

# Interview Schedule and Topic Guide for Telephone Interviews with Key informants

## 1) Background/History

How long have you been involved with direct payments? In what capacity?

What were your main expectations of the 1996 Act? How far have these been achieved?

What do you see as the main differences between direct and indirect payments? Do you know of different ways of offering direct payments (e.g. Independent Living Trusts)?

## 2) Current status of direct payments

What do you regard as the main barriers to the expansion of direct payments nationally/locally? What are main factors influencing the take-up of direct payments?

Why do you think direct payments have expanded more quickly in some areas/ part of the country?

What do you consider are the main advantages and disadvantages of direct payments policy - first for disabled people, second, for local authorities?

Are resources made available to aid disabled people in finding the appropriate support/personal assistance?

Does the availability of personal assistants in this area meet the demands of disabled people adequately? (Explore – what is being done to address this).

## 3) Labour force factors

What part have different professional groups (e.g. social workers, doctors) played in encouraging or limiting the uptake of direct payments? How have they done this? What is the impact of DPs on the work of professional groups such as social workers? Is there much variation in the interpretation of local authority/trust policy by individual professionals?

What views of DPs are held by public sector workers and their unions? How influential have these views been?

Does the availability of personal assistants in this area meet the demands of disabled people adequately?

#### **4) Assessment**

When undertaking community care assessments, do social workers discuss the direct payment route with service users, or do they wait until someone requests a DP?

Are routinely advocates involved in supporting individuals undergoing assessment?

What factors influence the number of hours of support allocated to individual service users? What is done to ensure consistency in assessments?

To what extent are assessments influenced by budgetary constraints?

#### **5) Access and Equity**

Has analysis been undertaken of patterns of DP use by different social groups (e.g. by gender, ethnicity, age, nature of impairment etc)? What patterns have emerged? If some groups are more likely to get DPs, why is this the case?

Are systems in place at local authority/trust level to ensure equality of access by different groups? If so, can you tell us about these?

#### **6) Role of Disabled People's Organisations/ Activism**

What do you think has been the impact, if any, of disabled people's organisations on the growth of direct payment schemes nationally/in E/S/W/NI/ and locally?

#### **7) Future directions**

What do you think is the future direction of policy over the next few years?

Do you think that direct payments meet adequately the support needs of all disabled people?

What do you feel is the proper role of support organisations?

How should direct payments be funded (centrally or locally)?

Should alternatives be offered to direct payments? If so, what forms should these take?