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### **Self-directed gaining ground with advisers, according to poll**

A third of financial advisers are now offering or are considering expanding their self-directed services following the introduction of the retail distribution review (RDR), according to a poll by Cofunds.

Five months into living with RDR, 404 financial advisers were asked about their plans for offering self-directed services, 17 per cent said that they already offer a form of self-directed service and 9 per cent said they are looking to introduce them.

Fifty-three per cent said categorically that they will not offer a self-directed service, a noticeable decline from the 69 per cent reported a year ago when Cofunds asked advisers the same question.

The growing popularity of this area is backed up by internal Q1 data from Cofunds which shows a 19 per cent year-on-year increase in demand for self-directed services. However, despite the advances over the last 12 months, the platform expects to see further growth in this area as more advisers make use of the wide range of tools already at their disposal to cost-effectively manage the full range of clients.

Commenting on the findings, Andy Coleman, Director of Distribution at Cofunds, said: "To some the idea of advisers suggesting to their clients that they may occasionally want to make their own investment decisions may seem counter-intuitive. However, for those who have already embraced it there's a clear logic to adding a self-directed offer to their client servicing tool kit. By offering a self-directed service to those clients for whom the adviser recommends full advice is not appropriate at this time, any existing assets can be retained, while still allowing the client to make new investments, in an informed manner.

"The firm can continue to demonstrate value to the client - providing valuations, tools and investing functionality - and therefore is front of mind when, and if, the client decides they do need advice."

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### About Cofunds

Cofunds is the leading investment platform for advisers and other financial institutions, with assets under administration over £52bn (as at 01.04.13). It provides flexible administration and management services for advisers and their clients as well as dealing and custody services for financial institutions. It does not offer investment management or advice, nor does it compete with advisers by offering its services direct to the end client. Cofunds exists to serve the needs of institutions, advisers, their clients, and fund managers. Cofunds is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.