

SERVICE DEVELOPMENT CHANGE PROGRAMME

PERSONALISATION: An Agreed Understanding

Personalisation is seen as a key driver in the shaping of all public services, with a growing public expectation that services will meet their needs and help them achieve personal goals and aspirations. *Changing Lives*, the report of the review of social work services highlights this and recognises the challenge designing and delivering support and services around the needs of individuals, their carers and communities poses.

In taking forward its work, the Service Development Change Programme already indicated that the key theme will be that of personalisation: what it is, embedding this principle in practice, looking at approaches to delivery, considering constraints and contributing to how these might be overcome.

Personalisation can mean a number of things to different people and the Group have produced the draft attached following their own discussions and consideration of previous research and work done in the review. This has two main purposes:

- To raise awareness of, and stimulate consideration of personalisation and what it might mean;
- To help establish a shared understanding of what it is about, the issues it raises and its relevance to social work services.

We hope this will help stimulate discussion amongst practitioners, managers, commissioners, partners as well as carers and those who use services. We would be very happy to receive people's views on the paper – whether they agree or disagree, want to offer substantive or drafting points, wish to highlight particular issues the Group might need to consider, or whatever. Comments can be sent to Luke Manley at luke.manley@scotland.gsi.uk or logged on the website below.

This paper will be placed on the website – www.socialworkscotland.org.uk, as well as being circulated to Local Practitioners Forums, the National Social Work Services Forum, the Users and Carers Forum and the other Change Programmes.

Many Thanks

SERVICE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

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PERSONALISATION: AN AGREED UNDERSTANDING

Introduction

Personalisation through participation isn't rocket science! But it can change the way public services are delivered and how engaged people and communities are in that. It is a key pillar of the public service reform agenda as well as *Changing Lives* and other policy priorities across social care such as Shifting the Balance of Care and Self-Directed Support through Direct Payments.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a statement of what personalisation is, what the application of this approach can achieve and indicate the key areas that need to be considered in the development and implementation of this approach.

This provides the context for the work being taken forward by the Service Development Group as part of the *Changing Lives* programme. Hopefully it will also provide a stimulus for everyone who plays a part in how and what service people can access to consider whether current practice reflects this agenda and, if not, what can be done to change that.

Personalisation – what is it?

A simple definition is that: ***'It enables the individual alone, or in groups, to find the right solutions for them and to participate in the delivery of a service. From being a recipient of services, citizens can become actively involved in selecting and shaping the services they receive.'***

Personalisation means that people become more involved in how services are designed and they receive support that is most suited to them. This can range from engaging with a community resource, which could mean that referral to a social work department isn't necessary, right through to provision of an intensive support package. Personalisation is about prevention, maintenance or intensive support - whatever is needed.

If a person or group of people feel in control of their life by directing their support, then it usually follows that there is more of a chance that the support will work because they feel ownership of it. People won't feel that things are being done to them rather they become actively involved in their support and invest time in wanting it to work for them. Even where there are mandatory or statutory aspects, there can still be a dialogue on how that is best managed and delivered to achieve the desired outcome, for example that a child is protected, that re-offending is prevented.

Personalisation means enabling people to work with professionals to manage risk and resources. It isn't about withdrawing professional support or indeed ignoring risk or the limits on resources, but about actively engaging people in a dialogue about how to manage risk and the use the money and support that are available to them in the best way.

Personalisation should lead to services which are person centred (both around individuals and communities), which can change when required, are planned, commissioned and sometimes delivered in a joined up way between organisations.

The principle of personalisation is also in line with the National Care Standards for services. These require services to recognise and accept people as individuals, adhering to the principles of: **dignity, privacy, choice, safety, realising potential, equality and diversity**. It also fits with the principles of good social care practice which *'...promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being..'* [International Association of Schools of Social Work 2001]

Why do we need to do this?

Not only is personalisation something that we would all want to expect of services for ourselves and our families, demand in social care services is increasing, 'customer' expectation is rising and issues are becoming more complex. The current way in which services are delivered, and the emphasis on inputs and process rather than outcomes for the customer, is too inflexible for the scale and nature of future demand. Resources are finite and there is a need to move away from a 'one size fits all' approach and seek more innovative and cost, as well as person, effective solutions. Personalisation is an approach which might help address some of these issues in that by:

- focussing on preventative support, we may reduce the need for more costly support packages designed for crisis – this will have long term benefits for the system as well as the individual.
- devolving more control to individuals and communities and enabling people to become participants rather than simply recipients of support, we are more likely to achieve success for individuals first time without having to reinvest in alternatives.
- providing individuals with choice and flexibility and a way in which to improve quality, they get the right support at the right time which has obvious benefits for service provision as well as service users.

Social Care in Scotland

Personalisation is the foundation of good social care practice and is already the goal of social care in Scotland. However, research commissioned for the 21st Century Social Work review suggested that the system fails to deliver that consistently. Instead, social workers can become risk managers and resource allocators, gatekeepers and controllers. And services provided by local authorities and those commissioned from the voluntary and private sectors, often tend to be reactive and not anticipatory with little focus on early preventative services or planning for future requirements recognising people's needs change.

Areas for change

Personalisation needs to happen for everyone. To achieve that local partnerships need to develop a strategic approach to:

1) Personalisation as prevention - services that are designed to build the capacity of individuals and communities to manage their own lives with appropriate and proportionate intervention at the right time. Focus on - Preventative services, Self management and Rehabilitative services.

2) Personalisation for complex cases – help people to find the right support solutions for them and to be active participants in the development and delivery of services. Encourage people to come up with their ideas and put effort into devising solutions which suit them. This doesn't mean that people are not supported and left without guidance, but that solutions are developed in partnership with professionals.

3) Personalisation as choice – sometimes people just want to have efficient, reliable “off the shelf” services which respond to their needs when they have them. Give people access to a choice of services and enable them to speak up for what they want. Views of people who use these services are listened to and issues acted upon.

How do we achieve this?

We need to look at five key elements within current practice:

1) Tools – current assessment tools and how practitioners and users manage risk; how people are involved in how services are developed and commissioned. Giving people better information about the services available and how they can find their way around the system.

2) Finance – how we encourage investment in community based preventative services; integration of different public sector budgets so that everyone is working to the shared objective of personalisation and the same outcomes for people and communities; further devolution of spending to service users so that services are purchased and commissioned around their plans.

3) Workforce – identification of skills gaps / re-training; consideration of new roles ie navigator, advocate, broker, counsellor, risk assessor and designer; recognition of contribution of unpaid carers as a vital part of service provision and supported for them as partners.

4) Mixed economy of care – range of choices of services which are delivered by organisations large and small, across the public, voluntary and private sectors. Variety in the ‘marketplace’ is important in providing a range of options; current planning, commissioning, procurement and contracting practice, built upon National Care Standards, should encourage the development of a healthy social care market.

5) Performance measures – give people a greater say over the quality of services; the right to have access to other services when quality falls below an agreed threshold; outcomes, as agreed with the individual, can be specified; include people in internal quality assurance and forms of external validation such as inspection.

Implementation

Personalisation is the goal of all public sector services and is an important part of the public service reform agenda. Personalisation is the vision, however we acknowledge that there may be some challenges and tensions in how this vision is

achieved. Issues such as risk, financial constraints, delegation and decision making, equity of service provision, and investment in preventative work vs crisis management, are all considerations.

These are big issues but it is important for us to find ways to explore these collectively and identify solutions, as well as sharing examples of good practice. This will be part of the work of the Service Development Group, working across other change programmes and others, in helping to point the way as to how the aspirations of *Changing Lives*, and personalisation in particular, can be realised.

Service Development Group
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