

Direct Payments Support Service Case Study – Peter O’Mara



Peter came to the Disability Resource Centre (DRC) having suffered a severe stroke in 2011. The stroke had affected every part of his physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. He had already received excellent care from ARNI (Action for Rehabilitation from Neurological Injury) and his social worker recommended the use of Direct Payments to regain independence, choice and control in his life. She referred Peter to the Direct Payments Support Service (DPSS) at the Disability Resource Centre (DRC).

DRC Direct Payments Officer Mike Byrom visited Peter in his own home, helping him to complete all of the forms needed to formally employ the Personal Assistant that he had chosen.

Mike also arranged the free payroll service so that Peter, as an employer, had everything that he needed, even calculating the tax and national insurance and producing a pay slip for his Personal Assistant.

Mike opened a special bank account for Peter called a ‘holding account’ which is managed by the DRC Direct Payments Support Service and is used to pay the Personal Assistant from the money that Peter receives from Luton Borough Council (LBC) to pay for his care.

Peter says ‘It only took a few days to open this account; I would have found it very difficult to open my own bank account. Mike and I manage the money in this account so that we pay my Personal Assistant and also pay her Tax and National Insurance to HMRC. The DRC Personalisation Team also lets the Direct Payments Finance Team at Luton Borough Council know how my money is being used, so they are happy.’

‘If I didn’t have this support from the DRC DPSS I wouldn’t be able to manage my Direct Payments and employ my own Personal Assistants as it would all be too much for me to cope with. Having their support means that I am well-supported with carrying out my responsibilities with receiving a Direct Payment from LBC and being an employer. This gives me peace of mind.’

‘It is also a real help being able to contact the DRC Direct Payment Support Service by phone, and having someone to talk to about direct payments, payroll queries and any concerns I may have as an employer.’

‘As a result of all the support I have received I have recently employed an excellent Personal Assistant who has really had an impact on my health and self-confidence. She is very conscientious and is happy with me as her employer.’

DRC Direct Payments Officer, Mike, has enjoyed being able to work with Peter and, with the other agencies involved, to provide another piece of the jigsaw in Peter’s road to an independent life after his stroke.