

Alternative Resource Allocation System for People with Disabilities in Ireland

Taking Control - November 2009

Disability Services in Ireland

- Services for persons with disabilities seek to enable each individual with a disability to achieve his / her full potential and maximise independence, including living as independently as possible.
- The development of services for persons with disabilities is informed by the National Disability Strategy (2004) which provides a framework of new supports for people with disabilities. The strategy builds on a strong equality but has been suspended due to the economic downturn

Funding of Disability Services

- Funding of Support Services for people with disabilities in Ireland comes under the HSE who is the national agency for the delivery of health and person social services
- The Government decides the policy, the Dept of Health and children are involved in policy formulation and evaluation however they do not have any role in the delivery of services – this is the main activity of the HSE.
- There are service agreements between the Service providers and the HSE

A New Resource Allocation System

- The idea of Individual Budgets or Individualised Service Design and how they can be used to help all disabled people to get control of their own support and achieve better lives for themselves has been introduced in other countries with great effect
- The disabled person is treated as an active citizen, in charge of their own life and living within a specific community.
- It is also assumed that if their impairment means that they need some significant level of help in order to live life as a citizen then they should be entitled to a fair amount of money so that they can buy the help they need
- The disabled person can then use that money to purchase that help from either service providers or from the community
- This model is not just a theoretical model – the Independent Living Movement has already shown that people with physical disabilities can take control of their lives in this way
- Supported living has offered similar opportunities to some people with learning difficulties

The UK Experience

- Changes in Social Policy and introduction of Legislation 1996 – 2001 lead to introduce direct payments
- Direct payments is a monetary payments by local councils direct to individuals, who have been assessed as needing certain services, including those that find themselves caring for others.

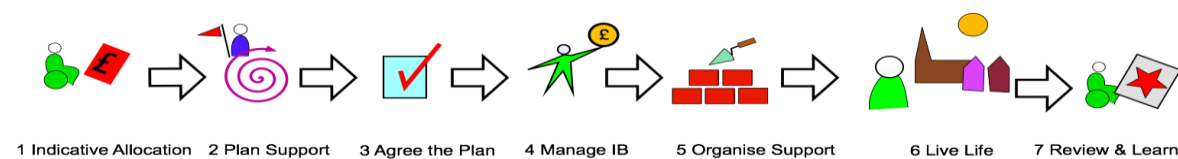


of self-directed support

The total transformation of social care into a system

- At the heart of In Control's Model is what they have identified as the 7 steps to In Control.
- These Seven Steps provide a framework for the disabled person to plan and manage their budgets, but they also involves a radical but positive re-think of how the existing care management service works.

Seven Steps for being in- Control



- You get your own **individual budget**
- You can do your own **support plan**
- 3.You may need an **agent** to represent you
- 4.You can have as much control as you want using **6 options**
- 5.You can use a **full range of support**: from traditional services to DIY
- 6.You get real **flexibility** over your funding
- 7.You tell people how you've done and what's next – **accountability**

1. Assessment



So it looks like I can get £15,000.

Step 1 - Assessment – you are told how much you can expect to receive based on a simple assessment

2. Making a plan



Who else can we get to help us do this plan?

Step 2 - you plan how you will spend your money in a way that makes sense to you

3. Getting the plan agreed



Yes - it looks like a good plan.

Step 3 - you get the plan agreed with the local authority – who appoints you an agent if you need one

4. Money for my support



We're opening a bank account for Zoe's support money.

Step 4 – Managing your Individual Budget – you take as much control as you want over the money and the possible service

5. Organising my support



I can choose how I get my support.

Step 5 - you can use your money to buy support and to get help to organise your support

6. Support that suits me



My life's changed – I'm in control.

Step 6 - Live Life, you can use your money flexibly in order to achieve real outcomes that make a positive difference

7. Being accountable



It's gone well. Let's talk about what's next.

Step 7 - you tell the local authority how it's gone and what you are going to do next

Managing the 'Individual Budgets'

Direct Payments	Direct Payment (Agent)	Direct Payment (Trust)
Broker (sic)	Individual Service Fund	Care Managed

This Model does the following

1. Clarifies existing pattern of expenditure on individuals
2. Clarifies the relationship between expenditure and assessment criteria
3. Pragmatic need to 'cost no more than now'
4. Over time the technology of support will change, hence we will need to adapt the initial methodology

Guiding principle: the cost of enabling the achievement of a threshold for active citizenship?

The Present System

Weakens person-centered planning
Stifles creativity
Failure to manage market or expectations

In Control's Model

Evaluation In Control Model 2003-05 Findings

- Significant improvements across all the domains of citizenship.
- Everyone in their sample who what in residential care left and moved into a home of their own.
- Significant numbers of people found work or made less use of existing day service provision
- Control over staffing increased very significantly and everybody was satisfied with their new support arrangements
- People's families and social lives all improved dramatically.

It is worth noting the following

- *None of these changes required more funding*
- *It is not about more money, it is about putting the existing money under the control of the right people*

What Does This Really Mean?

- We need a shared vision of the future so we can change the way services are funded in Ireland – it is not about the disability severity or type it is about the persons needs
- Challenging the mandate of who controls the funding and the planning for people with disabilities and advocate for a change in how resources are allocated
- We also need to advocate for funding structures to be rooted in values of respect, trust and partnership
- Establish a Parent Driven Independent Person Centred Planning service.

Conclusion

We now have the opportunity to make a difference; we now have an opportunity to influence positive change.

Our tools are; Our knowledge of what's possible, Our frustration or sadness or anger at the way some things are: and our irrepressible commitment of making life better for people with disabilities.

We will be challenged; we will (again) be frustrated.

However, we know from our own experiences that we will not easily achieve that which has not been achieved.....

But if we work hard together, **we will win!**

“There is nothing more powerful as an idea whose time has come” Victor Hugo

I believe the “time has come for us all to work together to make a life for our sons and daughters that can be” more than just words and dreams

No one else is going to do this for our sons and daughters - the revolution for change begins with each one of us.

The time for a change in who controls our sons and daughters funding and lives is now!

For more information you can get in touch with in Control

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