



Cultural commissioning models

Personal budget model



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What is it

Personalisation is a social care approach where every person who receives support, whether provided by statutory services or funded by themselves, will have choice and control over the shape of that support in all care settings. Following an assessment of their eligibility, financial support can be either allocated a direct payment (a personal budget paid direct to the individual or family) or a personal budget (a sum of money allocated to an individual or family to meet their eligible needs).

People in receipt of a direct payment and/or personal budget can choose to include arts and cultural activities within their support plan and use their allocated budget to pay to attend the sessions. The intention is that this approach provides people with more choice to attend activities that can help them meet the objectives included in their support plan that they have agreed with their local council's social care team.

How does it work?

As councils devolve purchasing responsibility to service users, providers may no longer rely on block contracts with local authorities. Instead, councils are setting up framework agreements, under which providers are accredited to provide services of a particular quality at an agreed price. Arts and cultural organisations are able to put their services forward for accreditation under these new framework agreements and then promote their arts and cultural offer to service users.

The exact approach will differ for each arts and cultural organisation and is likely to be shaped by their relationship with their local council. In some cases the local council may contribute grant funding to support the arts and cultural organisations in getting their service off the ground. This can be particularly useful in funding a development phase where the arts offer is co-designed with the council's adult social care team, service users and artists. In essence the council is helping to share

the risk associated with setting up a new service, in particular given that it may take some time to build up demand and subsequent attendances from service users.

The number and frequency of sessions promoted to service users may vary dependent on the model agreed during the development phase. It is usual for sessions to be offered once or twice a week with service users required to commit to booking a minimum number of sessions (often following attendance at a taster session). The cost per session is usually agreed in advance with the council as part of the framework agreement. An example cost per session from existing arts and cultural organisations delivering activities using personal budgets is £50.

Requiring service users to commit to a minimum number of sessions is an important element of the personal budget model as this provides a guaranteed source of income for arts and cultural organisations delivering the sessions and facilitates planning as well as staff recruitment.

Who are the commissioners?

Ultimately the commissioner is the individual with a personal budget or direct payment as they are electing to use this to cover the cost of attending their chosen arts and cultural activity. However the local council has a key role to play. **The Care Act 2014** places a duty on councils to ensure service users can access a diverse market of providers in order to meet their care and support needs. Consequently local councils have a role in understanding how people want to live a good life and make sure that different types of support and activities are available at the right price to support local people. This process is known as market shaping.

It may also be possible for arts and cultural organisations to be commissioned by **individual service fund (ISF)** providers who may take on the role of managing personal budgets on behalf of people who don't wish to be personally responsible for managing all aspects of their care and support.

How is the service contract organised?

The structure, frequency and pricing for the arts activities are agreed in advance with the councils adult social care team as part of the Framework Agreement. The activities are then promoted to people in receipt of personal budgets or direct payments through a number of channels.

Dependent on the delivery model established a contract is signed between the service user wishing to attend their chosen activity and the arts and cultural organisation providing the sessions. Invoices are then issued to service users on a monthly basis to cover the duration of their booking. Alternative invoices may be issued to the ISF provider managing the fund on behalf of the individual.

How is the service evaluated?

At a high-level an individual's participation in arts and cultural activities should aim to contribute to the outcomes outlined in the **Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF)**, specifically:

- Enhancing quality of life for people with care and support needs;
- Delaying and reducing the need for care and support; and
- Ensuring that people have a positive experience of care and support

The approach to measuring the impact of the arts activities is likely to be included in the Framework Agreement with the local council. Generally this will incorporate a review of the extent to which the participant's attendance has enabled them to meet the objectives included in their individual support plan.

Arts and cultural organisations are usually required to provide data on the number of participants attending the sessions and retention rates. A combination of participant consultation and professional observation is likely to be required to assess the impact of the sessions on a range of social and learning outcomes, including:

- confidence;
- self-esteem;
- creativity and skills;
- psychological well-being;
- social inclusion;
- communication and social skills; and
- motivation

Building sustaining working relations

Continuity and consistency of service is important for service users electing to attend the arts and cultural activities. Incorporating arts activities within a Framework Agreement provides an opportunity for arts and cultural organisations to develop longer-term links with the council's adult social care team in order to review take-up and explore new models of meeting service user's care and support needs. A process of co-design involving the local council can be an important step in securing senior-level support to ensure arts and cultural activities are promoted effectively by support brokers¹ / care coordinators and ISF providers.

Development and delivery of the service is likely to require arts and cultural organisations to build links with service user groups, carers and family members who all play an important role in encouraging and supporting personal budget holders to engage in arts and creative activities.

¹ A support broker supports someone with an estimated personal budget to work out the best way to meet their social care needs and get the life they want.

Scalability

In their market shaping role local councils are likely to be interested in services and activities that can be delivered at scale thus providing consistency of service and opportunity for everyone with a support plan. However a number of factors

need to be considered when assessing the feasibility of scaling activities delivered by arts and cultural organisations funded through the use of personal budgets or direct payments, namely:

- understanding the maximum/optimum group size for sessions to ensure that identified social and learning outcomes are achieved;
- the availability of artists with experience of/interest in working with people with care and support needs;
- the availability and location of suitable/accessible venues from which to deliver arts activities;
- the capacity of the arts and cultural organisation to coordinate and manage a larger programme of activities;
- the level of demand from personal budget holders in the short, medium and long-term; and
- competition from other providers including but not restricted to arts and cultural activities

Local councils may look to encourage or facilitate consortium arrangements to enable provision from a number of arts and cultural organisations. This can provide benefits in terms of sharing delivery risk, allowing service users to access a wider range of art forms and enabling broader geographical coverage with sessions delivered from a number of centres.

A process of scaling activities may also involve arts and cultural provider promoting their activities across a number of local council areas. This can be helpful in ensuring minimum participation numbers are achieved although travel costs and logistics for the personal budget holder need to be carefully considered.

Potential challenges

There are a number of challenges associated with setting up and delivering a service model funded through personal budgets or direct payments. A key challenge is achieving sufficient take-up of the sessions to ensure that the service is financially viable. Pricing of the sessions, contracting for a group of sessions and effective promotion are important elements of a successful model.

Although participant's personal needs can be catered for by appointing a dedicated member of staff to work alongside the artists delivering the session, many people may elect to bring their own personal assistant. As this

involves paying to both attend the session and for the time of their personal assistant this can push the cost over what is affordable within their budget. The impact of the introduction of the National Living Wage may also have the effect of increasing the cost of employing personal assistants. At the same time reductions in the value of personal budgets for some service users following reassessment may result in the price per session agreed with the council as part of the Framework Agreement becoming increasingly unaffordable.

Arts and cultural organisations are not the only providers looking to support personal budget holders. The process of market shaping is helping to provide more choice for service users. Competing providers may offer arts activities at a lower cost although these may not be directly comparable in terms of quality, content and their ability to deliver positive outcomes for service users. It can however be difficult for personal budget holders to distinguish between different providers and cost may be an overriding factor in their decision.

People in receipt of a personal budget can also encounter a degree of inflexibility from their local council who may be reluctant to amend their existing support plan to enable their attendance at arts activities, for example where their budgets have been block-allocated to day centres or private care providers. This may serve to restrict participation to people that have been recently assessed and with a new support plan.

Support brokers from the local council or ISF providers managing personal budgets on behalf of the people may also seek to identify and purchase activities that can be delivered throughout the year. As such arts and cultural activities delivered in a block of sessions rather than continuously across the year may be perceived as less attractive.

Finally support brokers, family members, carers and personal assistants may influence the choice of personal budget holders as to which activities they wish to commission. Consequently their perceptions on the quality, value and cost of arts and cultural activities may direct people to seek out alternative provision. This highlights the importance of effective marketing and promotion to a range of influencers.

Top tips

- Co-design the service with the local council adult social care team and ensure that it is included in the menu of activities used by support brokers to help people in receipt of a personal budget to navigate local opportunities;
- It is important to ensure that artists and creative practitioners have some experience of working with people with care and support needs and/or are prepared to do some training to ensure quality and appropriateness of delivery;
- Where possible review participant's support plans to ensure that their personal aspirations and goals can be met during the arts activities;
- Clearly communicate the purpose and value of the arts activities to support brokers, family members and carers. Inviting people to observe a session or participate in a taster session can be effective in encouraging people to commit to attend;
- Build links with ISF providers to promote the arts activities but also discuss the service model and how this meets their planning requirements;
- Clearly set-out the parameters for the service for example the level of personal care that can be provided the support worker and whether participants are required to bring their own lunch; and
- Requiring personal budget holders to commit to a minimum number of sessions is important as this provides a degree of certainty with regards to income, facilitates better planning and also reduces the risk associated with recruiting paid artists and support workers to deliver the sessions

Examples

- **Core Arts, London** – works closely with people who purchase activities to benefit their well-being and social inclusion;
- **Escape Arts, Warwickshire** – delivers tailored activities to meet diverse needs and interests', ensuring every individual has the opportunity to engage fully in a creative journey;
- **HeartnSoul, London** – works with people with learning disabilities wishing to develop their talents and opportunities; and
- **Tin Arts, County Durham** – runs participatory dance projects for people of all ages and abilities funded through direct payments

The Cultural Commissioning Programme, funded by Arts Council England, works with arts and cultural organisations to help them better engage in public sector commissioning, with public service commissioners to help them understand the potential of arts and culture to deliver their outcomes, and also with policy makers and stakeholders nationally. The first phase of the programme (July 13 – June 16) was delivered by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), in partnership with New Philanthropy Capital and New Economics Foundation. A second phase (July 16 – Dec 17) is delivered by NCVO.