

Personalisation in practice:

Making personalisation a reality for housing, support and care
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Planning for the future: Roundtable discussions

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There were three topics for discussion. Each table was allocated one to discuss in detail:

1. Quality
2. Brokerage
3. Risk and safeguarding How do we balance empowering.

Quality assurance

Key points:

- Establish a kitemark of service provision
- Have customer reviews on the web
- Carry out peer quality checks
- Have a regulatory body, which service providers are members of and who carries out a benchmarking service.

1. How will people know the quality of what they are purchasing?

Standard of quality provision

- Approved providers list
- Sharing good practice
- Benchmarking
- QAF
- Preferred providers: possible kitemark system
- Monitoring of services: monitor satisfaction rates
- Internal and external audit
- Vetting and barring also to be considered.

Service reviews

- Published service reviews
- Usage of particular services: this will eliminate 'bad' services
- Peer reviews.

Outcomes

- Achievement of outcomes: need to measure, need to capture, need to be person-centred.
- Monitored outcomes: both service level and personal level.

2. How can we make sure that people's own experiences are shared and help inform others?

Service user's experience

- User led forums
- Customer mentoring system
- Customer reviews or * (star) ratings
- Peer quality checks
- Word of mouth.

Information

- Ensure enough information available to allow customers to make informed choices.
- (Perhaps) a list of approved staff/providers compiled by the local authority.

Feedback

- Feedback mechanisms: e.g. using the internet and rating systems.

Example: Torbay currently use 'reach standards' for learning disability services.

3. How will we measure quality in the future and what is the role of regulatory bodies in this?

- Questionnaires for quality outcomes
- Customer retention by providers
- Regulatory bodies: possibly not mandatory. User views should be fed in and good practice shared.

Brokerage and advocacy

Key points:

- To have a choice of broker
- To have information about brokerage: either through the internet, a central source of information or elsewhere.
- To determine a clear definition of what brokerage is.

1. What role could the various organisations (voluntary sector, statutory sector, user led organisations, social enterprises, providers, etc.) play in providing support, guidance and information to people with individual and personal budgets?

General comments

- Different sources of information necessary
- Importance of independence
- Lack of conflict of interest
- Decision making with the individual
- A national brokerage model?
- Advocacy before brokerage.

Voluntary sector role

- Providing information for people: in order that people can make fully informed and empowered choice.

Statutory sector role

- Role for accreditation and regulation
- Providing information for people: in order that people can make fully informed and empowered choice

- Ongoing charge of brokers is to check the choice and services are working for the customer
- Develop consortia of good brokers: enforce some kind of accreditation system within this.

User led organisations' role

- Peer recommendations
- Peer star ratings.

Independent broker's role

- Independent brokers: need to be control and not have an interest in where the money goes.

Example: Cambridgeshire have an Opportunities Trust, which acts as a single point of access to service users and providers. This is co-ordinated by the local authority. This could be replicated to demonstrate good practice of brokerage.

2. What is the role of the local authority in supporting these changes?

- Possible role as licensing
- Local authorities to explore different pathways and solutions: to provide different options for choice
- Offer a choice of brokerage services: e.g. council managed, external service, user led/user-managed service
- To support people in making fully informed choices
- To listen to what people want and to work with them to achieve that want.

3. How should brokerage and advocacy be funded?

- Individual to pay: possibly from an individual budget
- Third sectors: local authority will have to fund an element if the customer does not have people around them to support
- Gross funding is a possibility: but this might limit choice
- Explicit allocation for brokerage.

4. Other comments

- Debates concerning the definition of the term 'brokerage' and 'broker': these need to be addressed.

Safeguarding and risk

Key points:

- Maintain focus on the duty of care, as well as safeguarding
- Explore who should monitor and review safeguards in a personalised environment
- Continue the local authority duty to safeguard staff as well as service users
- Encourage a positive risk taking approach: move away from a risk averse project.

1. How do we balance empowering clients with ensuring they are safeguarded?

- Training and information for customers
- Approved list of providers, which meets requirements on framework
- Encourage positive risk taking. Encourage the right to take risks

- Principle of legal, safe and contributing to outcomes to be adopted
- Maintain and improve risk and needs assessment
- Self-assessment of risk
- Need to balance expectations.

N.B. it's not the rules of safeguarding that need to change, but rather their application.

2. What are the rights of the client?

- Independence: having control
- Right to make decisions on the assumptions that they have capacity
- To take the same kind of risks as the rest of us to take, subject to capacity
- Acknowledgement that we all make mistakes: personalisation is about empowerment and allowing people to make their own mistakes, but subject to some form of check and monitoring.

3. What are the responsibilities of service providers, brokers and care managers?

Service providers

- To identify and offer options for customers
- Risk assessment approach
- Use risk-enablement panel to look at safeguarding
- Use support plan process to manage risk. Support planning also needs to assess personal assistants to see if they can assess risk to themselves and outline rules
- Service provider needs to show they are safeguarding appropriately.

Brokers

- Signposting to allow customer to make informed choices.

Care managers

- Explore safeguarding issues for staff
- Responsibility for CRB checks.
- Concern over professional boundaries.

Voluntary organisations

- Use voluntary organisations to manage personal assistants: e.g. by giving advice to clients about employment law.

4. What is the role of local authority commissioners in facilitating a balanced approach?

- Local authority needs to ensure provider safeguards
- To monitor and review support to ensure the customer is 'safe' and independent.