

What is an individual employer?

An individual employer is someone who needs care and support and uses a direct payment, or their own money, to employ personal assistants (PAs). This gives people the choice and control over who supports them, and how and when this is done.

People employ PAs for many reasons, but some may do so to ensure they have continuity of care, improve their wellbeing, maintain or increase their independence and/or to support them at work.

The number of people choosing to become an individual employer is growing, so it's important that you, in your role as a social worker, are able to let people know how they can do this and where they can find useful information.

each.

How can people pay for a personal assistant?

People usually pay for their own care and support in one or more of the following ways.

- ✓ Direct payment – if someone's assessed by the local council, trust or NHS team as needing support with their care, health or wellbeing, they can choose to have a personal budget and receive this as a direct payment to arrange the care and support that has been agreed.
- ✓ Self-funding – some people use their own money to arrange their care and support.

What happens next?

If someone decides they want to employ their own care and support, they become an individual employer. They take on the role and all of the responsibilities of an employer, including recruitment, induction and training.

This can seem a daunting prospect as there's lots to think about and arrange, but you can reassure them that there's lots of support available. You could arrange for them to speak with someone who already employs their own care and support, so they get a good idea of what's involved and how it can benefit them.

Support for individual employers

Employing personal assistants toolkit

Skills for Care's 'Employing personal assistants' toolkit guides individual employers through the process of recruiting, managing and training their PAs. You might find it useful to read the toolkit and familiarise yourself with this process.



You can access the toolkit online at: www.skillsforcare.org.uk/individualemployers or email marketing@skillsforcare.org.uk for a free, printed copy.

Individual employers can also email us for a free copy, or you can request one on their behalf.

Funding for training

Ongoing support for social workers

Sign up to our monthly social work bulletin to keep up to date with the latest news and developments, including around becoming an individual employer.

You can do this by registering for or logging into your account on the Skills for Care website and ticking the box to receive the 'Social work briefing'.

Visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/register.

You can also get in touch with your locality manager who can signpost you to relevant information, tools and events in your area.

Find your locality manager at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/inyourarea.