

Imosphere launches digital self-assessment tools to assist local authorities with Social Care Funding Reforms

24 August 2022: In response to the upcoming social care cap, Imosphere, a leading provider of social care and support tools, has today launched a new online self-assessment tool for adult social care. The tool will also provide the basis for Independent Personal Budget (IPB) calculations from early 2023, providing a common approach to budget-setting across Personal Budgets and IPBs.

Developed in collaboration with local authorities, including two of the Government's trailblazers, the solutions will support the expected surge in demand for new assessments and accurate Independent Personal Budget (IPB) calculations for those self-funding their care.

With the Government's social care cap coming into effect next year, there is a consensus that the reforms will increase the pressure on already over-stretched services including unmet and under-met needs, greater strain on unpaid carers, and increased waiting times for assessments and delivery of care packages.

A defensible and transparent method when calculating IPBs

Imosphere's self-assessment tool is designed to support local authorities to manage the increased demand for assessments, while enabling Imosphere's existing calculation tool for Personal Budgets to be extended to calculate IPBs using the same methodology. This will enable Local Authorities to adopt a fully transparent, defensible calculation system for adults with social care needs.

The self-assessment tool will be implemented by local authorities or their system suppliers, for use within their 'Citizen Portal and/or their social care IT system. It will support a strengths-based approach and enable service users to explain their situation and identify the outcomes they would like to achieve and the resources that are available in their local community.

For local authorities, the tool has been developed to support two key areas:

Determination of eligible needs – capturing the personal outcomes of service users and where needs appear eligible for each Care Act domain, as well as screening of financial assets level.

Independent Personal Budget calculation – a questionnaire to determine the individual's living situation, support needed in areas with eligible needs and levels of unpaid support.

Once self-assessments have been completed by service users, local authorities will be able to use the IPB calculator embedded in Formulate, Imosphere's strengths-based tool that provides fair and accurate estimated budgets for adults needing care and support.

Oliver Brown, Head of Product at Imosphere said, "We are delighted to launch our Self-assessment tool. Our goal as a company has always been to continually evolve based on legislation and customer demands, developing solutions collaboratively with customers to ensure effective operations and compliance.

"Our new Self-assessment tool is based around our existing strengths-based assessment which has already proven to be effective and has been used by LAs across England to calculate accurate, fair and consistent budgets for years. Our recent product developments have evolved in close collaboration with LAs, including two of the Government's six trailblazers."

Marcia Bowden of Oxfordshire County Council said, "As we move towards social care reform, we need to ensure our systems are able to meet our changing and developing needs. By choosing Formulate, we aim to have a clear and more open resource allocation system for all. It also gives reassurance and speed to social workers and other professionals, because they have a tool which provides consistency and demonstrates clarity to customers."

While the trailblazers are adopting the new tool in the first instance, the final version will be available to all local authorities by Spring 2023. Local authorities have already signed up for implementation to ensure they are prepared well ahead of next October when the cap will be introduced.

Notes to editors

Imosphere will continue to work with the Trailblazers as well as their existing clients, to develop their solution for the Social Care Reforms, ensuring that it enables LAs to continue to support their current and new service users requiring Personal Budgets, as well as the new self-funders that will require their support come October 2023.

About Imosphere

Imosphere provides health, social care and education professionals with a suite of powerful, intuitive, and purpose-built service support tools that enable them to assess need and make evidence-based decisions. Working with CCGs, local authorities and schools, Imosphere supports the comprehensive assessment of need and risk, translating it into equitable, needs-led funding decisions for individuals' care and support.

Trusted by customers across the country, Imosphere works with the likes of Rochdale Borough Council, Dorset Council, Devon County Council, Staffordshire County Council and North and West Northamptonshire Council.

<https://imosphere.com/care-and-support-tools/>