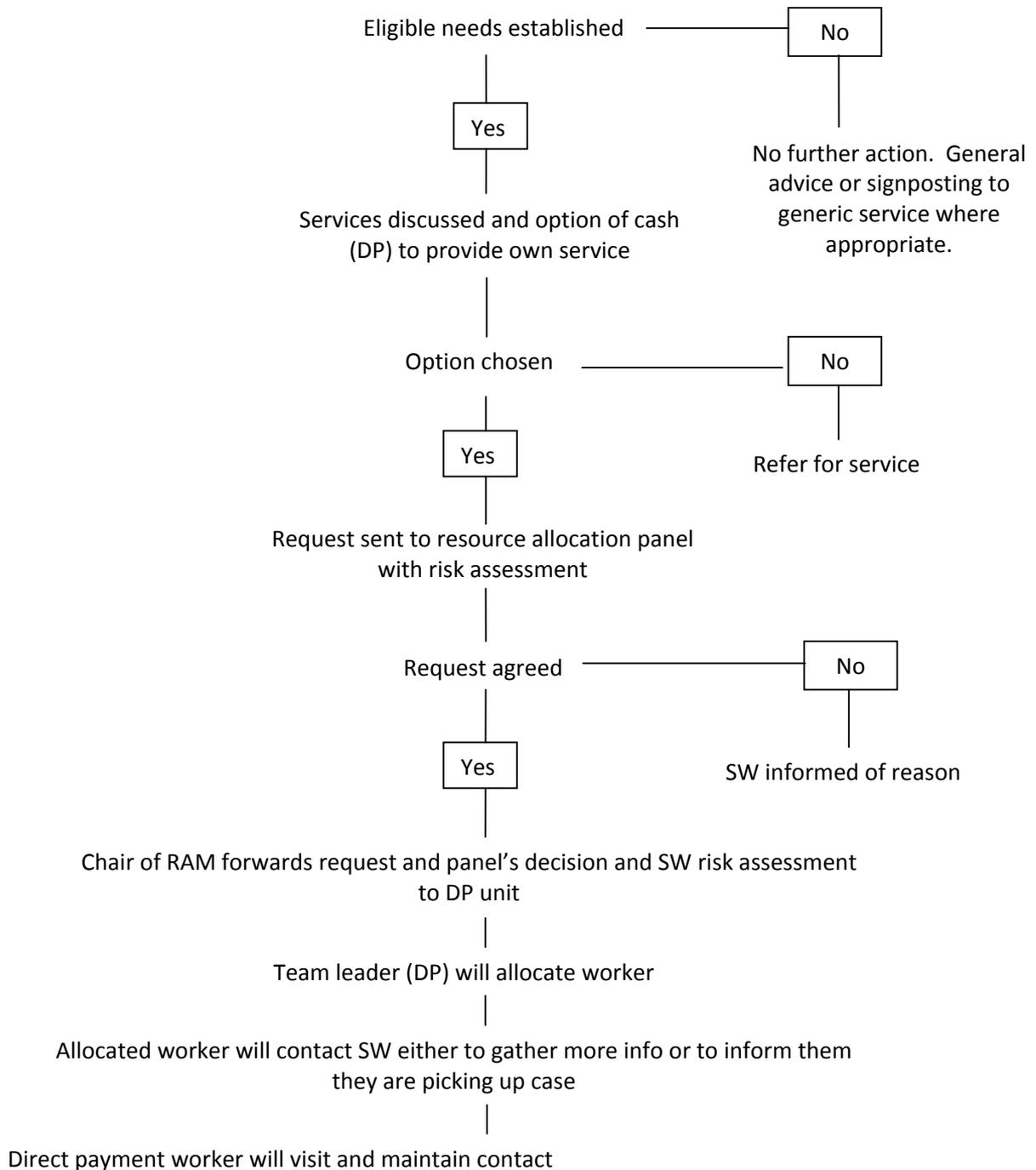


Process for Direct Payment Setting up payment

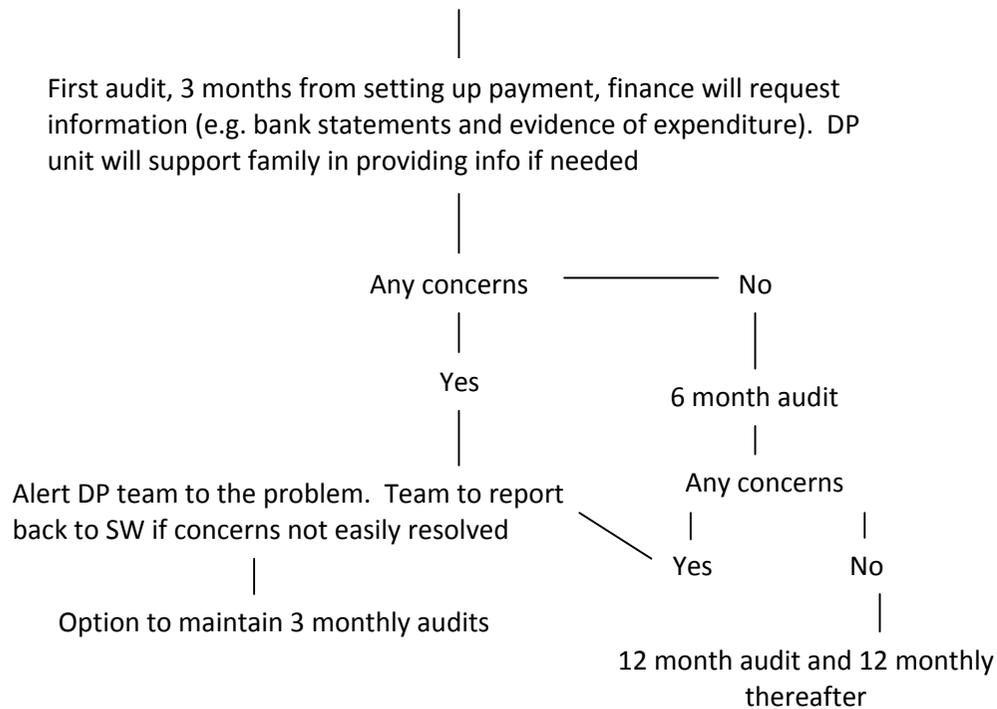
Family request assessment → referred to social worker



Process for Direct Payments 2

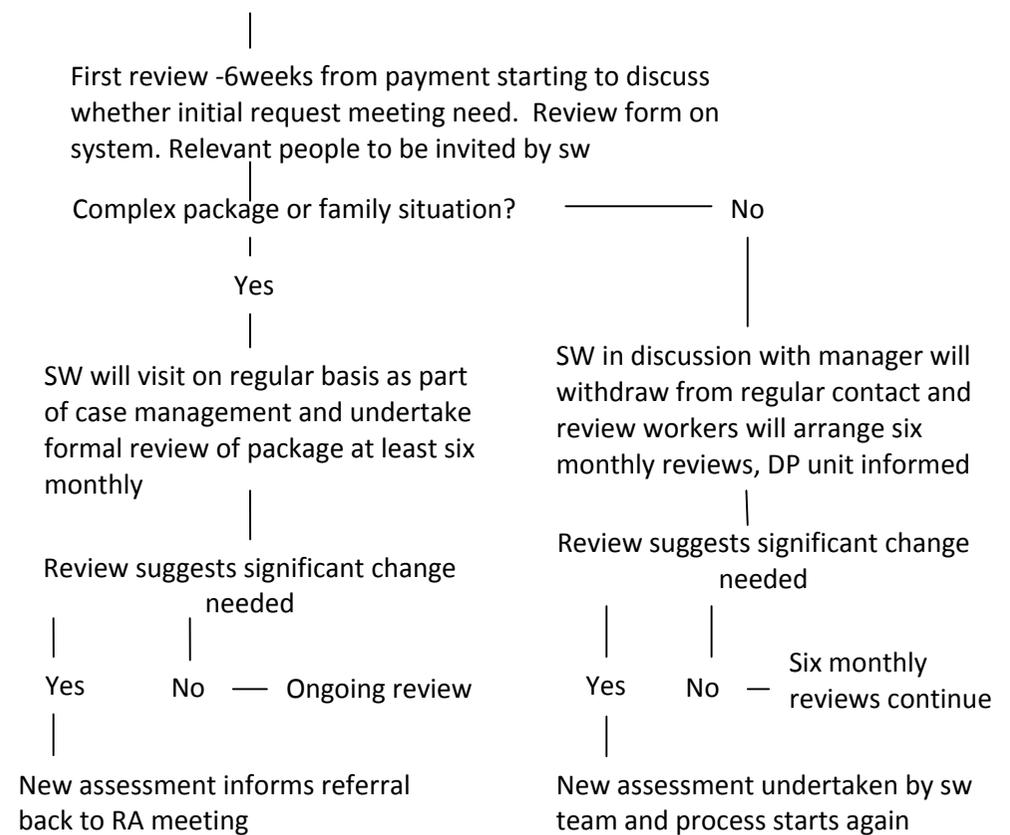
Once DP worker is confident that payment is set up and running smoothly s/he will withdraw from regular contact with the family. The worker will stay available for info/advice and trouble shooting

DP / finance responsibilities



The primary responsibilities of the DP team relate to monitoring and supporting of families in the administration of the direct payment. The primary responsibilities of the SW team relate to ensuring that the payment is meeting assessed need, however they also need to play a part in making sure that public funds are used effectively and efficiently and should not ignore financial records

Social Work team responsibilities



Action to be taken when underspend is identified

Build up of funds in bank accounts is both wasteful of resources and often worrying for families. Some of this can be managed through regular reviews where workers become aware of imminent changes of circumstances and can request temporary changes of payment from DP. Where an audit or review identifies underspend in the direct payment budget the following actions need to be taken.

Discussion with family to understand the circumstances leading to any underspend. Workers should support families in meeting their legal obligations as an employer, e.g. ensuring PAs are given paid leave.

Discussion of options to spend any money. Options should be based on the benefit to a young person and family and should relate to 'eligible need'. For example a substantial underspend accrued because regular day care or support for leisure activities has not been purchased **might** be spent to support a young person having a period of overnight care including a short holiday away **if** that need has been established. It should not be spent on anything the family might decide would be nice for example mum going to a Spa as a treat whilst young person is at school.

How the direct payment underspend is used should be reflected in care plan and Resource Allocation Meeting informed so that usage can be noted in statistical returns. Discussion should be held about whether the overall care plan needs to be changed to reflect how the family and young person can best benefit from future payments, and at what level those payments should be made.

Where no agreement can be reached or no eligible use of underspend can be identified, the worker should inform the Resource Allocation Meeting (through Team Manager, CWDT) with a recommendation e.g. suspension of payment until money at acceptable level; or request to be made for return of money.

Consideration will need to be made about whether the family need additional support to manage the payments or whether it is appropriate to end the provision of a cash payment, even if the family still prefer this option.

If the latter decision is made it will be relayed to manager of DP unit via chair of RAM following consultation with relevant HOS and a request will be made for closure of the bank account and return of all monies accrued.