

Dosh Newsletter

Winter 2019-20



Welcome to the Winter 2019-20 edition of the Dosh Newsletter

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Please contact meike.beckford@dosh.org if Dosh can be of help to you and the people you support.

Meike Beckford – Lead Director

Disclaimer: We have tried to ensure that the information in this pack is accurate. We will not accept liability for any loss, damage or inconvenience arising because of any use of the information.

The Dosh Team

Lead Director

- Meike Beckford

Office Team

- **New Business Advocates**
 - Peter Smith
 - Grace Calvert
- **Administrators**
 - Angela Atkin (Mon-Wed)
 - Lisa Lett (Tues-Fri)
 - Alison Buckley (Mon-Fri)
 - Emily Clarke (Fri)
- **Personal Assistant to LD**
 - Kerry Measures

Finance Team

- **Financial Administrator**
 - Angelika Bogacka
- **Financial Assistants**
 - Mike Counsell (Wed-Fri)
 - Stephanie Strickland (Mon-Fri excl. Wed)
 - Laura Davy (Mon-Wed)
 - Grace Sodzi (Thu-Fri)

Office Contact Details

Email: doshoffice@dosh.org

Phone: 0300 303 1288

Named Financial Advocates

South West

- Lesley Discombe (Devon)
- Tony Killeen (Devon)
- Kath Oxlee (Somerset/Wiltshire)

Dorset

- Sue Metelko
- Debby Griffiths
- Mel Dean
- Mary Hurl

Wales & West

- Jane Richardson
- Judy Krasker
- Susan Vickers
- Carole Postins

East

- Mike Kitcher
- Bob Bye
- Jill Norfield
- Tony Prime

Northamptonshire

- Mngqobi Dube

North

- Julie Fairclough
- Shameema Kurawle: Mid/North Lancashire
- **Recruiting: Scotland*

East Midlands

- Phillipa Gould
- Sarah Bolger
- Michaela Le Bail
- Lisa Winter

Dosh News

Welcome to our new team members!



We have a few new members to welcome to the Dosh team. **Mary** joined the team in November. Mary is joining Sue, Mel and Debby as Financial Advocate for Dorset. **Kath** joined in November and is the new advocate for Wiltshire and Somerset and **Shameema** will be joining us in the North this week! **Grace S** has also joined us as Finance Assistant and Graduate Trainee, working in Grantham.

In September, we were joined by **Tony** Prime in Essex and **Julie** Fairclough in Greater Manchester and Lancashire.

Goodbye to Steph!



We have recently said goodbye to our very valued team member Steph who left us in November to start an exciting new career with Police Scotland. She has worked for Dosh for many years and will be missed by many.

Thank you to Steve!



Steve Raw, our Managing Director has left Dosh to take up a secondment role as Head of Workforce Strategy and Engagement with Thera Trust. We want to thank him for his leadership and support to everyone in Dosh over the last 10+ years. His vision, commitment and hard work are an inspiration to us all.

Safer Winter Driving



car

If you are eligible for PIP, you may be able to join the Motability Scheme which allows you to use your enhanced rate mobility component to lease a new car, scooter or powered wheelchair.

Find out more here: www.motability.co.uk/about-the-scheme/who-can-join/.

Motability have collaborated with Kwik Fit on four simple car checks for safer winter driving.

1. Check your screen wash bottle and top it up regularly

A lot of dirt and grime ends up on the windscreen during winter, so having plenty of screen wash will help to maintain your view.

2. Check that all your lights are working and check them regularly

If you have a blown bulb in your brake light, you could receive a fixed penalty notice if stopped by the police. Also, other road users may not be able to see you clearly in wintry conditions.

3. Check your tyres every few weeks

Adequate tread is critical to help tyres grip cold and icy roads. Make sure you have at least 2mm of tread on all your tyres.

4. Check your coolant level and top it up if necessary. It protects your engine from extreme cold temperatures

Coolant is stored in a reservoir under the bonnet and is usually a bright-pink or blue colour. Check your vehicle handbook, or you can ask your dealer, if you're having trouble finding it.

Funeral Costs Update



An important update from the DWP Monthly Partnership Newsletter.

money

Funeral Expenses Payment can help to pay for some of the costs of the following:

- burial fees for a plot
- cremation fees, including the cost of the doctor's certificate
- travel to arrange or go to the funeral
- the cost of moving the body within the UK, if it's being moved more than 50 miles
- death certificates or other documents

From spring 2020, the maximum amount families can claim from the Funeral Expenses Payment scheme to help meet costs for additional expenses such as a coffin, flowers and funeral directors' fees **will rise by 43%, from £700 to £1,000**. This payment is on top of the existing allowances that pay for funeral necessities listed above.

Dosh Days



team

It was great to have the whole Dosh team together at the beginning of December to share stories and bounce ideas around. We were also joined by partners from Thera Trust to discuss our new strategy.

Our strategy and purpose ideas concluded in the following word cloud:



As a part of this we also tried to define our purpose.



purpose

“To empower, give voice to and enable each individual with a learning disability to be more independent and have more control over their money... to live the life they choose.

Benefits Updates



benefits

75% of PIP appeals won by claimants

PIP statistics show only around 15% of mandatory reconsiderations lead to a changed award in the person's favour. On the other hand, 75% of PIP appeals are decided in favour of the person claiming benefits!

Claims take 13-16 weeks to be decided from the date they were received by the DWP. There are 2.2 million claimants on PIP.

Help with Bus Fares from the Job Centre



bus

Ask the work coaches at the Job Centre about the **Flexible Support Fund** and extra payments they can provide.

The government say:

'To assist with the affordability of public transport, and where an appointment at a Jobcentre has been agreed as necessary, **Work Coaches are able to consider the reimbursement of a claimant's travel costs.** In exceptional situations, where a claimant's requirements cannot be met in any other way, an advance payment can be made.'

Protect Vulnerable Clients on Universal Credit



protect

If someone is identified as having complex needs, then the DWP should tailor and/ or turn off their conditionality – these are requirements to do things like look for a job. This will reduce the risk that the person's claim is sanctioned or closed.

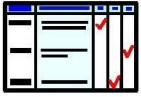
You can ask for this by putting a note in their journal and / or use [this Citizens Advice form](#) which can be uploaded onto the UC system. Ask the work coach to take this into account.

DWP guidance states-

‘Complex needs mean the claimant is experiencing some difficult life event or personal circumstances that means it would be unreasonable to expect them to meet their current work-related requirements. In such cases the work coach can ‘turn off’ conditionality requirements.’

(Advice for Decision Makers- chapter J and Chapter K2)

BID Form Changes



At the last Dosh Day, we had several working groups involving advocates, office and finance working on the BID (Best Interest Decision) form and process to get it working a little better.

form

The main aims were to:

- make it easier to complete
- have one clear record, with everything on one form
- get clear payment instructions to Dosh Finance

Support teams should have already received our new form template from our advocates. If you haven't, please ask your advocate.



changes

The groups made some amendments to the BID form and process, as you will have seen to remove the payments details from the initial BID form. You will now be sent a separate form after the BID is cleared if we need to make a particular online order or booking, so we can get all the details we need.

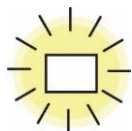


improvements

The big shift is getting BID forms that include all information on them, include Circle of Support involvement and answers to every section in the form. Having everything in one place means it's easy to follow and understand and can be checked easily later on.

We hope this new template will make it easier for everyone involved. If you have any questions or suggestions, please let us know.

New Referral Form



new

We have a new referral form that has been in use since November.

We have made the changes to ensure we have the correct, detailed information we need to start a referral, based on our experience and some hiccups we've encountered. In particular:



information

- a clear capacity assessment and BID process for referrals
- additional information on capacity around all areas of money
- supporting documents e.g. bank statements where possible



mental capacity

Lots of people who refer to Dosh find it difficult to answer the capacity questions. If you are referring someone to Dosh, the first question we need you to answer is:

- **Can they manage their own benefits?** (Do they have capacity to understand what benefits are, what actions they need to take and the consequences of doing/not doing those things? Can they deal with changes like benefit assessment forms, PIP or Universal Credit)?

Then, if they **cannot** do this, they may need someone else's help. You can then make a **best interest decision** with their circle of support to:

- Look at whether they need an appointee, deputy or guardian
- Weigh up different options e.g. Dosh, family, friends, Council – what can they offer, what does it cost, will it work for them?



queries

If you have any queries about a referral, please let us know. We also welcome any feedback to make sure it is fit for purpose.

How to keep warm and healthy this winter with a disability



It is important to stay warm and healthy when the cold weather sets in. It is often the time when people are more prone to illness.

Willowbrook Mobility Direct have provided some tips.

tips



house

Keep your home warm

Firstly, it is essential to get your boiler fully serviced. This will ensure that it won't stop working when you need it the most!

Once you are certain that it is in order, it's worth setting your heating to a timer to ensure that your living room will be the perfect temperature all day and that your bedroom will be heated in time for when you go to bed.

If you have limited mobility, we recommend keeping your living room temperature at around 21°, and your bedroom temperature to at least 18°. This will help to prevent common illnesses such as colds.



yourself

Keep yourself warm

Layering up your clothing is proven to be much more beneficial than wearing one thick jumper. This is because thin materials such as wool, cotton, and fleece help to maintain body heat. However, getting one layer of clothing on your body can be strenuous if you are a wheelchair or a mobility scooter user. Therefore, we recommend wearing thermal clothing underneath your every-day clothes to preserve your body's heat.

A vast proportion of heat leaves your body through your neck and head, therefore wearing a hat and a scarf is extremely important too.



Stay healthy

It is important to ensure you continue to eat a healthy, balanced diet, particularly in the cold months. One hot meal per day and plenty of hot

healthy drinks can help you to keep warm as well!

Immobility can make you more vulnerable to infection, so we recommend that you still exercise as much as you possibly can, even if this means just getting up to stretch your legs.

A form of exercise that is recommended if you have a disability is swimming. Not only is it a great cardiovascular work-out, submerging into water over 30C makes it easier for your blood to circulate too! Your muscles are relaxed, pressure is alleviated from joints and muscles and pain can temporarily be relieved.

Bill Savings Over Winter



electricity

Warm home discount

The Warm Home Discount Scheme requires the largest energy suppliers to discount £140 from the electricity bills of two million low income households.

Those who qualify will have received a letter between October and December 2019 telling them how to get the discount.

The letter will say if you need to call a helpline by 28 February 2020 to confirm your details.

Your electricity supplier will apply the discount to your bill by 31 March 2020.

The helpline is open for calls from Pension Credit customers on 0800 7310214.

People in receipt of other means-tested benefits may also be able to claim a discount direct from their energy supplier.



heat

Winter fuel payment

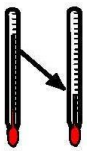
If you were born on or before 5 April 1954 you could get between £100 and £300 to help you pay your heating bills.

You usually get a Winter Fuel Payment automatically if you are eligible and you get the State Pension or another social security benefit.

If you are eligible but do not get paid automatically, you will need to make a claim. The deadline for claiming payments for this winter is 31 March 2020.

Most payments are made automatically between November and December. You should get your money by 13 January 2020.

If you do not get your payment, call the office that pays your benefits - their details are on any letters they send you.



cold

Cold weather payments

You may get a Cold Weather Payment if you get certain benefits or Support for Mortgage Interest.

You will get a payment if the average temperature in your area is recorded as zero degrees celsius or below for 7 consecutive days.

You'll get £25 for each 7 day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March.

The Cold Weather Payment scheme runs from 1 November 2019 to 31 March 2020.



website

For more details on all these schemes, go to

www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/heating

If you are supported by Dosh, check with your advocate if you are eligible for these schemes.

Some need to you apply direct, which needs to be done by the bill payer, instead of the appointee. Ask your support team for help to contact the company.

10 Great Disability Podcasts



great

A list of some great things to listen to over the winter period.

#PartofMe - a peer interview podcast about celebrating diversity which aims to help listeners develop disability confidence and inclusion at work



radio

Honestly with Clemmie Telford - podcasts about important topics that tend to make people feel uncomfortable

Midland Mencap - a range of podcasts looking at all aspects of living with a disability, from playing sport to employment

The Tilt Parenting Podcast - a US-based podcast for parents of autistic and other neuro-diverse children

Airing Pain - this podcast brings together people with chronic pain and top specialists to talk about resources that can help them

Independent Living - a host site for a wide variety of podcasts made for and by people with disabilities

Muscle Owl Radio - this podcast provides updates and discussions on topics within the Neuromuscular and disabled community

Abnormally Funny People – made by stand up (and sit down!) comedians, including Lost Voice Guy, 2018 Britain's Got Talent winner

Disabilitymatch – helping disabled singles find partners and providing tips on all aspects of living with a disability

No Triumph, No Tragedy - BBC broadcaster Peter White talks to people with disabilities who have achieved outstanding success in a variety of fields

Financial Advocacy in Action

As always, we would like to take this opportunity to share a story of the impact the Dosh team are making and the successes of the people we support. The names of the people have all been changed



anxiety

Fiona is a lovely senior lady who is strong and knows her own mind. However, she has anxiety when dealing with household bills and handling cash.



support

Fiona's advocate met with her and explained that we can pay her bills for her through her Dosh account.



happy

She now doesn't worry about bills and spends the money left on enjoying herself.



Easy Read

She loves the Easy Read visuals we use in our processes.



Best practice in supporting people with money

An example training session from Dosh



money

- Do you support people with best interest decisions around money?
- Are you unsure about supporting people to move from DLA to PIP?
- Have you struggled to open a bank account for someone you support?



confidence

- Are you lost in the jargon of personal budgets, direct payments and self-directed support?
- Do you want to learn new techniques for supporting people to manage their money?

This training session by Dosh Financial Advocacy will give you the latest information on key money topics and help you to gain confidence in supporting people with money. It will cover:

Banking	Money plans and budgeting	Benefits
Support with money	Mental capacity and best interest decisions	Self-directed support



information

- Sessions run 9:30am – 4:00pm
- Free resources and handouts given out on the day
- Refreshments and lunch provided

Contact: Meike Beckford for more info: meike.beckford@dosh.org.