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Individual Budgets Evaluation Network

# The Individual Budget Pilot Evaluation: a rapid summary

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# IBSEN evaluation questions

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**CORE QUESTION →** Do individual budgets offer a **better way to support** disabled adults and older people than conventional methods of resource allocation and service delivery?

If so, **which models work best** and for whom?

**Evaluation dimensions**

| | |
|---|---|
| User experience | Risk & protection |
| Carer impact | Commissioning |
| Workforce | Outcomes |
| Care management | Costs |
| Provider impact | Cost-effectiveness |

# Some evaluation elements

- Randomised trial – IB and comparison groups (but lots of flexibility within those groups re deployment)
- Follow-up interviews after 6 months → some challenges (logistical, instrumentation, interviewee exhaustion, proxies …)
- In-depth user interviews – support planning process
- Interviews with IB leads, providers, funding stream lead officers, other managers
- Interviews and diaries, front-line staff and first-tier managers
- Add-on study of impact of IBs on carers

# The IB pilots - unfinished business …

- Extended transition/ transformation
  - Resources tied up, double funding
  - Inhibited changes in staff practices – law and FACS
- Limited follow-up – different ‘steady state’ outcomes?
- Impact of uncertainty and change:
  - Risk aversion or precaution?
  - Reliance on conventional deployment mechanisms
- Developing the Resource Allocation System
- Shaping the market and place shaping
- Impact on carers and communities?

# Integrating funding streams

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- Supporting People – most success
- Integrated Community Equipment Services – partly successful
- Access to Work – different eligibility criteria
- Disabled Facilities Grant – capital funding
- Independent Living Fund – most disappointment

# Excluding NHS resources from IBs

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- Contexts – extensive partnerships with PCTs and providers
- ‘Missed opportunity’
- NHS continuing care – the risks to personalised support
- IBs and mental health
  - Integrated budgets and services
  - Implementation challenges
  - Blurred boundaries – ‘health’ versus ‘social’ services
  - ‘Cost-shunting’

# Can IBs remain cost-neutral?

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- Allocating resources – underlying principles
- Integrating funding streams
  - ILF review
- Increased demand for IBs
  - Mental health service users (and higher expectations)
- Managing the ‘winners and losers’
- From bulk purchase to individual buyers

# Issues for policy and politics

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- Resource allocation – underlying principles
- Funding streams – personal budgets (social care only) or individual budgets?
- FACS and charging policies
- Safeguarding
- The legitimate ‘boundaries’ of adult social care

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