

# ASC Direct Payments monitoring

Optimise income collection through identification of surplus funds

Regular monitoring ensures surplus funds are recouped more frequently and that service users are spending their Direct Payment in accordance with their care and support plan.

To ensure public funds are being spent accordingly, Councils must have systems in place to monitor the usage of Direct Payments (DPs). Most Councils monitor and review their DPs (also known as cash personal budgets) on an ad-hoc basis, or on a two-year (or longer) cycle. As well as causing a major spike in workload when reviews are required, this approach leaves a large window of opportunity for surplus funds to be misappropriated and for service users to avoid paying their contributions; leading to considerable revenue losses.

With **Civica's Adult Social Care (ASC) Direct Payments monitoring**, you can replace ad-hoc checks with regular, annual financial reviews of your DP caseload. Our expert team works in line with your **local policies and procedures**, to ensure the DP has been spent in accordance with the service user's care and support plan, identifying surplus account balances that can be reclaimed and highlighting any funds that have been misappropriated.

The monitoring will also include **checking and balancing the service user's contribution**, to ensure the correct amount has been paid into the DP account. If the service user has underpaid their contribution, a debtor invoice will be raised to recover the underpayment. Alternatively, we ensure future payments to service users are reduced until unspent funds have been recovered.

"The Civica team has expert knowledge of our financial system and were able to adapt their skills and knowledge around our local rules and policies, taking into account the regulations of the Care Act."

**Stuart Towse**, Financial Support Manager, North Lincolnshire Council

## Why use Civica for ASC Direct Payments monitoring?

Civica supports your team by carrying out DP reviews efficiently and accurately.

### All of our team:

- ▶ Are familiar with Care Act regulations
- ▶ Are DBS checked
- ▶ Have at least five years' experience in ASC or a similar benefits-related area
- ▶ Have worked with multiple Councils, frequently adapting their skills and knowledge to new ways of working and ensuring they correctly interpret your local policies.

You don't have to provide Civica staff with office space, computers or phones: they work remotely, accessing your systems over PSN-compliant connections.

### Service benefits

- ▶ **Increase income collection** by recovering surplus funds from service users' accounts
- ▶ **Maintain service levels** during workload peaks or staff shortages
- ▶ **Improve accuracy of contribution payments**, ensuring service users are aware of their responsibilities
- ▶ **Ensure effective use of public funds** by verifying that DPs are used appropriately
- ▶ **Free up your experts** to focus on business as usual as we can carry out DP reviews and related back-office processing for you.

# Business benefits



## Care Act

compliance



## Telephone support

can be provided if required



## Consideration

for service users' needs

### Easy procurement

Procuring this service is straightforward. You can use an OJEU-compliant framework, or contract directly with us. For smaller engagements, a purchase order is often all that's needed — no contract or terms and conditions.

### Designed to meet your needs

Whether you need one or two people for a few weeks, a larger team to handle a major project, or ongoing support for an indefinite period, we can meet your requirements. We work with you to design the right solution, provision it quickly, and resource it to meet agreed timeframes. And we take responsibility for training our assessors on your local policies and processes.

### Flexibility and scalability

There's no minimum spend or long-term commitment — you're never locked in. You can scale the service up and down as your requirements change over time, extend it beyond the original agreement, or switch it off completely if you no longer need it.

### A cost-neutral service

In many cases, the service will be cost neutral as surplus DP account balances are reclaimed.

In addition to DP monitoring, we can support you in other ways:

- ▶ **Carry out financial assessments** – for both residential and non-residential service users – efficiently and accurately
- ▶ **Monitor, reconcile and update your Corporate Appointeeship accounts**, ensuring service user's benefit information is accurate
- ▶ Provide guidance on **streamlining your ASC financial assessments process** to help you save money and transform service delivery.

We developed our DP monitoring service working in partnership with North Lincolnshire Council. Faced with a variety of challenges in delivering DP reviews, the Council chose to use our service to monitor its DP accounts. This resulted in the identification of hundreds of thousands of pounds in additional income from DP surplus and misappropriated funds.

