

Family/ Representative Q&As

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What does ISF stand for?

ISF is short for 'Individual Service Fund'

What is an ISF?

The person you care for or represent has been assessed as needing care and support. They will have had an assessment of what support they need, and if they have current support hours in place, these will have been reviewed by their social worker / care coordinator. The Council decide how much their support costs and this is recorded on their care plan. This is called their Personal Budget.

There are 3 ways you can get a Personal Budget:

- A managed budget is when the Council holds the Personal Budget. Services have to be bought from Providers who have a contract with the Council
- Cash budgets are when the person or you as their representative look after the Personal Budget. The Council puts money in a bank account that you set up. You organise and pay for your support directly
- **An ISF is when a Provider looks after the Personal Budget. The service user, or the person representing them, can choose the Provider.**

Why would we choose an ISF?

ISFs are a good option for people who want more choice over who supports them, what support they get and how it is delivered, but who cannot or do not want to manage some of the responsibilities and pressures that come with a cash budget.

With an ISF, the service user and their representative can:

- Choose the provider they want to hold their ISF.
- Use the Personal Budget in a flexible way to meet outcomes and support needs
- Use the Personal Budget to pay for support from a range of organisations if they want to

How do ISFs work?

The ISF Provider will get a copy of the Care & Support Plan or Review from the social worker/ care coordinator. This plan explains what the person needs support with and what goals they would like to achieve with support.

The ISF Provider will work with the service user, the people who support them and their social worker/ care coordinator to decide how they want needs to be met and goals to be achieved with the money available. This will become their 'My ISF Plan'.

In shared supported living services, the plan will need to include making a payment for the 'shared' hours during the day and night in the building.

Once the 'My ISF Plan' has been agreed with a social worker/care coordinator, the ISF Provider can start to deliver what you agreed in the plan.

Support has to be delivered in a way that meets needs and goals. If all the support planned within a week isn't used, it can be 'banked' used it at another time.

The service user or the person representing them, and the ISF Provider can review the 'My ISF Plan' at any point. The way support is delivered can be changed if it is not working, or just to try something different as long as these changes do not cost more than the Personal Budget. Significant changes will need to be reported to your social work team to request a review of care needs.

Your ISF Provider will keep you informed about how much money is in the ISF and how it is being spent.

How do we choose an ISF Provider?

All ISF Providers have to be accredited by Wakefield Council.

A list of all accredited ISF Providers is available on our website or from your social worker/ care coordinator. This list will also provide information on how to get in touch with ISF Providers to find out more.

<http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/Documents/health-care-advice/adult-services/isf-provider-list.pdf>

If person you care for or represent wants their ISF to be held by an organisation that isn't on the list, that organisation will need to apply to the Council for accreditation. They can do this at any time. Accreditation should take no longer than 2 weeks from when the Council receives the organisation's application form.

What will I have to pay?

The service user will pay their financial contribution directly to their ISF Provider. This is the money the Council has assessed the person as needing to pay to help towards the cost of the support they receive.

An ISF provider may charge an administration fee for some services, for example if you want them to buy support from a different provider and check the quality of that service. The service user, or their representative, will be responsible for paying this charge. The charge can be paid from the Personal Budget.

ISF Providers have to be clear with you about whether any administration charge will apply and give the service user or their representative the chance to change their mind before anything is agreed.

If there are 'banked' funds in the ISF, do we still need to keep paying the contribution?

Yes.

The service user financial contribution is assessed by the Council as the amount they need to pay for their care under the Council's Charging Policy. This is an annual amount, the payment of which is spread out across the year.

In term of budgeting, the service users' financial contribution is always seen as being 'spent first'. The Council then 'tops-up' the budget to pay for the remaining cost of care and support. Refunds would only be made

if the total actual cost of care and support over the year was less than the financial contribution paid by the service user.

Will support hours change?

Only if the service user wants them to.

If they are happy with the type of support they get now, nothing needs to change.

However, if they decide they want to have their support in a different way or some of their support from a different organisation, their ISF Provider can help with this.

Can my family member/ the person I represent keep living where they are now?

Yes. ISFs can be used to pay for support where they live now.

How does buying support from different organisation/ services work?

The ISF Provider will tell you about different support options including other services and organisations. This may include other care services (such as day services) or services open to everyone (gyms, craft clubs etc.). These organisations / services do not need to be contracted with the Council.

The ISF Provider will be responsible for ensuring the service meets any required regulatory standards for that service and for putting appropriate risk assessments in place.

What if we're not happy with the ISF?

As we are just trying out ISFs in Wakefield at the moment, we really want to hear from you if things are not working. The Council will work with the ISF Provider to see if we can fix any issues and make things better for the service user.

If the person or their representative is still not happy:

- If they want to change their ISF Provider, they can give them 4 weeks' notice and pick a new one; or
- They can decide to not to have an ISF anymore and pick to either have a cash budget or a managed budget instead. Your social work team will explain what each of these options will mean for the service user.

So, what happens next?

If the person you care for or represent decides they would like at ISF, please contact your social work team.

If you, or the person you care for or represent, have any questions about ISFs before you can decide, you can contact Holly Watson by:

- calling 01924 305 613
- emailing hollywatson@wakefield.gov.uk