

## Support with Confidence consultation

### Appendix 5: Comparison of previous and proposed new approach

	What we used to offer	What people told us	Our proposed future approach
<b>Accreditation</b>	<p>East Sussex care and support providers could choose to apply to the Support with Confidence scheme to become an accredited member. The majority were not regulated by the Care Quality Commission including personal assistants (PAs)</p> <p>Providers were vetted and trained prior to accreditation approval including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensuring that they (and any staff) were properly trained for their work;</li> <li>the completion of appropriate background checks;</li> <li>an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check;</li> <li>gathering suitable references; and</li> <li>signing a code of conduct to adhere to the scheme expectations.</li> </ul> <p>Adult Social Care and Trading Standards continued to monitor scheme members for service quality following approval.</p>	<p>85% of residents, workers and organisations rated the scheme as 'very helpful' or 'helpful' in finding accredited support they could trust, which was flexible to suit their needs and preferences.</p> <p>95% of members and applicants rated the scheme as 'very helpful' or 'helpful' in building their business or service, to find client work, provide a sense of community and allow them to access training.</p> <p>Two thirds of the survey respondents 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' with the proposal to close the scheme. Reasons given included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>impact to clients;</li> <li>loss of a valuable resource;</li> <li>impact to the PA workforce; and</li> <li>difficulty to find trusted and competent support.</li> </ul> <p>Those who agreed with the proposal to close the scheme cited the potential legal sanctions as a reason, but also gave concerns about impact to clients.</p> <p>77% of residents, workers and organisations, and 80% of members and applicants rated accreditation of services as one of the things that was most important with a future offer.</p>	<p>It is not possible to continue running the Support with Confidence scheme as the licence holders have withdrawn the brand. The information we now have relating to employment status and registration, and the compliance risks associated with this, mean that we do not propose to develop a replacement accreditation scheme.</p> <p>There are however many other (free and paid for) independent schemes and platforms PAs and businesses can register with, including the East Sussex <a href="#">Buy with Confidence</a> scheme for businesses.</p> <p>Adult Social Care and Health commissions Direct Payment Support Services (DPSS) from <a href="#">Independent Lives</a> and <a href="#">PeoplePlus</a>. From April 2024, Independent Lives will be our strategic partner continuing to offer this service which includes supporting people who receive direct payments to buy services from individuals or businesses.</p> <p>They can help with recruiting staff, undertaking checks on possible PAs (including DBS checks), writing job descriptions, and understanding the rules that employers must follow.</p> <p>They also support adults who pay for their own care.</p>

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<b>Directory</b>	<p>Dedicated online directory for accredited care and support providers who were approved as members of the Support with Confidence scheme.</p> <p>Accredited member entries were also included within the 1Space and ESCIS online directories.</p> <p>Accredited entries were managed by the Support with Confidence team.</p>	<p>58% of residents, workers and organisations rated having a single online directory as one of the things that was most important with a future offer. Comments included the importance of offering a directory of trusted and competent professionals, as well as easy access to support.</p> <p>For members and applicants allowing residents to find out about their personal assistant services was rated as most important (81%), with allowing residents to find out about my business also rated as most important (72%). Comments included the directory being a source for finding work and concerns for how residents can find trusted and competent support if the scheme closed.</p>	<p>It is not possible to continue running the Support with Confidence scheme as the licence holders have withdrawn the brand. There will therefore no longer be a dedicated online directory for accredited services.</p> <p>PAs and businesses offering care, support and wellbeing services to people in East Sussex can instead list their services for free on <a href="#">1Space</a>. 1Space is our free online directory of groups and organisations that offer care, support, and wellbeing services in the county. The listing can be personalised with availability, pricing and any external accreditations. Residents can use this directory to look for services that meet their needs.</p> <p>Businesses can also advertise their services in the <a href="#">East Sussex Community Information Service (ESCIS)</a> online directory of community information and events.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Care Choices directory</a> of registered care services is also available online and in a free printed version.</p> <p>The DPSS Independent Lives provide a recruitment and training platform, called <a href="#">PA Pages</a>. PAs can advertise their availability for work and individuals wanting to employ a personal assistant can advertise their jobs. They have experience writing job adverts, job descriptions and personal specifications for successful recruitment in urban and rural areas. They also work with several external recruitment platforms including Gumtree.</p>

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			We will also develop a webpage with useful guidance, including a downloadable and printable checklist to use when considering employing a personal assistant (PA), available in different formats and languages.
<b>Helpline</b>	Scheme telephone number and email, allowing residents, workers, organisations, members and applicants to call the Support with Confidence team for assistance to find an accredited service and for support with service delivery.	There was a mixed response to this. 26% of residents, workers and organisations rated having a helpline as 'most important' however it also had the highest total of 'least important' votes at 19%.	The DPSS will continue to support people who receive direct payments to be a good employer or buy services from individuals or businesses. They can help with recruiting staff, undertaking checks on possible PAs (including DBS checks), writing job descriptions, and understanding the rules that employers must follow. They also support adults who pay for their own care.
<b>Training</b>	A mandatory training programme for all applicants to the Support with Confidence scheme, included core training such as business training, safeguarding, emergency first aid, infection prevention and control.  Training refresher requirements were also set and monitored for all members of the scheme.	Members and applicants stated that the scheme was helpful in allowing them to access training.  73% of members and applicants rated care worker training as one of the most important aspects of future support.  Comments on training specifically for PAs and employment status were also shared.	Adult Social Care and Health will continue to offer a comprehensive, free <a href="#">training programme</a> to PAs and others working with adults who need care and support. This covers courses such as moving and handling, safeguarding and first aid and there are opportunities to develop specialisms in areas such as mental health, dementia, autism and self-neglect.  We will develop an 'introduction to care' training programme for PAs and others new to care work in the community who don't have access to training through a care provider. This will cover areas such as professional boundaries and lone working.  The <a href="#">Independent Lives PA Pages</a> include access to training and an information hub for PAs and small businesses. Independent Lives support educational attainment for PAs by working with Skills for Care and local colleges to identify career and educational pathways which are reviewed annually.

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			Skills for Care offer support and online <a href="#">resources</a> that explain more about the PA role for those interested in working as a PA, and for those already working in the role.
<b>DBS checks</b>	<p>All applicants (and their staff) to the scheme were required to have an enhanced DBS certificate with the adult barred list check, that was dated within the last six months. If the applicant did not have a valid check already in place, the Support with Confidence team were able to process a check for the applicant.</p> <p>All members (and their staff) of the scheme were required to refresh this DBS check every three years or join the DBS update service.</p>	Members and applicants stated that it was an important aspect of any new offer would be to have support with DBS checks.	<p>Businesses will be able to access DBS checks through the <a href="#">ESCC Umbrella Service</a>.</p> <p>The DPSS can support adult social care clients who want to employ a PA, or use a self-employed PA, to apply for an enhanced DBS check. People who are paying for their own care can also use this service however charges will apply.</p> <p>Other options that may be available to self-employed PAs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applying for a basic DBS check to get a copy of their criminal record. This is called 'basic disclosure' and costs £18.</li> <li>• Registering with an employment agency that can apply for an enhanced check to assess suitability to work for them.</li> <li>• Accessing enhanced DBS checks through external organisations offering this service (this may be subject to a fee and becoming a member of that organisation).</li> </ul>
<b>Referrals</b>	<p>Dedicated referral service for Adult Social Care workers within East Sussex County Council to help clients find personal assistant support.</p> <p>As well as a PA to PA referral service for members who need to source PA support for contingency arrangements.</p>	Members and applicants commented that client referrals would be an important aspect of any new support offer. Questions were raised about why the scheme could not continue without the referral service, as well as how referrals would now be received from the DPSS and from people who pay for their own care.	<p>It is not possible to continue running the Support with Confidence scheme as the licence holders have withdrawn the brand. and there will no longer be a dedicated referral service for accredited PAs.</p> <p>The DPSS will continue to support people who receive direct payments to be a good employer or to buy services from individuals or businesses. They can help with recruiting staff, undertaking checks on possible PAs (including DBS checks),</p>

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			<p>writing job descriptions, and understanding the rules that employers must follow.</p> <p>They also support adults who pay for their own care.</p>
<b>Complaints and safeguarding support</b>	<p>Support to residents and members in circumstances where concerns and complaints were raised regarding an accredited service.</p> <p>Support also provided to Adult Social Care teams during a safeguarding enquiry raised about an accredited service.</p> <p>Accreditation status could be suspended or withdrawn when the service was assessed as no longer meeting the scheme's code of conduct requirements.</p>	<p>58% of residents, workers, and organisations rated help with complaints as either most important or important when asked what a new support offer should include.</p> <p>At least 70% of members and applicants rated help to deal with complaints as most important or important for the new support offer.</p>	<p>Concerns that someone is being abused, neglected or exploited by a personal assistant or business should be reported to our <a href="#">contact centre</a> in the same way as other safeguarding concerns.</p> <p>Skills for Care's dedicated '<a href="#">employing PAs toolkit</a>' has advice and guidance available on how to sort out problems that may arise whilst employing a PA.</p> <p>If a business has broken the law or acted unfairly, they can be reported to <a href="#">Trading Standards</a>. Trading Standards can investigate unfair trading and illegal business activity, like rogue traders and scams.</p>
<b>Business support</b>	<p>Support to applicants and members of the scheme to set up and develop their business throughout the accreditation process and once accredited.</p> <p>Yearly scheme marketing campaigns to promote the scheme and its members services.</p> <p>Quarterly newsletters sent to members and applicants providing a range of articles to support them in their service delivery.</p>	<p>At least 70% of members and applicants rated business support as most important or important for the new support offer</p>	<p>ESCC <a href="#">Trading Standards</a> offer basic advice to East Sussex businesses and signposting to useful resources such as <a href="#">Business Companion</a> which has information for businesses and individuals that need to know about trading standards and consumer protection legislation.</p> <p>PAs and other care and support businesses can promote their services through the <a href="#">1Space</a> directory and <a href="#">East Sussex Community Information Service</a> (businesses only).</p> <p>The East Sussex provider bulletin is a weekly email newsletter covering a range of topics affecting PAs and other health and care providers. We encourage all PAs to <a href="#">subscribe to the mailing list</a>.</p>

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	Business training available through the scheme, advice and guidance available from a Trading Standards Officer when required, accreditation training pathways and scheme network events.		Skills for Care's <a href="#">dedicated pages</a> for individual employers, PAs and supporting organisations bring together a range of resources and useful information for people employing their own care and support. It also has information about the PA role and resources to support organisations that work with individual employers and PAs.
<b>Wellbeing support</b>	<p>Monthly 1:1 and group wellbeing sessions available to scheme members and delivered by Mental Health First Aiders within the Support with Confidence team.</p> <p>Monthly communications providing wellbeing advice and resources for members and their clients.</p>	<p>At least 70% of members and applicants rated wellbeing support as most important or important for the new offer.</p> <p>Comments included that the scheme suspension and proposal to close had caused a negative impact to members and client wellbeing</p>	<p>The <a href="#">East Sussex Personal Assistants Network (ESPAN)</a> provides a mutually supportive environment and friendly and informal meetings, led by PAs in their local communities. The meetings are open to all PAs, any potential PAs, users of PA services and any care and support service operating within East Sussex.</p> <p>The Adult Social Care and Health training department will work with PAs to explore whether it would be helpful to offer bespoke sessions on areas such as vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, organised reflective practice and peer support.</p> <p>Skills for Care have <a href="#">wellbeing resources</a> available on their website for PAs and their employers.</p>