

Direct Payment User Survey Report

Spring 2019

To help inform our strategy plan for 2019 and beyond, we undertook a market research survey of the people who use our direct payment support services.

The research focuses on what people think about having a direct payment in general, their expectations prior to having a direct payment and how it has met their needs.

The aim was to identify the key benefits to having a direct payment and to understand what the perceived and actual barriers are to using a direct payment. This knowledge will help us to shape our support services to improve outcomes for direct payment users.

1. Introduction

A short questionnaire was sent out alongside our national newsletter in December 2018, both in hard copy and electronically to just over 10,200 Penderels Trust customers.

The total number of completed questionnaires received was 686 which represented a return rate of 6.7%.

Two of the questions were specifically aimed at those who employ their own staff, 574 of people (84%) who responded were employers and answered these questions.

2. Summary of Key Findings

- Most respondents (89.1%) have found having a direct payment a very positive (63.7%) or fairly positive (25.4%) experience.
- 84.1% of respondents found having a direct payment very easy (54.7%) or fairly easy (29.4%).
- Before they started their direct payment, most respondents had some idea about what was involved, with over half being completely clear (27.8%) or quite clear (27.8%).
- For 70.4% of employers, the process of being an employer has been very easy (32.8%) or quite easy (37.6%).
- Of the employers, 82.9% said being an employer completely met their needs (52%) or met most of their needs (30.9%).
- Overall, 81.1% said working with Penderels Trust has been very good (63.7%) or fairly good (17.4%).
- 85.5% of respondents said the service provided by Penderels Trust completely met their needs (61.3%) or met most of their needs (24.2%).

89%

Having a direct payment was a positive experience

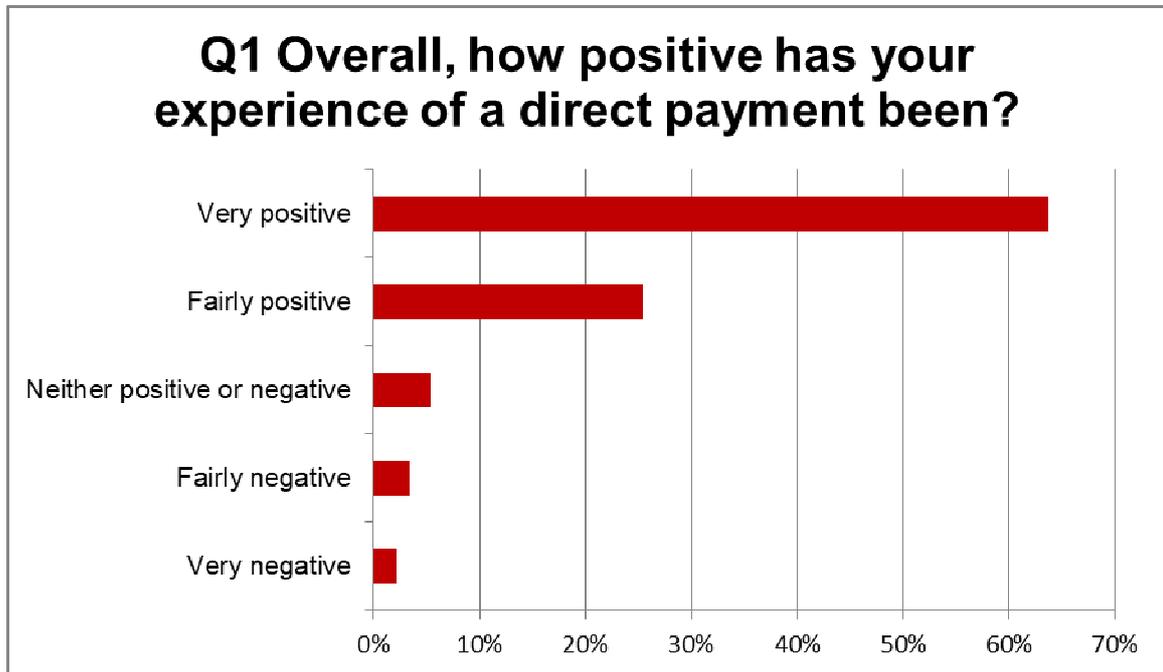
84% found having a direct payment easy



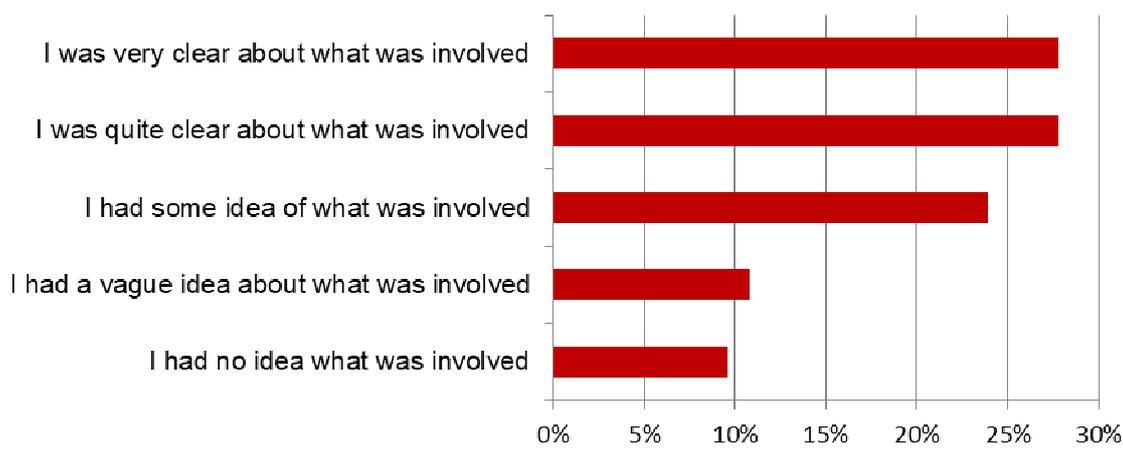
82% said being an employer met their needs

Direct Payment User Research

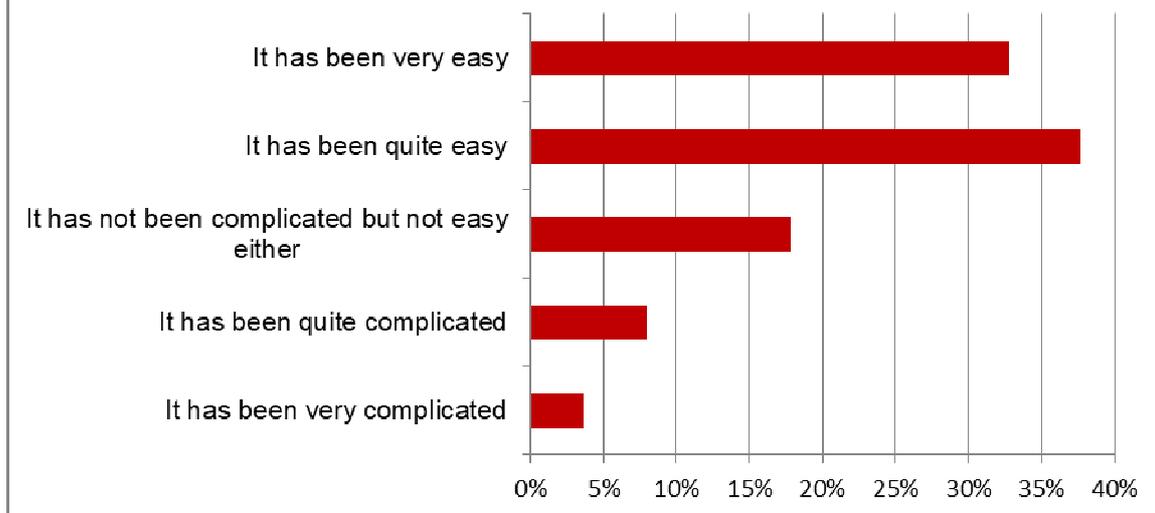
3. Research Results by Question



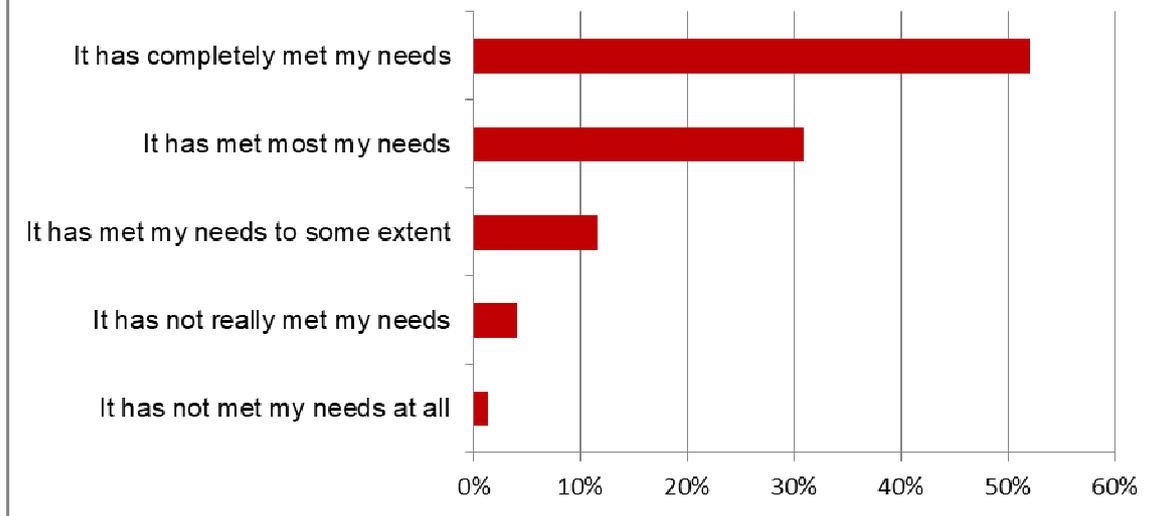
Q3 Before you started your direct payment, did you understand what would be involved?



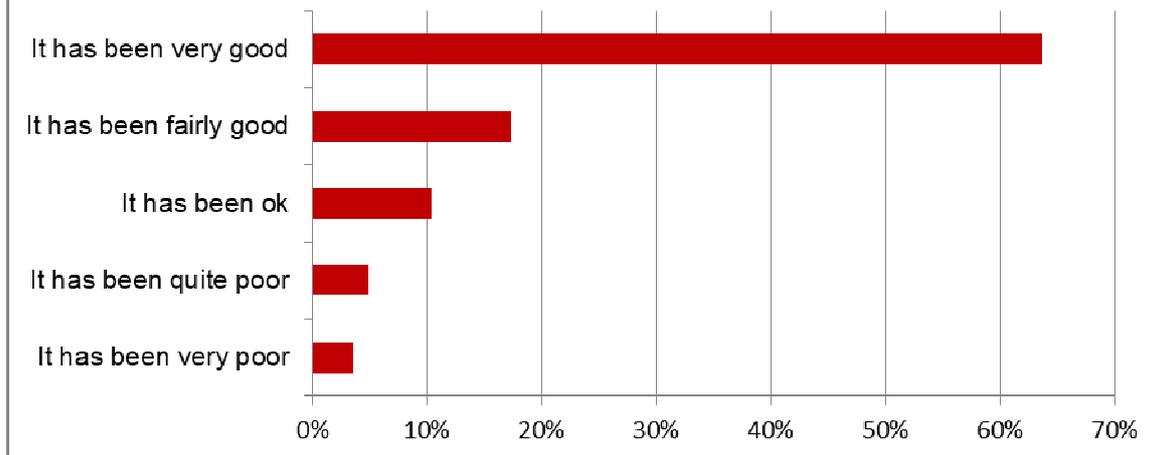
Q4 If you are an employer, how easy has the process been?

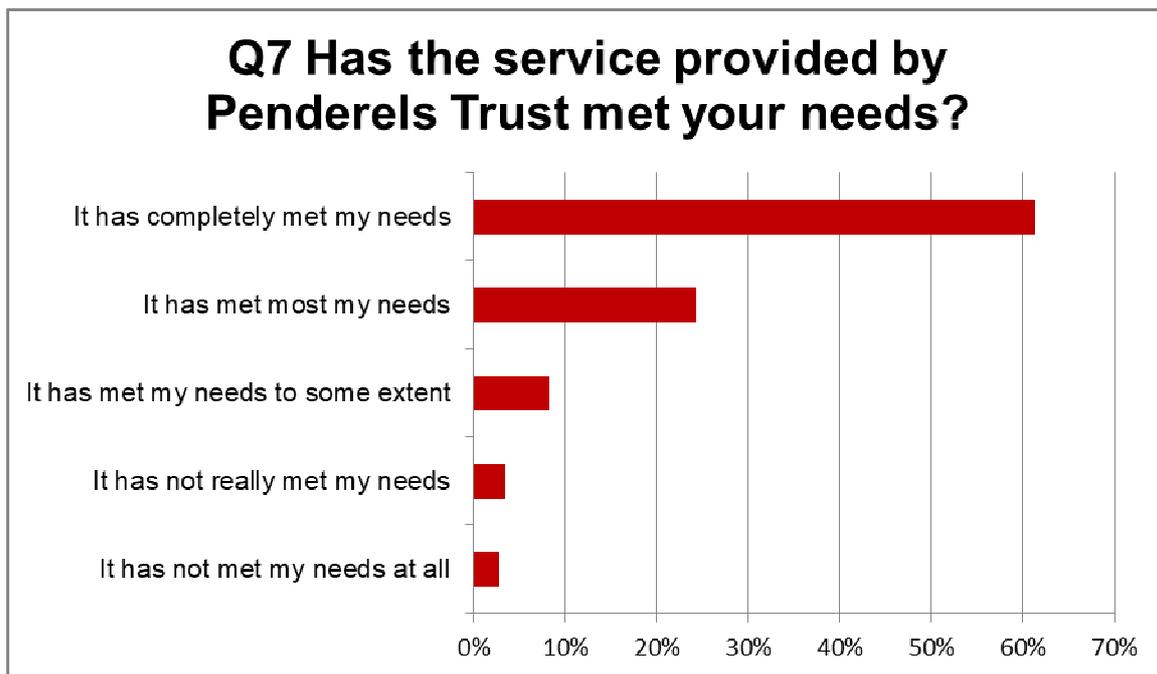


Q5 How does being an employer meet your needs?



Q6 Overall, what has been your experience of working with Penderels Trust to date?

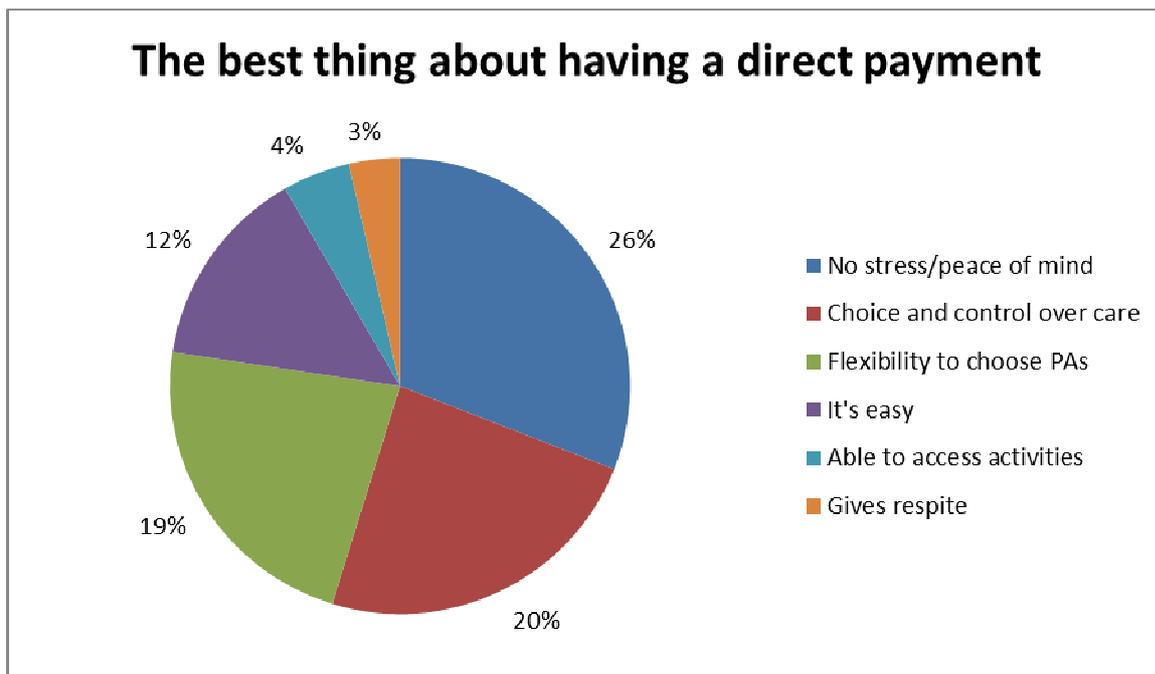




4. Research results for Qualitative Questions

Respondents were asked what the best and worst thing was about having a direct payment. This was a free text question but most of the answers could be grouped into categories. Most respondents gave one answer only.

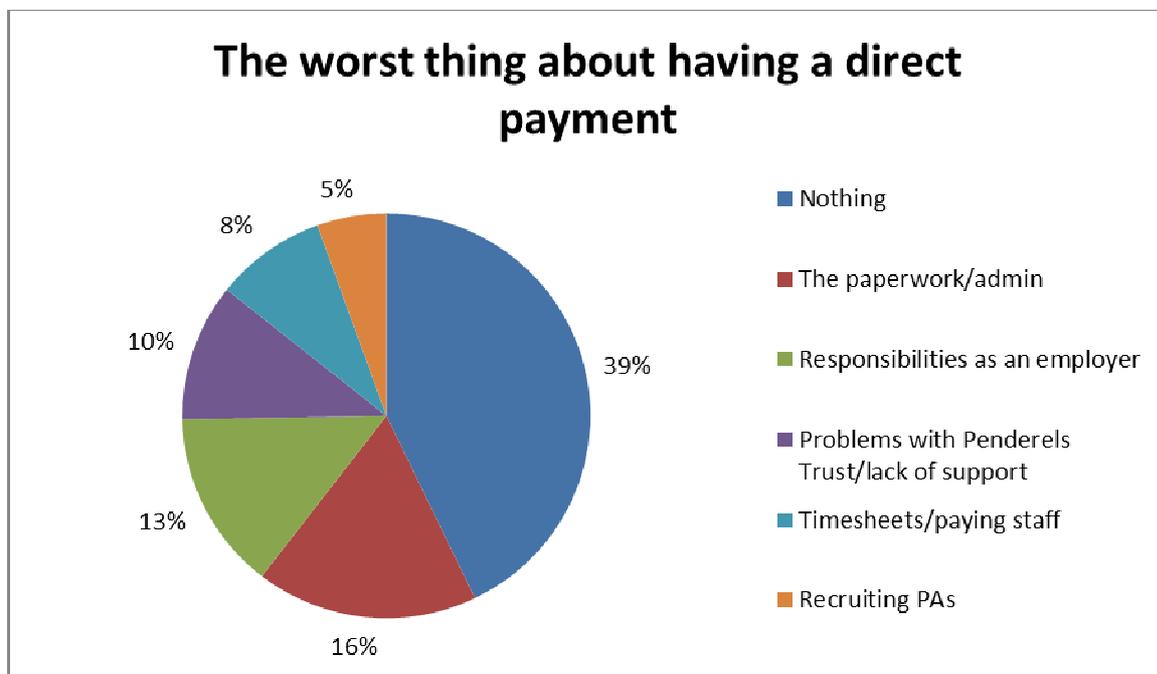
What is the best thing about having a direct payment?



Direct Payment User Research

- Over a quarter of respondents (26%) said that having peace of mind and to be free of stress was the best thing about having a direct payment. Comments included 'takes all the stress away' and 'peace of mind knowing the person I employ is the best for my child'.
- A fifth of respondents (20%) said having choice, control and independence was the best thing. Comments included 'being in control and making decisions' and 'being able to have control over my care at home, I love being cared for at home'.
- 19% of respondents said having the flexibility to choose the carer/PA they want was the best thing about having a direct payment. Comments included 'choosing carers that can be trusted oneself' and having the 'flexibility to employ the right person'.
- 12% of respondents said the best thing about having a direct payment was that it is easy. Comments included 'it's straightforward, easy and always on time' and that a direct payment is 'so easy to manage'.
- Others said having a direct payment enabled them (or their child) to access activities, offered respite, freed up their time, that there was 'no middle man' and that it saved them time.

What is the worst thing about having a direct payment?



- The top answer was 'nothing' with over a third of respondents (39%) giving the response.
- 16% said the worst thing about having a direct payment was the paperwork and admin involved. Comments include 'I sometimes worry about the paperwork' and 'the paperwork involved on top of being a carer'.
- 13% said the responsibilities of being an employer was the worst thing. Comments included the responsibility of 'making sure that I have policies, procedures in place and that I am working within the law' and 'being treated as an employer when I am a 24-7 carer.'
- 10% said the worst thing was the lack of support from or issues with Penderels Trust. Most of the comments were around lack of communication.
- 8% of respondents cite having to submit timesheets and managing staff payments as the worst thing. Many comments are around remembering to send timesheets in on time.
- 5% specifically mention the difficulty in recruiting for a PA and 'finding and keeping good carers' and 'uncertainty when a PA leaves and settling with a new one'.
- Other responses include issues with the local authority (communication, assessments), tax and HMRC issues, lack of funding, less flexibility than expected and not being confident about what a direct payment can be used for.

Direct Payment User Research

Conclusion

Overall, having a direct payment has been a positive experience for our respondents with over a third not having anything negative to say about it. The importance of having a quality direct payment support service was indicated as the top answer for the best thing about having a direct payment was the 'peace of mind' and to be 'free of stress' as they had support to manage their direct payment. Looking at ways of reducing administrative workload and making it easier for direct payment users to complete the paperwork required will continue to be a focus for our service. We will also review our processes around communicating with customers.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the Penderels Trust customers who took the time to respond to our survey.

Contact

For more information, please contact:

Caroline Clay, Marketing Manager
Email: cclay@penderelstrust.org.uk
Tel: 02476 511611