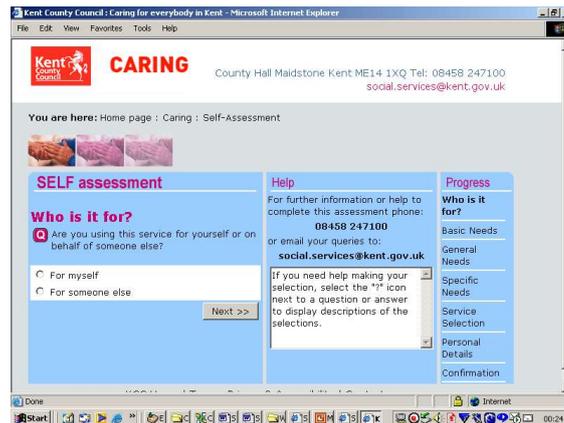
Little evidence as yet but....

- indications are that older people are comfortable with self-assessment
- ... but prefer an element of professional support with the process
- the design and layout of self-assessment material is crucial
- *(publication of research by Peter Griffiths at King College is imminent)*

Self-assessment - challenges

- concern has been expressed that older people may under assess their needs
- value of the assessment is in what happens afterwards ie appropriate action by professionals
- (incorrect) perception that older people lack the necessary skills for computer based self-assessment – may require a culture change in attitudes towards older people

Self-assessment: internet based example - Kent



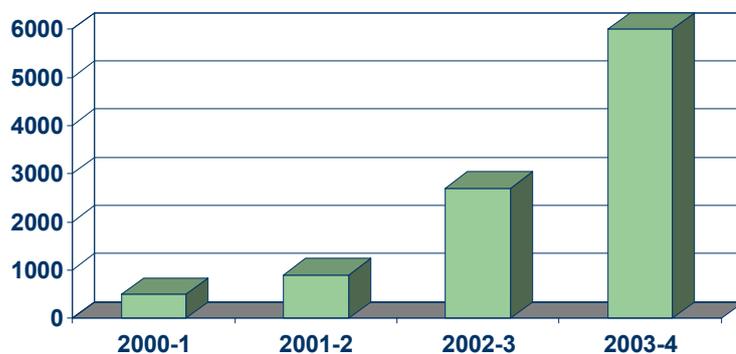
Direct payments

- introduced in Community Care Act 1996 but older people excluded
- extended to older people in 2000
- from April 2003 have a duty to offer direct payments to all those eligible
- emphasis on independent living not just personal care
- have to have been assessed as in 'need' of care services
- must be perceived as able to 'manage' direct payments (with assistance)

Direct payments

- can be used for ...
 - personal assistant
 - equipment
 - minor adaptations
 - care services from an independent agency
- can **not** be used for ...
 - purchasing care services provided solely by social services (can have mixed package)
 - long-term care in a care home
 - Any service, equipment or adaptation normally paid for by NHS or housing authority
 - spouse or close relative living in as carer

Take-up of direct payments by the over 65's has been low. 6,000 cases in England in 2003-4 represents **2%** of all older clients receiving community based services



Source: RAP proforma P2f

Direct payments - potential benefits

- greater control by individuals
- flexibility of care packages
- empowering
- choice of services

Direct payments - potential drawbacks

- brings additional responsibilities of managing money and employing staff
- worry over arranging service if PA sick etc
- lack of checks on eligibility of PA to perform service required
- availability of appropriate support in local authority to manage direct payments
- possible exploitation of vulnerable people

Need more evidence from older people about their experiences of direct payments.

Emerging information eg *'It pays dividends'*, Heather Clark et al, JRF, 2004

- happier, more motivated, improved quality of life
- support services crucial
- requires a change in cultural attitudes away from assuming older people have restricted life-styles
- black and minority ethnic groups can secure culturally relevant services

Individual budgets

Budget held by local authority on behalf of eligible individuals or their carers. Individuals will be able to choose whether to receive direct cash payments or services.

Not before 2012.

Issues for discussion

- right mix of services must be available
- need to balance protection and risk
- increased role for advocacy and the voluntary sector
- how do direct payments and SAP / self-assessment fit with the move towards a *whole systems* approach
- Link-Age

Although the potential benefits are clear much will depend on implementation, funding and the active involvement of older people. There is not yet enough evidence to properly evaluate either direct payments or self-assessment.

Gillian Crosby
CPA, June 2005

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New attitudes to old age