Statutory Sick Pay Enhancement Scheme

The Welsh Government has recently announced the introduction of the Statutory Sick Pay Enhancement Scheme. The scheme allows employers under direct payments to pay eligible personal assistants their full pay if they are unable to work due to COVID-19.

The scheme was introduced primarily as an infection control measure. Traditionally, prior to the introduction of the enhancement scheme, if an employed personal assistant went on sick leave, their only source of income for that leave period would either be normal statutory sick pay or in some cases, no income at all. However, under the new statutory sick pay enhancement scheme, employed personal assistants will continue to receive their full wage for a period of two weeks if the reason of illness is due to COVID, allowing them to go on sick leave and/or self-isolate with the reassurance that they will continue to be paid and hopefully removing any financial worry. By removing this financial barrier, it supports and encourages care workers to do the right thing, by staying off work, remaining at home and reducing the risk of passing on the virus.

Swansea Social Services are currently in the process of putting together a generic letter and guidance document which will soon be sent to all direct payment employers. However, for the time being, if you have any questions, please don’t hesitate in contacting us on 01792 636445 or DPSupport@swansea.gov.uk.

Here are some key points to remember:

- The scheme runs from 1st November 2020 until 31st March 2021.
- The enhancement cannot be claimed if the personal assistant has already received a self-isolation payment.
- The enhancement is paid for a maximum period of 14 days. If the person remains unwell after this time, the scheme does not provide further payment.
- Employees will receive the enhancement whilst they await their COVID test results. If the test result returns as negative, they will still receive the enhancement for the period they were waiting and should return to work.
- The individual must be taking time off work for one of the following.
  - Having symptoms of COVID-19
  - Testing positive for COVID-19
  - Self-isolating due to being identified as a contact by the NHS Wales Test Trace Protect Service
  - Self-isolating because a member of your extended household has symptoms of COVID-19 or has tested positive.