

# Direct Payments for care in North Somerset

## Fact sheet 8

### Becoming a Personal Assistant

#### **Role of a personal assistant.**

Personal assistants provide a valuable role in social care. A personal assistant or PA support people to live independently and to lead the life they choose.

Personal Assistants are not employed by a care agency or the local authority but are employed directly by the person they will be supporting or be self-employed.

The role can be flexible, a PA can choose the work with hours to suit them. Being a PA gives you the opportunity to make a real difference to someone's life. PA's generally work with just a few people. This gives the opportunity for them to really get to know the person they work for and build a positive working relationship with that person.

The role of a personal assistant is a varied one and can range from supporting with personal care and household tasks to accompanying people in the community and with social activities. You may also support people in their place of work.



The role will depend on the needs of the individual employing the PA and will be based on the aspects of their life they need support with.

Typical tasks might include:

- Companionship
- Providing transport
- Assisting them while out in the community
- Supporting them at their place of education or work
- Personal care
- Household tasks
- Supporting with health needs

### **Becoming an employed or self-employed PA.**

Employed PA:

- You will be employed directly by the person.
- The employer will set your hours and rate of pay and have a contract of employment with you.
- The employer has the responsibilities of an employer such as ensuring you are paid correctly and that the relevant deductions for tax etc are made.
- You will be entitled to paid annual leave.
- You can opt into a pension scheme.

Self-employed you will:

- Source your own work which involves more than one client.
- Be your own boss.
- Have more freedom over the work you do.
- Be able to set your own rates and be in control of the hours you work.
- Be required to register with HMRC with responsibility to pay tax and NI contributions.
- Need adequate insurance

- Provide evidence of up-to-date DBS
- Need to provide a contract/agreement with your clients.

You can check whether work would be considered employed or self-employed here [Check employment status for tax - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk).

### **Finding work as a PA.**

North Somerset online directory holds a PA register.

[Find a Personal Assistant | North Somerset Online Directory \(n-somerset.gov.uk\)](http://n-somerset.gov.uk)

You can register your details here and look for jobs. To ensure you get the best match for work please put as much information as you can about yourself including availability, interests, location etc. Many individuals with care and support needs are in receipt of direct payments and will use this to pay for their support.

You can also use local papers, job centre and social media to advertise or seek work.

### **Find out more:**

The following organisations/links may be useful

<http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Home.aspx>

[Personal Assistants \(skillsforcare.org.uk\)](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk)

[What is the role of a Personal Assistant? - YouTube](#)

[Skills for Care - Becoming a Personal Assistant In Care on Vimeo](#)  
[e-Learning courses - SCIE](#)

If you are in receipt of or considering claiming universal credit and self-employed you can find out how this could affect you at:

[Universal Credit for the self-employed - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

#### How to contact North Somerset social services:

Care connect is the first point of contact for all social services adult care general enquiries.

Care Connect  
Town Hall  
Walliscotte Grove Road  
Weston-super-Mare  
BS23 1UJ

Telephone: 01275 888 801

email: [careconnect@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:careconnect@n-somerset.gov.uk)

Council documents can be made available in large print, audio, easy read and other formats. Documents on our website can also be emailed to you as plain text files. Help is also available for people who require council information in languages other than English. Contact [Jennifer.monks@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Jennifer.monks@n-somerset.gov.uk)