

Direct Payments - Have your voice heard

Feedback Report

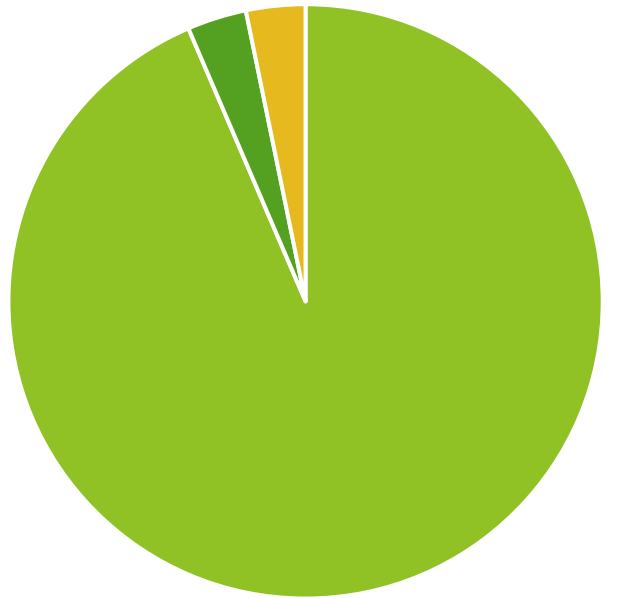
Give me the headlines?

- 74% of respondents reported that direct payments are working “somewhat well” or “very well” for them.
- Respondents who reported frustration with the process indicated difficulty communicating with agencies and the council.
- 42% of respondents reported a “negative” or “very negative experience trying to find a PA
- Respondents who reported frustration with PA services found that pay was too low, retention was too difficult, and organisational work too reliant on the service user to be a meaningful relief for carers

Who responded?

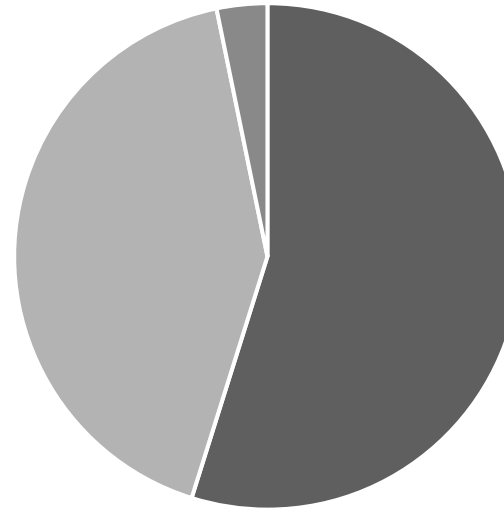
We received 31 responses to the survey, which can be broken down as follows.

Where do you live?



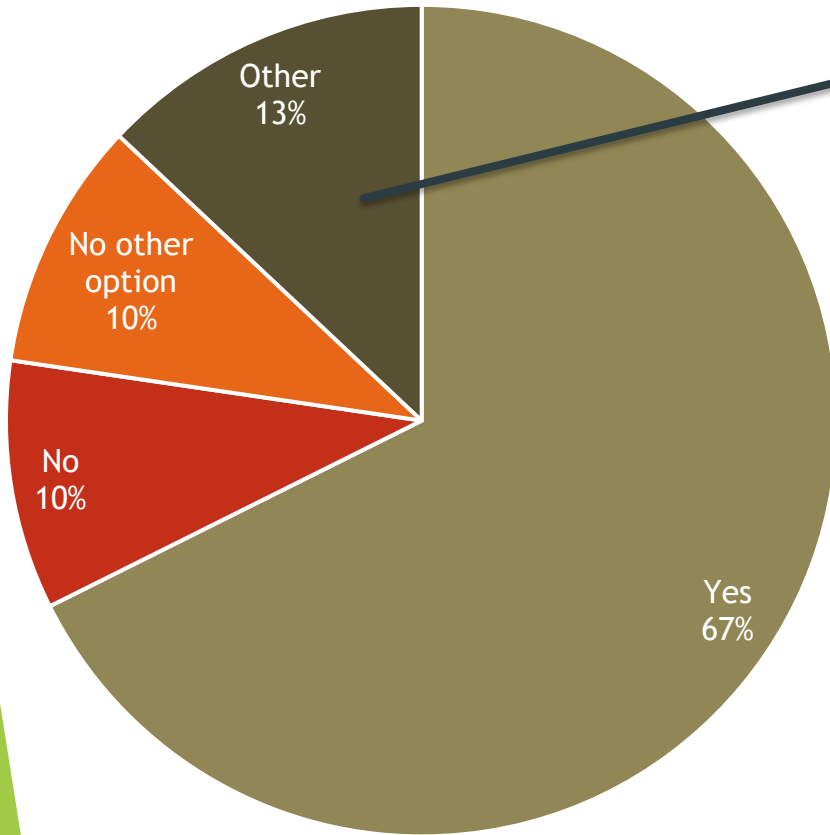
■ Brighton ■ Peacehaven ■ West Sussex

I am...



- Receiving Direct Payments
- Carer for someone trying to get or receiving direct payments
- Trying to get direct payments

Are direct payments the right option for you?



“They would be if there was more flexibility around what they can pay for.”

“I don’t like the way they are managed.”

“Whilst there is some degree of choice about what they can be spent on, it is an arduous & time consuming process trying to get clarity about this (...)”

Why aren't they right for you?

“In the 4 years that my son has had direct payments we have found it really difficult to recruit, train and retain PA staff (...) the amount of time I spent doing administrative work for this cancelled out any benefit - it's the parent carers role to write an advert, advertise, monitor & respond to replies, speak to applicants do interviews, arrange paperwork for stating, endlessly chase up DBS checks, even for people already working in a school in Brighton and Hove who had a current DBS. (...) **A ridiculous amount of work for extremely little respite from my caring role which was the original purpose...**”

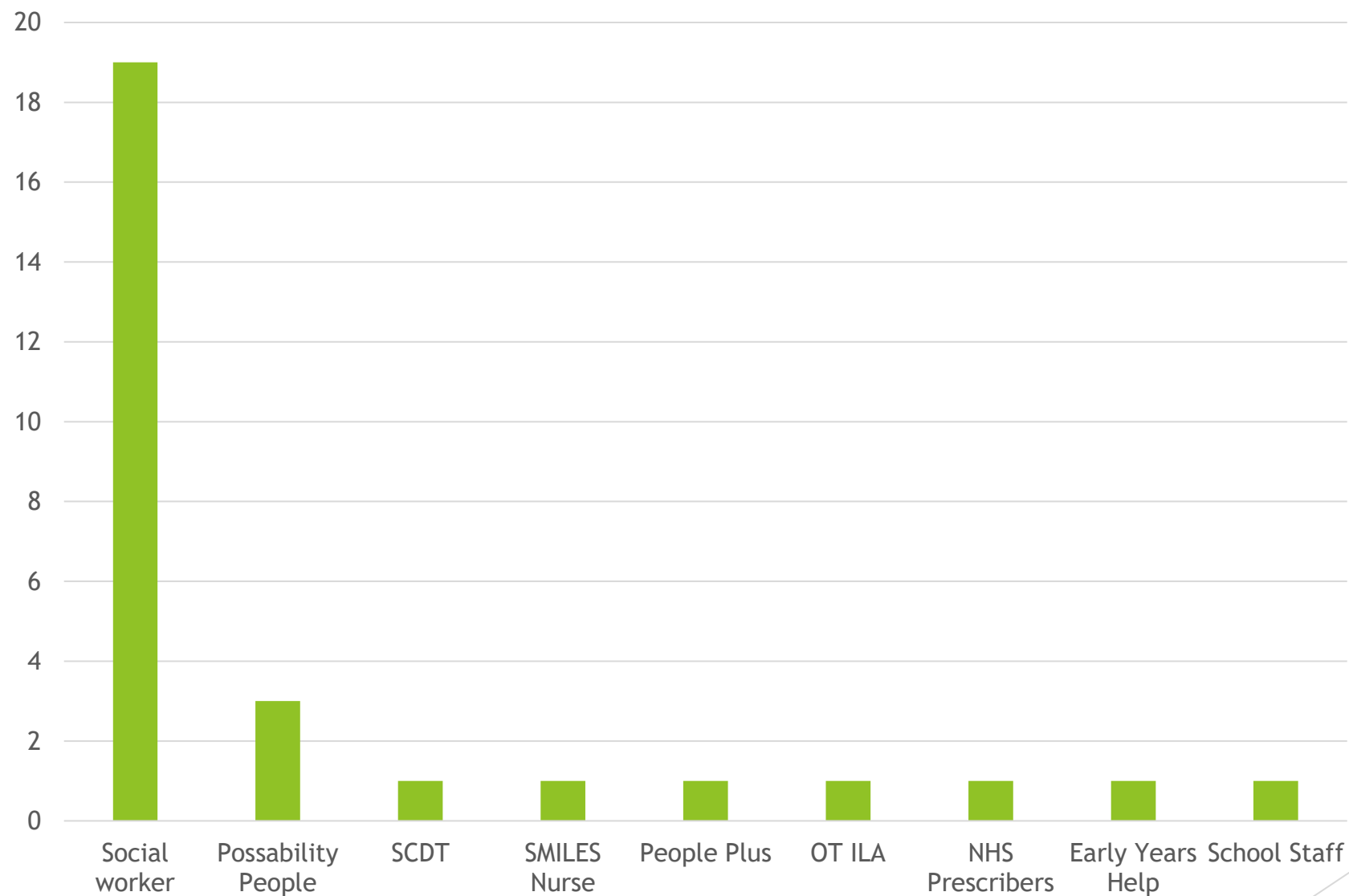
Why aren't they right for you?

“Employment of PAs for my child has been a difficult process; **advertising one's child is difficult, recruiting and interviewing someone whilst caring at the same time, checking DBS, references etc, the pay is insufficient to recruit and retain. Turning parents into employers and trainers is problematic** and not the right model of social care provision in my view. The council should have responsibility for recruitment, training and matching social care to families.”

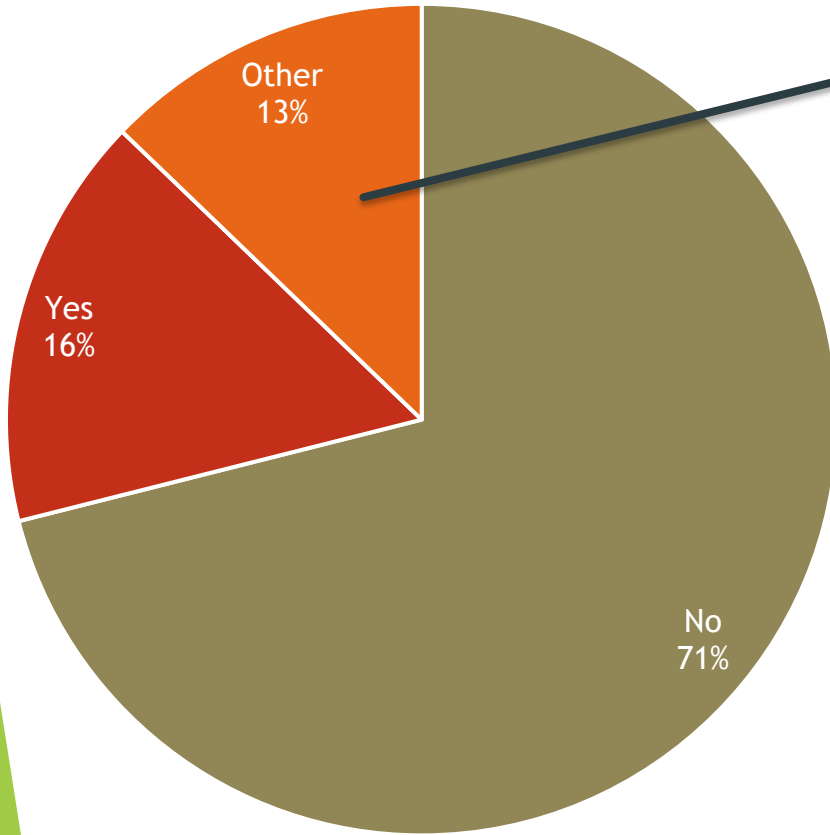
Why aren't they right for you?

“Whilst there is some degree of choice about what they can be spent on, it is an **arduous & time consuming process** trying to get clarity about this. Also whilst payroll is much appreciated, **recruiting is getting harder**. The lack of training & support for PAs is extremely frustrating. **Some PAs have been very good. Others lack motivation & ambition for my disabled child. The rate of pay remains poor.**”

Which professionals have been involved with your direct payments?



Have you been offered an alternative to direct payments?



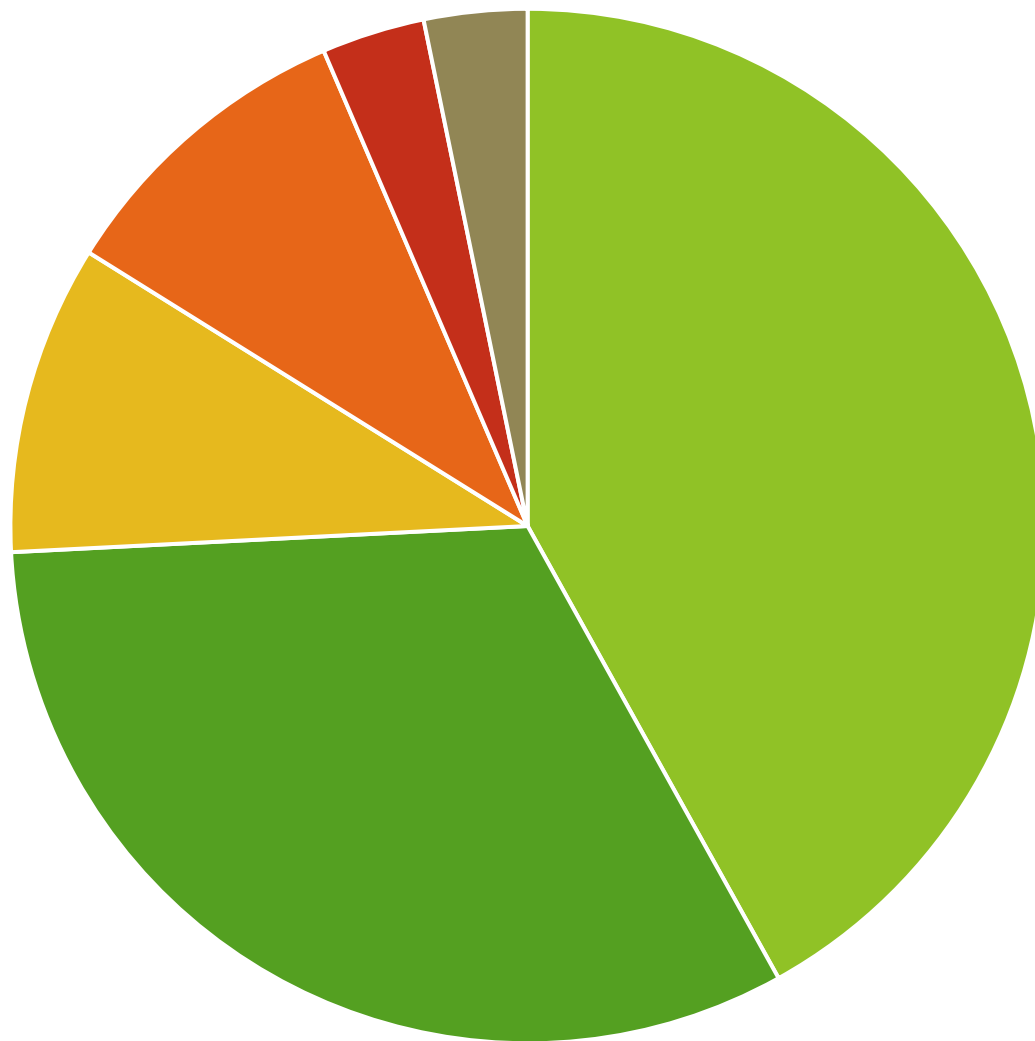
“What alternative? There isn't one!”

“I don't know.”

“I was under Sovereign/caburn care for a few years. I have been on direct payments for approx 12 years now.”

“There was a half-hearted attempt to use provider services but they seemed incapable of offering a person-centred option (...)”

How well do you feel direct payments are working for you?



■ Very well ■ Somewhat well ■ Not particularly well ■ Not working at all for me ■ N/A ■ I now have chc

Where's our help needed?

- Several respondents outlined issues with Possability People's PA noticeboard functionality, regarding quality and regularity of carers.
- 25% of those who did not use a service or agency to find an PA **did not know any of these services existed.**
- 60% of those who did not believe direct payments were appropriate for them directly cited **difficulty in recruiting** for and sustaining PA roles.
- 30% of respondents indicated a **negative or very negative experience with the initial application** for direct payments.

Respondent Experience

“Very difficult to find information, to find eligibility criteria, to understand the processes for arranging payment, very confusing with so many different organisations involved. Horrendous system for sorting out [DBS] checks, take unreasonably long time, lots of delays. **Lots of additional stress on top of having a disabled child.**”

“[Possability] people[‘s] notice board doesn’t work there needs to be another way to find PA’s”

What can we do?

- Joined up work with BHCC to centralise resources supporting carers with recruiting process.
- Consider options for supporting carers during the recruitment process.
- Publicly communicate what services are available, compile and share resources.
- Gather feedback from carers about why they leave roles.
- Gather feedback from social workers supporting DP applications, to see where the barriers are.