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## Christmas and New Year Holidays

The festive period is upon us again with the blink of an eye! As you all prepare to enjoy the festivities, please ensure you take note of our office closures and alternative contact information.

Our office will be closed from **4.00pm on Friday 22nd December 2017** and will not re-open until **Wednesday 3rd January 2018 at 8.45am**. Whilst members of the SDS Team will not be available to take your call during this period, should you have an emergency please contact our out of hours service on 03547 565656 (check number) who will be able to offer assistance.

In the instance that you require to contact your payroll provider, please find information below:

Payroll Provider	Office Closed	Contact Number
Accountability	Christmas Day Boxing Day New Year's Day	0191 4921222
Barrie Bookkeeping	23rd December – 28th December 2017 30th December – 5th January 2018	01592 756713
Cornerstone	Christmas Day Boxing Day New Year's Day 2nd January 2018	01224 256000 / 01224256045
Fife Business Services	23rd December – 3rd January 2018	01592 572102

We ask you to bear in mind that whilst your payroll provider may be open during the holiday period, there will be skeletal staffing and therefore limited facilities available.



*We here at the SDS Team wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year when it comes!*

## Timesheets

Please note that your payroll provider will likely require your employee's timesheets to be submitted early in the month of December to ensure that they are paid in time for Christmas. They will send you a letter directly to confirm the dates

they require the timesheets to be submitted by nearer the time. Should you have any issues, please contact your payroll provider in the first instance.

## Personal Assistant Annual Leave

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As per previous correspondence, please note that the holiday year runs from 1st January – 31st December each year. Could you please ensure that your personal assistants have used all of their annual leave prior to the end of the year; this leave entitlement **cannot** be carried forward

and they will **not** be paid for any hours that have not been taken. Should you have any queries regarding your personal assistants annual leave entitlement or annual leave balance, please contact your payroll provider for further assistance.

## SDS Working Group

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We have arranged for the next working group to be held on **Tuesday 5th December 2017 in Elgin Town Hall, 1 Trinity Place, Elgin, IV30 1UL**. The working group will be held between **10.00am – 12.00pm**. The purpose of the working group is to give you the opportunity to discuss your SDS package and liaise directly with members of the SDS Team. We encourage all groups of individuals to attend, whether you are the client in receipt of SDS, the employer of the package, a family member of the personal assistant on the package. Refreshments will be provided!

Could you please contact the SDS Team on **01343 563420** to confirm whether or not you will be able to attend. Also, should you have any specific areas that you would like to discuss, if you could let us know in advance it would be much appreciated. Thank you in advance and we look forward to seeing you there!

## Personal Assistant Training

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An ISF falls under Option 2 of SDS, whereby You may or may not be aware that Personal Assistants are now able to access Moray Council's e-learning system called LearnPro. This will give them access to both online and practical training courses, including Adult Support and Protection and Manual Handling Training. In order to gain access to this, we require your Personal Assistant's names and email addresses to set them up with an individual log in. If this is something that your Personal Assistant would be interested in, please ask them to contact the SDS Team on 01343 563420.

Due to limited access on the LearnPro system, the training team are only able to give PAs access to the site for one month at a time. Should you require further access, please contact the training team on 01343 563582.

The training team will be able to re-instate your account for a further month period. This can be done as and when required.

It is imperative that your Personal Assistant liaises directly with yourself prior to arranging any training to ensure that you are able to arrange appropriate cover.

Please note that in order for the training to be funded by Moray Council, it must be deemed appropriate and relevant to the packages the Personal Assistants are working on as there is a cost attached. Should you have any queries regarding the relevance of certain training opportunities, please contact your allocated social worker for further information.

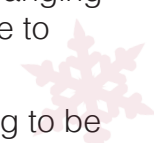
For your information, LearnPro is mobile friendly. LearnPro is not available to self-employed carers as they are responsible for their own training.

## Sharing Information with Personal Assistants

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We are looking to gather contact information from your Personal Assistant's to store on record so we can send them letters with information they may find to be useful. If you are happy for us to make contact with your Personal Assistant, could you please ask them to contact us with their

contact information (address, phone number and email address if possible). They can either call us on **01343 563420** or send us an email at [SelfDirectedSupport@moray.gov.uk](mailto:SelfDirectedSupport@moray.gov.uk). As always, your assistance is much appreciated!





## SDS My Story - Lucy Lintott

Lucy was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease (MND) in 2013 when she was just 19 years old. As some of you may be aware, Lucy is a keen ambassador for MND awareness and has recently taken part in a BBC Documentary MND and 22-year-old me. This documentary goes through Lucy's journey of her illness and how she has managed since her diagnosis. Lucy has also set up a fundraising website which has raised over £100,000.00 to date for MND Scotland. Lucy states that she is *"funding as much money as she can because awareness needs to be raised and a cure found"* and bravely highlights that she *"fundraises in the hope that the rest of her generation doesn't have to go through what she is going through"*.



Lucy is determined to live life to the full and has spoken of how SDS has assisted her in some ways to do so. When speaking to Lucy about her SDS package she highlighted that one of the main advantages of SDS is that she was able to choose her own carer. Given that Lucy is a young woman herself, she was quite keen to employ someone younger as she felt she would be more comfortable as they would be able to relate to her more. Lucy employs her Personal Assistant Kim through her Direct Payment and describes Kim as *"more like her friend than her carer"*.

Lucy spoke of how despite her illness, she enjoys remaining active and Kim assists her in doing so. Kim will support Lucy in activities such as going to the gym, assisting her out in the community, going on trips and covering respite periods as and when required. Lucy feels that receiving SDS has allowed her to do *"what she wants when she wants without feeling guilty on others such as her family members"*. Lucy stated that she finds that Kim has assisted her in getting out the house a lot more and has enabled her to maintain her independence. Kim mentioned that Lucy loves her daily routine with Lucy joking that *"if Kim does anything out of her routine she gets told off"*.

Kim assisted Lucy in travelling to Glasgow recently to perform alongside 'Choirs with Purpose' to record a song which will feature on 'Stand Together', the charity concept album backed by Sir Paul McCartney. When speaking to Kim about Lucy and her role as her Personal Assistant she stated that *"not many people enjoy going to work every day – I don't ever feel like that...I feel like I'm getting something out of it, it's not every day you get to sing in the choir!"*.

**If you would like to read more about Lucy please visit**  
**<http://lucysfight.com/>.**

*Lucy's Fight*

**If you would like to donate to MND Scotland, please visit**  
**<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/lucy-lintott1>.**

**JustGiving™**

# Pension Scheme

During our recent SDS Working Group, it has been brought to our attention that there is a lack of understanding surrounding pension auto-enrolment from both employers and Personal Assistants.

You as the employer must by law begin a workplace pension scheme, regardless of whether your employees earn enough to meet the pension threshold or not. As this is now part of the Government's legislation, non-compliance could lead to fines being imposed.

Pension Status	Monthly Earnings
Auto-Enrolment into Pension Scheme:	Earnings above £833 per month
To be eligible to opt in (which includes employer's contribution into the pension):	Earnings between £486 and £833 per month
To be eligible to opt in (which does not include employer's contribution):	Earnings up to £486

Please note that if your employee does not wish to auto-enrol in the pension scheme (earnings over £833 per month), they must opt out of the pension scheme. Employees earning less than £833 per month must opt in.

You must be aware that the above earnings refer to the amount earned through singular employment. An example being if your employee works on two different packages earning £450 on each package (£900 in total), they would not be auto-enrolled into the pension scheme as the thresholds apply to the monthly earnings in singular employment.

For your information, your payroll provider has taken on the responsibility of your pension scheme; therefore they will be able to offer assistance and guidance with all aspects of the set-up and management of this.

Please be aware that Moray Council renewed their payroll provider list towards the end of 2016. If you are still currently with a payroll provider who is not on the most recent list, you will have been contacted by your Direct Payment co-ordinator to sign a disclaimer to acknowledge that your current payroll provider does not have a responsibility to offer this scheme.

Your payroll provider would be able to notify you of your staging date. This is the date that you must officially be offering any employees the choice of a workplace pension. You should have also received correspondence from The Pensions Regulator. If you have not yet received any of this information, please contact your payroll provider who may be able to help.

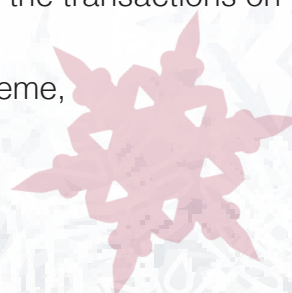
Your payroll provider will include everything you need to ensure you are legally compliant with the new pension regulations. This will include:

- The set-up of pension scheme;
- Assessment of all your employees in line with your staging date and on a continual basis each time they are paid in case there is a change in their earnings;
- Write to all of your employees to inform them of their pension status (see table above) and what they need to do;
- Online upload and payment of your pension contributions to your pension scheme.

If your employees are eligible for you to make a contribution towards their pension scheme, please do not be concerned as this money will be taken from your direct payment account. Any contributions will be worked out by your payroll provider who will make the transactions on your behalf.

Should you require any further information regarding your pension scheme, please contact your payroll provider or visit

[www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/employers/your-step-by-step-guide-to-automatic-enrolment.aspx](http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/employers/your-step-by-step-guide-to-automatic-enrolment.aspx).





# Publicity Information

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## Information Cards

The SDS Team have just finished producing updated information cards for our service. These will be given out at the time packages are being set up. A copy of these cards will be sent to each of you to keep for your reference. We have found that there has been a lot of confusion surrounding the responsibilities of the employer, social worker and SDS Team. These cards should clarify this for you to enable you to direct your queries to the appropriate individual.

## SDS Internet Page

The SDS Team are currently in the process of developing our Council website page. This page will be accessible to all individuals including employers and employees. We will include information that we feel would be relevant to your SDS packages. Our aim is to also include information regarding training and downloadable documents (such as timesheets, new employee documents etc). We will make you aware as soon as this page is up and running, it is still a work in progress at present, however we value your thoughts and opinions so if you feel there is something particular that you would like to be included please contact a member of the SDS Team on **01343 563420** or email us at [SelfDirectedSupport@moray.gov.uk](mailto:SelfDirectedSupport@moray.gov.uk).

## Social Media

In an attempt to make information as widely accessible as possible, we will now be utilising Moray Council's Facebook page for updates. This can be found at <https://en-gb.facebook.com/MorayCouncil/>.

## Direct Payment Reminders

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### Recruitment

Just a reminder that the Personal Assistant Pathfinder website is available to support you with recruitment. Information detailed on flyer below.

A flyer for the Moray Personal Support Network. The top half has a blue background with white text. The bottom half features a photograph of an elderly couple sitting on a wooden bench overlooking a beach and the ocean. In the bottom left corner of the flyer is the 'tsi MORAY' logo, and in the bottom right corner is the 'moray council' logo with the number '01343 563420' below it.

**Moray Personal Support Network**

The Moray Personal Support Network aims to bring people together. The Service is aimed at connecting people who need support, with people who can provide support.

Whether you are an individual looking to employ a personal assistant to provide you with support or a Personal Assistant looking for work the website will make your search easier and more efficient from the comfort of your own home.

For more information please contact:  
[SelfDirectedSupport@moray.gov.uk](mailto:SelfDirectedSupport@moray.gov.uk) or Tel: 01343 567144

**[www.supportinmoray.co.uk](http://www.supportinmoray.co.uk)**

Please note that the SDS Team do not manage recruitment for direct payment packages. Whilst we are here to offer assistance, the responsibility lies with the employer of the package. If you are unable to upload adverts on to the Pathfinder website, the SDS Team can do this on your behalf. Should you have any issues regarding recruitment, please contact your allocated social worker. In terms of advertising on the pathfinder, if you advertise independently, it is your responsibility to remove the advertisement when it is no longer

required. If you have sought help from your DP co-ordinator and they have uploaded an advert on your behalf they can remove it for you, but again it is your responsibility to ask them to do so when it is required.

### Stationery Allowance

Just a reminder that each individual who is in receipt of a Direct Payment is entitled to an allowance of £35.00 per year for stationery. Receipts must be submitted to your payroll provider in order to reclaim any spend.

Referrals by GP and/or other  
health professional



It's an easy to moderate  
intensity circuit class which  
burns calories, stretches and  
strengthens muscles while  
improving balance,  
coordination and posture.

Longmore Hall, Keith



1-2PM WEDNESDAYS, £3 per class

**ACTIVEAGEING**

Enquiries to Barbara Stearn, Level 3 GP Exercise Referral qual;  
07810 870612