

DASL DIRECT PAYMENTS PEER SUPPORT GROUP

5th July 2017

Attendees:

Service users – ALB, KAO, SW, PKB, ES, MN, LC, SM, CR, TBF, ZA, LB, AS, LT, RD, NP, AL, JM, JH, MN, SF, GOP, AR, YC, RLT, LG, AAL, LF, LF, MR, PBB, JH, VLM, AO, MC, MD, HAN, VM, ES, DV, HO, IH, AW, MM, DC, KA.

Speakers – Dianne Spruit, Dave Spruitt, Epayroll UK Ltd

DASL Staff – Joseph Healy, Richard Pargeter, Ferisa Symister

Presentation:

Dianne and Dave Spruit gave a presentation about Epayroll UK Ltd and digital payroll. They will provide a copy of the presentation separately to be circulated by email or by post.

Matters Arising from June meeting:

- The June focussed on issues affecting parents and carers using direct payments for children.
- Funding of suitable activities during school holidays is an important issue. Parents feel that they should be able to use direct payments for activities that meet their children's needs, and this should not be seen as something extra to the way direct payments are usually used.
- There was a discussion at the last meeting with Justin Colman (Head of Service, Children with Disabilities) about the possibility of parents and carers attending panel discussions. This is not currently allowed but many feel strongly that they should have a right to attend, as their views are not necessarily represented by social workers' reports. Justin has promised a further response by the time of the next meeting.
- There will be no meeting in August, as it is difficult for many to attend then. The September meeting will focus on social care and there should be an invited speaker, to be confirmed.

General discussion:

- The Self-Directed Support (SDS) Forum for London has its conference on Friday 7th July. Lauren Johnson and Joseph Healy of DASL's direct payments team are attending. JH will report back at the next meeting.
- These are very difficult times in terms of social care funding, with local authority budgets continually being cut. The government is talking

about a “new blueprint” for social care. There is a shortage of care staff and recruitment is difficult in the current climate. Dianne noted that there are similar issues everywhere, not just Lambeth.

- JH: There have been a lot of issues with financial assessments. People are automatically being put on the maximum client contribution if they don't respond to a letter about the financial assessment.
- JH: Council staffing cuts have an impact on services. For example, there are now only two people in the adult Money Management team.
- An attendee who works in social care as well as being a family carer noted that “not everyone is bad” in Lambeth social services and there are people who really care and want to do a good job. Another attendee agreed that a lot of frontline staff work hard in difficult circumstances and it is appreciated that it isn't always their fault if decisions are made at a higher level.
- JH: There will be training here (We are 336) in September for adults or carers of adults using direct payments. It will be on a Thursday or Friday and there was positive feedback about the training before.
- Free training for Personal Assistants (PAs) is available, but currently only for adult social care. It is not currently funded for people using Personal Health Budgets or carers for children. There is disagreement about who should fund training for children, as it has been argued that this should be under education, but parents and carers strongly disagree with the training being limited to adult social care.
- An attendee argued that training available to professionals should also be available to parents and carers who employ staff with direct payments, for example if you train staff in paediatric care.

Next Meeting: Wednesday 8th September (no August meeting)