

Community Health and Social Care Services

Resource Allocation System Policy

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Version History

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Oldham Cares is committed to promoting individual wellbeing and supporting independence through preventing, reducing or delaying the need for care and support. We aim to provide a service that is person-led and person-centred in a clear and understandable way.
- 1.2 Adult Social Care services, which forms part of the Community Health and Social Care Service in Oldham, have a duty to assess those who may be eligible for support from social services and to provide care and support services to meet any unmet eligible social care needs.
- 1.3 Eligible needs are defined as
 - needs arising from or related to a physical or mental impairment or illness;
 - as a result of the needs the person is unable to achieve two or more of the outcomes specified in the regulations;
 - As a consequence of being unable to achieve these outcomes, there is, or there is likely to be, a significant impact on the adult's wellbeing.
- 1.4 We will complete an assessment with you and if the result is that you have eligible needs you will be allocated a personal budget. Your personal budget will enable you to meet your assessed eligible needs. We will agree with you what services and support you will access to meet those needs and document it in a care and support plan with you.
- 1.5 The Resource Allocation system (RAS) is used to provide you with an indicative amount of money you would need to meet your eligible needs. This amount is known as your indicative personal budget.
- 1.6 The indicative budget is used as a guide for the development of your care and support plan which details the services and support you will access to meet your eligible needs. Once your care and support plan is agreed this amount becomes your final personal budget. As the original budget is only indicative, the final amount may increase or decrease, depending on the way in which your needs will be met.
- 1.7 The RAS works by translating your support needs identified in your assessment into an amount of money.
- 1.8 The use of a RAS is a fair, equitable and transparent way to allocate resources, supporting the principle of person-centred care, and adheres with the guidance set out in The Care Act (2014.)
- 1.9 This policy provides the framework for the way in which the Oldham RAS will allocate resources to meet your eligible needs.

2 Legal context

- 2.1 Our adult social care offer, including our RAS model, has been developed in line with the Care Act 2014 and other relevant legislation, statutory guidance and council policy.
- 2.2 The Care Act 2014 provides a single legal framework for the provision of adult social care services.
- 2.3 The Care Act 2014 requires Local Authorities to:
- Assess (or facilitate self-assessment of) all local adults and carers with potential social care needs in a fair and consistent way, using a single assessment tool and applying the new national eligibility criteria;
 - Operate a method of allocating a personal budget to all adults and carers who have been deemed as eligible under the criteria – based upon their assessment of need;
 - Focus on meeting the preferred personal outcomes of eligible adults and carers;
 - The solution should not be expected to give a precise estimation of the costs for each individual that reflects their individual circumstances but should give a reasonably accurate ‘ball-park’ figure that should enable care and support planning to be undertaken with a budget in mind.
- 2.4 Section 24 of The Care Act (2014) sets out the steps a local authority must take when it is required to meet unmet eligible needs:
- Prepare a care and support plan for the adult concerned.
 - Tell the adult which (if any) of the needs that it is going to meet may be met by direct payments, and
 - Help the adult with deciding how to have their needs met
- 2.4 Although it is not a statutory requirement to provide an indicative budget the Care and support statutory guidance states that:
- “The allocation of a clear upfront indicative (or ‘ball-park’) allocation at the start of the planning process will help people to develop the plan and make appropriate choices over how their needs are met.”*
- 2.5 The care and support statutory guidance states that the process used to set a personal budget must be transparent, completed in a timely manner and that the method used is robust. It also states that it must be possible for the sufficiency of the final amount identified to be challenged.
- 2.6 In line with guidance if you do not agree with the final amount that you have been allocated there is a process in place for you to appeal this.

3. Policy Approach

- 3.1 This policy applies to people in receipt of Adult Social Care services in Oldham who have been assessed as having eligible needs.
- 3.2 It provides the context of utilising a Resource Allocation System (RAS) to calculate a person's indicative budget at a local level in Oldham and explains how this works.
- 3.3 The RAS has some exclusions including costs associated with care management, intermediate care, administration costs and provision of information.
- 3.4 At this time, the RAS only allocates funding relating to community-based services and does not include residential or nursing care.

4. What is a Resource Allocation System?

- 4.1 A Resource Allocation System (RAS) is a method used to calculate how much money you may be entitled to, to meet your eligible social care needs, in Oldham this amount is known as an indicative personal budget.
- 4.2 The RAS used in Oldham has been developed by a company called Imosphere and is used by over 40 other local authorities where it has been proven to be an accurate way of calculating an indicative personal budget.
- 4.3 It uses information on the services available locally to improve accuracy and calculate a realistic indication of what it may cost to meet your unmet eligible needs.
- 4.4 It links to the assessment of your needs that we have completed with you and uses the information you have given us about your needs and circumstances. It is aligned with the statutory eligibility criteria to calculate your indicative budget. The criteria covers:
 - Maintaining a habitable home environment
 - Managing and maintaining nutrition
 - Toileting needs
 - Personal care
 - Appropriately clothed
 - Developing and maintaining family or other personal relationships
 - Making use of necessary facilities or services in the local community
 - Accessing and engaging in work, training, education or volunteering
 - Carrying out any caring responsibilities for a child
 - Making use of your home safely
- 4.5 The information you provide in your assessment is combined and analysed to provide an indication of the level of care and support you need and uses this, along with information about the support you already receive, to calculate your indicative budget.

5. Why use a RAS?

- 5.1 Although the Care Act does not mandate the provision of an indicative budget or the use of a RAS, the guidance does state that an indicative amount should be shared with you at the start of the care planning process. In Oldham we feel it is important to do this as we want you to be involved in the decisions being made about how your care and support needs are met and are committed to providing person-led, person-centred care.
- 5.2 The guidance states that the method used to calculate your budget should allow for timely, transparent and robust information to be given, so that you can be involved in the development of your care and support plan. We have looked at and consulted on different ways of doing this and have decided that using a RAS is the most appropriate option.
- 5.3 The use of a RAS allows us to give you upfront information about the amount that is available to you to meet your needs. This helps you to make decisions about how you want your needs to be met and allows you to be involved in the development of your care and support plan.
- 5.4 Using a RAS allows us to ensure that we allocate resources fairly, equitably and consistently based on your identified eligible needs.
- 5.5 As the RAS uses the information in your assessment it means that we can explain to you how your indicative personal budget is calculated and allows you to be confident that the indicative personal budget you have been given will be sufficient to meet your needs as it is based on what you have told us.

6. What is an indicative personal budget used for?

- 6.1 We will work with you to complete an assessment of your needs, as part of this we will ask you questions about your needs, the outcomes you want to achieve, what is important to you and the care and support that you already receive. If the result of your assessment is that you have eligible needs the information and answers you have given us will be used to calculate your indicative personal budget.
- 6.2 Your indicative personal budget is a guide to the amount of money that is available to meet your care and support needs and will support the development of your care and support plan.
- 6.3 We will give you information about the different types of care and support that are available and will work with you to co-produce your care and support plan, to ensure that it fully meets your needs and reflects the outcomes that you want to achieve. Once we have jointly agreed your care and support plan it will be reviewed and approved, subject to meeting your needs appropriately. At the point it is approved, your indicative personal budget becomes your final personal budget.
- 6.4 The amount of your final personal budget might be more or less than your indicative budget, dependent on your personal circumstances and the decisions that you make with us about how you want your needs to be met.

7. Approving changes in the indicative personal budget

- 7.1 The amount calculated by the RAS is only an indication; your final budget may increase or decrease depending on your care and support plan and the decisions we jointly make about how you want your needs to be met.
- 7.2 In order for your care and support plan to be agreed it needs to fully detail how your needs and outcomes are to be met along and include information about what it will cost to meet your needs in this way.
- 7.3 If the cost of the services in your care and support plan is equivalent to your indicative personal budget and the services detailed are appropriate then your care and support plan can be authorised.
- 7.4 If the costed amount of your services is 10% more or less than your indicative budget then before your care and support plan is agreed it will need to be discussed by the person who completed your assessment with you and their manager, by doing this we can make sure that all your needs and outcomes are being met in an appropriate way.
- 7.5 In some cases where the assessment and RAS identify that you have a high level of support needs, your care and support plan will need to be discussed at a panel. This is to make sure that the correct levels and type of support are put in place to meet your needs and that all suitable alternative options have been considered and discussed with you.

8. Reviewing and monitoring

- 8.1 When you first have a care and support plan put into place we will review this with you after 6 weeks to check that the care and support services are meeting your needs and outcomes. We will do this either through a conversation or by meeting with you.
- 8.2 We will complete a review of your needs and support that is in place at least every 12 months to see if anything has changed and to make sure that the care and support you are receiving is still appropriate. If your needs have changed, we will work with you to co-produce a new support plan.
- 8.3 If your needs or circumstances change during this 12-month period you do not have to wait for your review and can contact us at any time to request the review is completed sooner.

9. Financial Monitoring

- 9.1 The implementation and use of the RAS will be closely monitored to ensure that it remains equitable and transparent and calculates indicative personal budgets that are sufficient to meet a person's needs.
- 9.2 At least bi-annually we will complete a review that looks at the indicative personal budget amounts calculated and the final personal budgets agreed, across all age groups and types of services, to check that the amounts being calculated are accurate.
- 9.3 At least annually, we will review the configuration of the RAS. The configuration includes information about the support and services available to meet needs locally, by reviewing this annually, changes can be reflected ensuring that the RAS remains accurate.

10. Appeals, complaints and compliments

- 10.1 If you are not happy about the decisions made regarding your assessment, personal budget or care and support plan and want to appeal this, in the first instance we would ask that you contact your care assessor or their manager to discuss your concerns. Wherever possible we will work with you to resolve your concerns.
- 10.2 If you are still unhappy after this then we will give you information about our complaints process, or you can contact our complaints team directly on 0161 770 8122 or by email at asc.complaints@oldham.gov.uk