

PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORTING CHOICES

State of California
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INTRODUCTION

The 1992 amendments to the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act (Lanterman Act) require a person-centered approach to Individual Program Plans (IPP) for individuals with developmental disabilities (consumers).

Person-Centered Planning (*Building Partnerships and Supporting Choices*) consists of excerpts taken from the IPP Resource Manual to facilitate consumers and his or her family regarding person-centered planning. More information about person-centered planning can be found in the *IPP Resource Manual and More Than A Meeting, A Pocket Guide*. If you would like a copy, call or write:

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PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING

Person-centered planning, for the purposes of this manual, is an approach to determining, planning for and working toward the preferred future of a person with developmental disabilities (a consumer ¹³) and her or his family. The preferred future is what the person and family want to do in the future based on their strengths, capabilities, preferences, lifestyle and cultural background. Person-centered planning is a framework for planning and making decisions. It is not a collection of methods or procedures. Person-centered planning is based on an *awareness of, and sensitivity to, the lifestyle and cultural background of the consumer and family.*¹⁴

The preferred future

The preferred future of consumers and their families is determined by finding out what their *life goals, capabilities and strengths, preferences, barriers and concerns or problems* are.¹⁵ When consumers describe *where and with whom they want to live, whom they want to socialize with, how they would like to spend their time, what jobs they want to have and other aspects of their daily lives,*¹⁶ they are describing their preferred future. Observing those who have difficulty with language will provide an indication of their capabilities, strengths, preferences and concerns or problems. Asking those who know a consumer well can also provide the necessary information.

The needs, barriers, concerns and problems experienced by a consumer are identified in this person-centered process, but only as they relate to the goals, capabilities, strengths and preferences of the consumer and family. Procedures, such as diagnosing the consumer and listing the deficits and needs that led to that diagnosis, and prescription of activities intended to remedy the condition described by the diagnosis, do not fill the requirement for providing a planning process that is centered on the person and family.

Although knowledge and expertise are respected and valued, planning that is prescribed and controlled by others without respect for the choices made by consumers and families is not person-centered. In an approach to planning that is focused on the consumer and family, members of the planning team adopt the role of consultants or advisors who help the consumer and family achieve their preferred future.

13. For the remainder of this manual, the term “consumer” will include the consumer and, where appropriate, the authorized representatives of the consumer. “Authorized representative” means the conservator of an adult; the guardian, conservator, or parent or person having legal custody of a minor claimant, or a person or agency appointed (by the area board) pursuant to §4590 or subdivision (e) of §4705; or person or agency authorized in writing by the claimant or by the legal guardian, conservator, or parent or person having legal custody of a minor claimant to act for or represent the consumer (Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4701.6).

14. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4646.5(a)(1)

15. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4646.5(a)(1)

16. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4502(j)

Ongoing planning

Person-centered planning assists consumers and their families to build their capacities and capabilities. This planning effort is not a single event or meeting, but a series of discussions or interactions among the consumer, family, service coordinator¹⁷ and others. This group of people is called a planning team.

VALUES, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Values

The Department's efforts to design and implement a system of individual program planning that embodies an approach centered on the person and family are based on the following values:¹

Empowerment and choice

- The developmental services system supports rather than controls individuals and families, entering into partnerships that promote self-determination and interdependence.
- *Opportunities are provided to consumers to make choices in their own lives, including where and with whom they live, their relationships, the way they spend their time, the pursuit of their personal future and program planning and implementation.*^{2,3}
- Adult consumers have a choice of lifestyle options, and are supported in reaching their own future with the least amount of control by others.

17. The service coordinator may be an employee of the regional center or may be a qualified individual or employee of an agency with whom the regional center has contracted to provide service coordination services (Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4647[b]). Where appropriate, a consumer or the consumer's parents or other family members, legal guardian or conservator, may perform all or part of the duties of the service coordinator...if the regional center director agrees and it is feasible (Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4647[c]).

1. Adapted from (*Building Partnerships, Supporting Choices: A Vision for a Preferred Future for Persons with Developmental Disabilities*) (1994). California Department of Developmental Services, with additions from the Lanterman Act.

2. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4502 (j)

3. Note: It may be necessary to provide several different opportunities, options and experiences for consumers and families to reach a point of true choice.

- *All public and private agencies receiving state funds for the purpose of serving persons with developmental disabilities provide consumers with opportunities to exercise decision-making skills in any aspect of day-to-day living and provide consumers with relevant information in an understandable form to aid the consumer in making his or her choice.*⁴
- Consumers and families express their opinions, desires, and disappointments without fear of reprisal.

Diversity

- *Information is provided to consumers and families in a form or language they understand to facilitate their decision-making.*⁵
- Professionals join in partnership with consumers and families to engage in the person-centered IPP process.
- *Professional performance reflects sensitivity to the cultural preferences, values and lifestyles of consumers and families.*⁶

Family Support

- *Families are respected and supported in their role of primary decision makers on behalf of their minor children.*⁷ They make choice which determine what services are given, where and by whom. Services and supports provided build on family strengths, natural supports and existing community resources.
- Children with developmental disabilities most often have greater opportunities for educational and social growth when they live with their families.⁸
- *When a minor child must live out of the family home, the regional center will make every effort to place the child in a living situation as near to the family home as possible.*⁹

4. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4502.1
 5. Welfare & Institutions Code Sections 4502.1 & 4641
 6. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4646.5(a)(1)
 7. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4685 (b)(1)
 8. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4685(a)
 9. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4685.1(a)

- *If appropriate, the regional center will take the steps to develop services and supports necessary to return the child to, or in a living situation near, the family home.¹⁰*

Community integration

- Consumers will participate in valued ways with their friends, neighbors and co-workers in all areas of community life, with services and supports being provided which enable them to have real choices in where they live, work and socialize.
- Adult consumers are supported in natural settings in their local communities, with opportunities to live in their own homes, to be involved in meaningful activities, and to participate in the life of their communities.
- Consumers who are minor children live and grow up within a natural or surrogate family, attend their neighborhood schools and play with non-disabled children of their own age.

Teamwork

- The process of planning for a preferred future is a team effort, which is completed with a high degree of cooperation and a sense of partnership among all the participants.
- *The consumer and family are full participants in this effort. Their choices are given the full attention and respect of all the members of the team.¹¹*

Accountability

- *Measurement of progress toward a preferred future is made in terms of desirable outcomes as they are expressed by the consumer.¹²*
- *Services and supports provided to consumers and their families reflect the cost-effective use of public resources.¹³*

10. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4685.1(b)

11. Welfare & Institutions Code Sections 4502(j), 4502.1 & 4646(d)

12. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4648(a)(7)

13. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4646(a)

- While written records of the decisions and choices made by the planning team at planning conferences are made in the prescribed format, completion of these records is not treated as an end in itself.
- Members of the planning team complete the activities they agreed to do within the times agreed to.

Roles and responsibilities

The developmental services delivery system in California affects hundreds of thousands of children and adults directly. The system has an important impact on the lives of consumers, their families, their neighbors, and whole communities. The complexities of providing services and supports to consumers and families require coordination and cooperation between governmental and community agencies to ensure that no gaps occur in communication or provision of services and supports.¹⁴ Each participant in this system has an important role, and every role carries with it certain responsibilities.

Consumers and families

*Consumers and families have the central role in the system, and have been given leadership in the design of services and supports.*¹⁵ Consumers and families are responsible for taking the time to think about what they want; expressing their hopes, dreams, desires and needs as clearly as possible; and working as team members.¹⁶

Circles of support and natural supports

A circle of support is a group of community members that meets with an individual with developmental disabilities in order to share experiences, promote autonomy and community involvement, and assist the individual in establishing and maintaining natural supports. A circle of support generally includes a majority of people who neither receive nor provide services or supports for persons with developmental disabilities, and who do not receive payment for participation in the circle of support.¹⁷

14. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4501

15. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4501.

16. Capitol People First and Protection & Advocacy, Inc. (1994). *Your IPP: It's Not Just a Piece of Paper*. Sacramento, Ca

17. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4512(f)

Natural supports are personal associations and relationships typically developed in the community that enhance the quality and security of life for the consumer. Natural supports include, but are not limited to, friendships reflecting the diversity of the neighborhood and the community; associations with fellow students or employees in regular classrooms and workplaces; and associations developed through participation in clubs, organizations, and other civic activities.¹⁸

Both circles of support and natural supports can be of great use to a consumer. Their roles and responsibilities are defined by the consumer. Consumers decide whether they want a circle of support and the extent of involvement of natural supports.

18. Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4512(e)