

# **NDS Quality information pack**

**An NDS Quality Team Initiative**

**Person-centred planning**



**National Disability Services**

Queensland

## A message from the NDS Queensland Quality Team

The National Disability Services (NDS) Queensland Quality Team is part of NDS's Industry Development and Support activities. It was set up to support disability organisations to implement the new Disability Sector Quality System. The purpose of this information pack written by the NDS Quality Team is to stimulate discussion and debate amongst stakeholders of disability services in the context of implementing the Disability Sector Quality System — it is not intended as a definitive reference on the topic.

For example, this material may be used as a basis for stakeholder workshops or staff meeting discussions. It may also be adapted freely to meet the needs of any intended audience. It is requested, however, that NDS Queensland be acknowledged as the source of the material and that any modifications do not change the intent or compromise the integrity of the original document.

Information packs are also available covering the following topics:

- reviewing and developing policies and procedures
- recruitment and selection
- induction
- training and development
- networking, mentoring and peer support.

These can be downloaded from the NDS Quality website: [www.ndsqldquality.net](http://www.ndsqldquality.net) or you can contact NDS Queensland directly:

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### The information pack

This information pack is one in a series designed to help organisations review aspects of management as part of implementing a quality framework. The pack includes a series of information sheets, related questions and a facilitator's session plan that can be used by groups to review current practice and identify improvements. The information sheets are intended to stimulate discussion — they do not go into detail about the topic. There are numerous books, resources, courses, Internet sites and experts that can provide detailed information; some of these are listed in the resources section at the end of the pack. Accessing more detailed expertise will become more important as you move further into review or begin making improvements to practice.

For the facilitator it will be important to familiarise and tailor the workshop to the group and the organisation. The organisation's policies, procedures and any other resources for each topic will be needed to supplement the information in this pack. Similarly if the organisation is using the disability services standards as part of this review each participant will need copies of the standards.

### About the topic

Person-centred planning is the process of establishing a person's needs and preferences with regard to service delivery. It is not a new concept and has been adopted in varying degrees by organisations. The extent of adoption of this type of planning will have a great impact on the level of understanding between a service provider and a service user and will influence the satisfaction of the service user.

Each step in the planning process provides a volume of information about what works and doesn't work about person-centred planning and each different service user who participates will provide a very different experience in planning. Therefore it is important to periodically assess the organisation's planning processes against a person-centred planning model to identify ways of improving practice. This will have a direct impact on service delivery.

### The contents

This resource will help you to review the way your organisation develops plans for people with disabilities who are the service users and help determine if there are any changes or improvements to be made.

The pack contains information covering:

- benefits of person-centred planning and some assumptions to challenge
- obligations
- what is person-centred planning — what does it look like?
- person-centred planning in focus (discussion questions)
- sample workshop design and facilitator tips
- other resources.

# Benefits of person-centred planning and some assumptions to challenge

Information sheet



This sheet lists some of the benefits of, and assumptions about, person-centred planning. Participants will probably be able to think of more of these.

## Benefits

Some of the benefits of person-centred planning include:

- focuses on people thinking about what they want from their lives, their dreams, what is important/not important to them and the changes they want to make
- focuses people on who is in their life and on friendships and relationships they would like to develop
- builds confidence and skills in decision-making, planning and self advocacy
- focuses services and staff on how they can support people in a way that best meets the person's expectations
- challenges all those involved to think differently
- provides a forum for all those who are a part of the person's life to work together to achieve what that person wants to achieve
- provides a forum for people to be involved in the decision-making about their own lives
- reflects respect and value of the person
- improves quality of service delivery.

## Some assumptions to challenge

Some of the common assumptions people have about person-centred planning include:

- if the service user attends a planning meeting this is person-centred planning
- person-centred planning is too resource intensive
- person-centred planning can't be done in a group setting
- service users don't have the skills to be involved in planning
- the service user has been accessing this service for so long there is nothing new to learn or nothing staff don't know about them.



This information sheet is not meant to be a definitive list of the legislative or organisational obligations relating to person-centred planning. It is meant to highlight that there are some responsibilities that do need to be addressed by the organisation. If there are queries or concerns you can get more information directly from the legislation, standard or relevant governing body — it is important to be fully and accurately informed.

## The disability service standards

The following disability service standards are relevant to this topic:

- *Standard 2: Individual needs*
- *Standard 3: Decision-making and choice*
- *Standard 4: Privacy, dignity and confidentiality*
- *Standard 5: Participation and integration*
- *Standard 6: Valued status*
- *Standard 9: Protection of legal and human rights and freedom from abuse and neglect.*

Demonstrating use of this type of planning process will assist in meeting almost all of the standards.

## Other legislation

Aside from the disability service standards, there is no other directly relevant legislation for the topic of person-centred planning.

## Reducing exposure to risk

By using person-centred planning you are reducing exposure to certain business risks such as discontinuity of funding or not achieving your organisation's vision, mission or values.

# What is person-centred planning — what does it look like?



## Historical context

Services have always planned for how service delivery would occur. Many factors have influenced this planning over the years and practices have changed as community attitudes towards people with disabilities have evolved. Many organisations were originally established with a mission to provide care; planning was often service-based rather than individually-based.

Our understanding of the rights of people with disabilities and attitudes about how services are delivered have changed over time and been influenced by people with disabilities themselves. People with disabilities became more outspoken about what they wished for in their own lives and influenced the advent of legislation such as the *Disability Discrimination Act* and the *Disability Services Act*. Many of the practices of the past are now viewed differently and services have strived to increase the involvement of people with disabilities in the decision-making about service delivery.

As a result there has been a move away from service-focused planning towards person-centred planning. Where previously professionals or specialists would use their expertise to provide a programme for a group of people with disabilities (a plan for service delivery) now they apply their professional expertise while working with individuals to plan service delivery.

The extent to which the individual is involved varies from organisation to organisation. As organisations have become more and more involved in person-centred planning there have been improvements to practice and knowledge around how to increase the effectiveness of this type of planning. In many ways person-centred planning is an outcome that organisations, professionals and people with disabilities are continually striving towards.

It is clear in the disability service standards that person-centred planning is an expectation and service providers have a responsibility to evolve and learn more about ways that enable and empower people with disabilities — especially in planning.

## What is person-centred planning?

Person-centred planning — the process of establishing a person's needs and preferences with regard to service delivery — is not a new concept. The focus of person-centred planning, however, has changed over the decades and there is now a clear understanding that people with disabilities have the *right* to a person-centred plan, as well as the right and the *responsibility* to participate in the process of planning their future.



These rights are based in legislation (the *Commonwealth Disability Services Act 1986*) and the *Disability Service Standards 1993* that arise from the Act.

Terminology relating to planning processes has varied over time and between service types, e.g. personal futures planning, person-centred planning, consumer-focused plans, individualised planning, circles of support, and so on. This information pack is not about analysing terminology or establishing new terminology. It is about creating a better understanding of what constitutes effective planning.



**Important note:** A person-centred plan is basically an agreement between the organisation and the service user regarding the service provided, and is likely to cover mutual expectations and responsibilities relating to the service being delivered.

## What does person-centred planning look like?

Person-centred planning has at its core the belief that all people have the right to plan lives that are personally meaningful and satisfying, and that all people have talents and strengths that they have the right and the responsibility to develop.

Being person-centred means having an unconditional positive regard and empathetic understanding of the person.

It involves finding out what the person's capacity is, what they do well, their talents and skills; it involves discussions with the person and those they choose to be involved, resulting in the evolution of a plan or vision of their own choosing.

This type of planning is not a one-time event. The process focuses on continuing to gather information on individual core values and preferences and the decision-making process of goal setting and acquiring the support to achieve these goals.

The planning process aims to:

- identify the individual's goals, wishes and expectations as a starting point for planning
- create an environment of listening and understanding
- be a supportive and empowering experience that focuses on the person's abilities and capacity
- involve people who have a role in the person's life to work together and create interdependence throughout the process
- ensure the conversation is about realistic outcomes and improvements in the quality of life and quality of service delivery
- be flexible to the individuals involved
- reflect what is possible — not just what is available.



## What questions should service providers ask of themselves?

Good person-centred planning involves the service provider asking themselves:

- What am I doing in the long-term to make it possible for this person to have more control over his or her life?
- What am I doing to expand their experiences?
- What am I doing to extend their relationships, so that they are not relying too much on me for the realisation of their rights?
- What am I doing to ensure that they have more control and power within their relationships?

Michael Smull, author of *Essential Futures Planning* (developed to assist people in moving from institutions to community life focusing on gathering information on individual core values and preferences) says that people who develop plans with people with disabilities should be able to answer the following questions:

- What is important **to** the person?
- What is important **for** the person?
- Is what is important **for** the person being addressed in the context of what is important **to** the person?
- Is there a 'good' balance between what is important to the person and what is important for the person?
- What does the person want to learn, what else do we need to learn?
- What needs to stay the same (be maintained or enhanced)?
- What needs to change?

He says that these questions are important because too many 'person-centred plans' reflect what is important to the person right up to the part of the plan that describes what is actually going to be done. They then lapse into only dealing with what is important for the person or what is perceived to be needed. The goals and actions of the plans that help people move toward what they want should reflect a balance between what is important **to** and **for** the person.

## What is the best plan to use?

There are many styles of person-centred plans. As long as the plan is person-centred, it is important not to spend energy debating which is the best planning style but consider which style might be best used in particular circumstances.

This information pack includes a list of resources that will help you research which styles will best suit your organisation and service users.

This decision will be affected by the expectations of service users. Involving them in the choice, adaptation, introduction and improvements in the processes will ultimately increase its effectiveness.



## **Who should be involved?**

The key feature of person-centred planning is that the person chooses whom to involve in the process (the key stakeholders in the lives of the person). The person also determines the venue/settings and time of planning meetings. Family members and friends are partners in planning and can be welcomed and included in the planning at the discretion of the person. Service provider representative/s are those agreed upon with the person and should be the best person to fulfil this role i.e. knows the person and who is skilled/trained in planning. The person is also assisted to do his or her own planning depending on the individual and their circumstances — it may mean identifying an advocate of the person's or family's choosing.

## **How do we know if it's working?**

There are continual advances in person-centred planning and each plan you participate in increases your understanding about what works and doesn't work. It is important to continue to evaluate your practice both on the individual level and at a service level.

### **On an individual level**

Every plan needs to be assessed and the simple question to ask is 'Is it changing the person's life for the better?'

People who are involved in the planning should be involved in the review; reviewing time should not necessarily be a set time or date, but whenever a change is needed. The plan should be a living document and should result in learning, listening and further action. Reviews should reveal what is working and what is not and whether it is time to set goals and actions for new opportunities. The perspectives may be discussed in a 'group conference' setting and possibly using an independent facilitator.

### **At a service level**

Evaluation may be a part of a service evaluation or you may consider having an external review of your planning methods and results from time-to-time by people who are experienced and independent. These can be measured against your policies and procedures to see that they enhance and foster a person-centred planning approach.

## **What will assist in fostering person-centred planning approaches?**

The following conditions will help to foster an approach to person-centred planning:

- positive focus and commitment to person-centred approaches
- understanding planning processes, approaches and good practice
- a focus on flexible timetables and service delivery structures
- roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for all involved
- training
- relevant support and information given to all participants



- time
- supportive policies and procedures
- reviews and evaluations in place
- meeting service user expectations as a measure of organisational performance.

## Person-centred planning in focus

### Discussion questions

These questions aim to help you understand how person-centred planning works in your organisation and what might need to change. To get the most out of these questions locate a copy of the organisation's person-centred planning policy/procedure (if one exists) and read the information sheet: *What is person-centred planning — what does it look like?* before answering them.

#### How it happens now...

- Describe how person-centred planning happens here.

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- What works really well about the way it happens here?

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- What impression does this give of the organisation?

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#### How it relates to what we want to achieve...

- How does this relate to what is written in our policy and procedure documents or if none exist what we want to achieve?

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- How does this reinforce our vision, mission and values?

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- In what ways does this not reinforce our vision, mission and values?

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#### How can we better align 'how it happens now' to 'what we want to achieve'...

- What could we do to improve the way it works here?

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- What could we do to better align the way it happens here with our vision, mission and values?

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## Sample workshop outline — person-centred planning


Information for facilitators

This section of the information pack provides a sample workshop that can be used to explore and plan for improving person-centred planning within your organisation. For more information on how to conduct the workshop refer to the *Tips for facilitators* information sheet.

To prepare for the workshop make sure all participants have access to at least the *Person-centred planning in focus* discussion questions and the information sheet on *What is person-centred planning — what does it look like?*

Time	Suggested questions & prompts	Actions	
	<p><b>Welcome and introductions</b></p> <p><b>Introductions</b></p> <p>Ask participants to introduce themselves and talk about a time they set themselves a goal and achieved it — what did it feel like?</p> <p><b>Purpose</b></p> <p>To review our person-centred planning processes.</p> <p><b>Alignment question</b></p> <p>In this workshop/meeting/in-service, we are seeking some alignment (everyone being on the same page), not necessarily agreement on all points.</p> <p><i>Note: To assist with this, ask: 'How can we be more aligned as a group?'</i></p>	Write up the response and refer to as needed to keep group on track.	
	<p><b>Overview of the session</b></p> <p>During this session I will be asking some questions to stimulate thinking about the effectiveness of our person-centred planning such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ reminding ourselves of the business are we in</li> <li>▪ reflect on ways of improving how we person-centre our planning</li> <li>▪ discuss what we want act upon.</li> </ul>		
	<p><b>What business are we in?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Revisit the organisation vision, mission and values.</li> <li>▪ How does this relate to person-centred planning?</li> </ul>	Group discussion (large or small groups).	

Time	Suggested questions & prompts	Actions	
	<b>Discussing person-centred planning</b>		
	<p>Discuss people's thoughts around the information sheet on <i>What is person-centred planning — what does it look like?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What was surprising?</li> <li>▪ What was new information?</li> </ul>	Group discussion.	
	<b>What would person-centred planning look like in our organisation?</b>		
	<p>Spend time focusing on how you would describe the way that services were provided or that people's experiences of the organisation would be different if we could improve the way we plan.</p>	Group discussion with facilitator recording.	
	<b>What do we do now that is aligned to this?</b>		
	<p>What are the ways we demonstrate a level of person-centred planning processes in the way we plan now? <i>(each participant to provide two ways)</i></p> <p><i>Note: go around and get each participant to list a way that you could further align to person-centred approach. Each person is to list a new idea or expand on a previous idea.</i></p> <p>What issues do we need to address to make this successful?</p>	<p>Recorded.</p> <p>Small groups or pairs.</p>	
	<b>How will we know when we have achieved this?</b>		
	<p>How will we know we have the best possible person-centred planning processes in place?</p> <p><i>Note: List and then vote on importance of the items — choose some of the top ones and make them the measures/indicators.</i></p>		
	<b>Where to from here</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We have a list of ways we can improve the way we person-centred plan — how are we going to implement these?</li> <li>▪ We have a list of issues we need to address to make this work — how are we going to implement these?</li> <li>▪ We have some indicators/measures — how are we going to implement these?</li> </ul>	<p>Write up an action plan, indicating the priority, which person is to be responsible, when. Include a review date.</p>	

Time	Suggested questions & prompts	Actions	
	<b>Conclusion</b>		
	<p>Review the discussions held and summarise the actions agreed.</p> <p>Is there anything that you wish to change or add?</p> <p>Explain how and when the group will get feedback on what happens next (ideally within two weeks of workshop).</p>		
	<b>Thanks and acknowledgements</b>		

The following tips aim to help facilitators conduct the workshop provided in this information pack.



**Important note:** The session plan has been written assuming that people from the same workplace (or organisation) are working together on the issue and how it pertains to their organisation. The session plan will need to be altered if this is not the case.

### Preparation

- Provide pre-reading information with enough time for the participants to digest it and have a chance to ask questions before the session begins. The pre-reading information will include the information sheets from this information package, the disability service standards and any policy/procedural information that is relevant to the topic.
- Gather information about the room, food, timing and travel requirements of the participants prior to organising the session and venue.
- Familiarise yourself with the session materials and if necessary adapt them to the group's characteristics and experiences for example: break into smaller groups for discussions or activities; think about the time you have for each activity and mark these on your workshop plan in the time column; allow time for extra activities if needed; or use two facilitators if working with a large group).
- Consider covering the associated costs for participants with disabilities e.g. transport, childcare, attendant carers etc.

### During the session

- Take care to validate all contributions.
- Be flexible with timing and frequency of breaks. Aim for a break every hour. Allow more time for breaks if the interactions during these breaks are flowing freely (relationship building is the best outcome and worth sacrificing time spent on workshop content).
- Don't start by knowing the answers — participants will pick this up. The intention is to explore the possibilities, not confirm solutions you have already identified.
- When you are recording discussions make sure you label the information as you collect it to make the collation after the session easier.
- Keep an eye on all participants and their level of interaction; follow up with any individuals who may not be fully participating to see if there is any assistance that could be provided to increase their level of involvement.

### After the session

- Always thank and acknowledge all participants (including staff) and those who helped organise the session.
- Make sure feedback is provided within two weeks of the workshop (be realistic when you give a timeframe at the end of the workshop).

## **Tips on conducting the sample workshop**

### **Introductions**

- The introduction part of the workshop can be altered to suit the group and the facilitator. The activity listed in the session plan is designed to warm people up to the topic, be a non-threatening sharing activity and to make sure everyone is aware of who is in the room. If people do not know each other you may wish to spend more time on this to ensure all participants are comfortable.
- You may agree on some ground rules for the session. If so these should be recorded and remain in sight of the group throughout the session.

### **Alignment activity**

- This activity is about creating a good atmosphere for the group to work with each other on the session tasks. It is worth spending as much time as is required on this activity before progressing. The outcome will have a huge impact on whether the group will achieve the purpose of the session.
- The alignment discussion is designed to identify individual perspectives and how this will affect the work of the group. The more strongly aligned, the easier it will be to attack the workshop topic.
- One of the keys to successful group work is having an environment where there can be debate, questioning, curiosity, enquiry, disagreement and agreement around the topic at hand without personal agendas preventing all the issues being discussed.
- If people do raise significant concerns about whether they can work together you will need to facilitate a discussion to explore this. If this takes up the entire session the outcome will still be worthwhile.

### **Overview of the session**

- Check with the participants about whether this meets their expectations and spend time clarifying and agreeing on how you will be spending the rest of the session.

### **What business are we in?**

- This activity is designed to provide the context for the discussion. If there is disagreement on the vision, mission and values stop the session and discuss this issue. Agreeing on the vision, mission and values is vital for any of the work outlined in the session plan.

### **The next few activities (reflection and discussion)**

- These require people to have read the pre-reading. If this has not happened you may need to give people time to individually read the information.

### **Where to from here**

- This activity is the planning part of the session. Your role as a facilitator will be to ensure this is recorded and test out the feasibility of the plan. The plan needs to be owned, resourced and be reasonably practical to achieve.
- This write-up is able to be used as evidence of review of practice for the service audits; ensure the documentation is appropriate.

The information contained in this pack will not provide enough detail for more in-depth work on improving your organisation's approach to person-centred planning. The following list of resources is not exhaustive, however it is a useful place to start.

- *Person-centred planning education site*: a site from Cornell University with resources around person-centred planning <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/ped/tsal/pcp/>
- *National Disability Organisation*: a north American website with a project on person-centred planning, what it is and how to get started: <http://www.nda.ie/cntmgmtnew.nsf/0/00092669892C0B998025710F00411F50?OpenDocument> (or follow the links from the home page: Standards > person centred planning guidelines)
- *Paradigm*: This website has some articles on person-centred planning. This link is to some of those articles <http://www.paradigm-uk.org/articlespcp.html> (or follow the links from the home page: Information > articles > person centred planning)
- *Inclusion*: This site was set up by those who originally developed person-centred planning: [www.inclusion.com](http://www.inclusion.com)
- *Essential Life Planning*: a site all about this person-centred planning tool: [www.elpnet.net](http://www.elpnet.net)
- *E.W. Tipping Foundation*: a organisation fostering person-centred planning has compiled a bibliography: <http://www.tipping.org.au/pca/PCABibliography.htm>



**Please note:** These resources were current at the time of publication, however some website addresses or page links may change without our knowledge.