



## **Discretionary Fund Information Sheet**

### **Updated 31st October 2023**

Future Pathways has a fund to help support the people we work with. We call this our Discretionary Fund or DF for short. However, in this section, we will simply refer to it as 'the fund'.

The fund is one of the types of support that can be accessed to help you work towards the goals on your support plan. It can be used to help you access support from other services. It can sometimes be used to help you manage hardship. And it can help you purchase items that would support you in working towards your goals.

The fund is made possible by public funding. Because of this, it is important that we are spending the funds in the right way. We have guidance in place to help with this and Support Coordinators will ask you questions about any request you make to access the fund.

If your support plan includes accessing the fund, we need you to:

- Complete a support agreement. This is normally done before you start working with a Support Coordinator and before making a support plan.
- Share with your Support Coordinator how the support will help you to work towards your goals and the difference this will make for you. You also might be asked to provide quotes for items you wish to purchase.
- Work with your Support Coordinator to look at different options. Your Support Coordinator can provide advice on what Future Pathways may be able to support. If a request costs more than £1000, your Support Coordinator will need to write an application for the funding. They will ask you questions to help get all the information they need to make the application on your behalf.

If we have agreed to support the purchase of an item or service, we will need you to:

- Tell us if you would like to have the funds transferred to you to make the purchase yourself, or if you would like Future Pathways to arrange the purchase for you.
- Share your bank details if you would like to make the purchase yourself. Please note that we do not store your banking information.
- Send us receipts for the agreed purchase if you have made this yourself.
- Return funds to us if, for whatever reason, you decide not to make the purchase.

**Examples of support from the fund:**

- short-term funding to help you access opportunities or interests that support your wellbeing
- buying household items that help your safety and wellbeing
- paying for household repairs
- purchasing items to help with your mobility and remain independent
- travel costs to reconnect with family you were separated from when you were in care
- access to training or other learning

**The fund cannot be used for:**

- support that is available through local or statutory services
- luxury items
- repeated purchase of similar items or services
- payments for mortgage/endowment shortfalls
- loans
- items or services that you have already bought personally
- legal fees
- compensation or redress for past abuse experiences
- things that are not related to your support plan
- adding to your income

**Requests must not be for:**

- anything that might cause financial, physical or any other type of harm to you or others
- activity or purchases that are illegal in the UK
- activity or purchases that discriminate against people

**How much can I apply for?**

There is no upper limit to the amount you can apply for.

**Do I have to put my own money towards purchases?**

No. You do not have to pay for anything with your own money unless you want to, or if you want to have more choice about what is purchased (for example, to get a more expensive version of an item).

## **How many times can I access the fund?**

If you access the fund more than four times in a 12-month period, we will want to understand the reasons why.

If someone makes a request for an item or service that costs more than £1,000, we will look at how many times the person has accessed the fund in the past 12 months and the total amount spent.

## **How long does it take to find out if the request was successful?**

Requests for services or items up to £1,000

- Your Support Coordinator can approve requests up to £1,000. You can usually expect a decision from them within 2 weeks.

Requests for services or items more than £1,000

- For requests more than £1,000, your Support Coordinator will need to write an application to the fund on your behalf. Your Support Coordinator will ask for your input to write the application. You can usually expect a decision within 6 weeks, and often much sooner.

## **My request was declined – can I appeal?**

Yes. If you are not happy with the decision, you can appeal. You can work with your Support Coordinator on this. Together, you can give new or extra information to help your application.

If the request is for **up to** £1000, you and your Support Coordinator need to appeal within 1 month. Your appeal will be considered by two senior managers.

If the request is for **more than** £1,000, you and your Support Coordinator need to appeal within 3 months. Your appeal will be considered by members of our Alliance Leadership Team. They oversee Future Pathways.

If the request for support is outwith Future Pathways' remit and the request was for under £1000 you cannot appeal.

## **If my application was declined or if I make an appeal, can I still make other applications to the fund?**

Yes. You can still make other applications to the fund for other types of support.

## **If you have any questions about the fund, you can:**

- email us at [engagement@future-pathways.co.uk](mailto:engagement@future-pathways.co.uk)
- write to us at Future Pathways, 40 Shandwick Place, Edinburgh EH2 4RT