



11 September 2025

Spotlight on the Independent Living Group (ILG) Community

ILG Community brings together disabled individuals who employ Personal Assistants (PAs) – whether local authority, NHS or self-funding. Driven by lived experience, their leadership team is a group of PA employers and those managing budgets for others, with over half of the committee managing their own support. This group serves the entire UK, offering free membership, peer support, webinars, resources and advocacy – all guided by a passionate and independent steering committee.

“Together it feels like we are stronger and our voices rise higher!”

Upcoming online events

Managing challenges with PAs – 22 September 2025, 2.00pm to 3.00pm

Expert advisers from ILG Community offer practical strategies for navigating difficult situations with Personal Assistants. Ideal for PA employers seeking support and tips on resolving workplace challenges.

The unexpected pressures of being a PA employer – 8 October 2025, 1:30pm to 3.30pm

A deeper dive into the complexities of being a PA employer. Topics covered include boundaries, organisational support, self-care and shared experiences from those walking the same path.

The state of Direct Payments with the National Direct Payment Forum – 20 October 2025, 2-3pm

Pat Stack from the National Direct Payment Forum explores how Direct Payments have evolved and what those changes mean for PA employers now.

Join the [ILG Community Facebook group](#), a space for PA employers to share experiences and find peer support.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT ILG COMMUNITY](#)

[Training opportunity for personal assistants](#)

There is a new training opportunity designed specifically for individuals working as, or considering becoming, a Personal Assistant (PA) in care.

The Personal Assistant in Care Programme is a two-day short course delivered at Fareham College. It starts on **19 September 2025**. The course provides an introduction to the PA role within health and social care. It covers essential topics such as:

- Understanding the responsibilities of a PA
- Active listening and person-centred communication
- How Direct Payments work in practice
- Frameworks and standards for working in Adults' Health and Care

This course is a valuable stepping stone for people looking to build skills, increase confidence and access real job opportunities within the PA sector. It is also relevant for individuals already employed as PAs who may benefit from additional training and professional development.

A flyer for the course can be found on the [Hampshire PA Finder website](#).

The course is part-time and requires no formal entry requirements. It concludes with opportunities to meet employers. More details and application information can be found at: shcg.ac.uk/courses/personal-assistant-in-care/.

Incentive cards for your personal assistants

If you employ Personal Assistants (PAs) through Direct Payments, you may be interested to know there are incentive schemes available that can help your PAs feel more valued and supported in their role.

These schemes can provide benefits such as:

- ID badges and role verification
- Wellbeing and employee support services
- Access to national discounts (similar to the Blue Light Card)

Two of the most popular schemes are the [Blue Sky Card](#) and the [ILGPA Card](#). Each scheme is slightly different in terms of cost and benefits, so it's worth exploring the options to see which best fits your needs and your PA's preferences.

Using your Direct Payment

You can use your contingency fund to purchase one incentive card per PA, but only once they have successfully passed their probation period (normally six months). This ensures Direct Payments are spent responsibly and rewards are given to staff who are committed long-term.

If the cost of a scheme is more than the available contingency, you can contact Hampshire County Council to discuss whether the extra cost can be agreed. Any additional cards beyond the first would need to be funded personally by you as the employer.

A boost for recognition and professionalism

As well as offering discounts and support, these cards can act as an extra layer of professional recognition. They can help your PAs feel more valued and, in some cases, provide ID verification when needed. Please note that some schemes are only open to employed PAs, so self-employed PAs should always check eligibility first.

Find out more

An information sheet with details of the available incentive schemes is available from the [Hampshire PA Finder website](#).

New resources on the Hampshire PA Finder website

New content is now available on the [Hampshire PA Finder website](#), a valuable tool for anyone involved with Direct Payments. Whether you're an employer looking for a Personal Assistant (PA), a PA seeking work or simply searching for reliable guidance, Hampshire PA Finder now offers more resources than ever.

Who uses Hampshire PA Finder?

- **Direct Payment recipients** can use the Hampshire PA Finder to search for and connect with PAs who meet their care and support needs.
- **Personal Assistants** can register to find new work opportunities.
- **What's new?**
- **Easier navigation** – making it quicker to find the information you need.
- **Updated guidance** – [information sheets](#) for employers to explain the role of a PA, recruitment tips, employment responsibilities and legal rights.
- **Convenient matching** – Hampshire PA Finder continues to be a simple way for employers and PAs to connect.

Get started

- [Search for a PA](#)
- [Register a job vacancy](#)
- [Register as a PA](#)

If you can't find what you're looking for on the website, contact the Direct Payment Support Service (DPSS) at DPSupportService@hants.gov.uk.



Keep looking when cooking!

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (HIWFRS) is reminding members of the community to 'turn off the heat before they eat' with their Recipe for Success COOK campaign.

Fifty percent of all accidental fires in the home across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight over the last few years started in the kitchen. When life gets busy it's easy to get distracted, but it's important to 'keep looking while cooking'.

It's important to be aware of kitchen fire safety and to follow these top tips:

CLEAR – Keep tea towels, cloths and electrical leads away from the oven and hob.

OVEN – Switch off the oven and hob when you've finished cooking and remove pans from the heat.

OIL – A build-up of cooking oil/grease can increase the risk of cooking fires so clean regularly.

KEEP – Keep looking when cooking.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Tricky Friends video

'Tricky Friends' is a short animation from the Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB) to help raise awareness of issues such as exploitation, county lines and cuckooing. It's designed to spark important conversations and support safer, more informed relationships, particularly among those who may be more vulnerable to harm.

The three-minute animation has been created to help people understand what good friendships look like, when they might become harmful and what actions can be taken. It's especially relevant for people with learning disabilities, autism, cognitive difficulties, and for children and young adult groups who may be more vulnerable to exploitation.

[WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

Publication of the HSAB Annual Report 2024-2025

The Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB) Annual Report for 2024-2025 is now available.

The HSAB partnership is instrumental in driving forward our shared commitment to safeguarding adults across Hampshire. The work the Partnership does remains vital in strengthening adult safeguarding and improving outcomes for our most vulnerable residents.

The Annual Report reflects not only our achievements over the past year but also the challenges we continue to face and the priorities we are committed to addressing.

[READ THE REPORT](#)

Hampshire PA Finder website

The [Hampshire PA Finder](#) is a free service working to connect people seeking a Personal Assistant in Care with people who are, or want to be, Personal Assistants in Care. You will find lots of useful information on the site about being an employer or being a Personal Assistant in Care. We'd love to know what you think of the website, so please send your feedback to pafinder@hants.gov.uk.

The Direct Payment Support Service

Our Direct Payment Support Service (DPSS) is available to help Direct Payment recipients, operational staff and providers. The team has three full-time members of staff and can support you with a range of Direct Payment related queries. If you need some advice about Direct Payments, contact the team at DPsupportservice@hants.gov.uk for support.

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