



Implementing self directed
support in Cumbria



in Control Total

June 2009

Self Directed Support Programme Plan 2009/10 approved

The Adult and Cultural Services Directorate Management Team have approved the Self Directed Support Programme Plan for 2009/10. The plan describes the background to the programme, the achievements to date and the objectives for 2009/10. It also details the achievements and objectives for the seven projects which form the programme. In his introduction to the plan, Richard Parry the Acting Corporate Director says:

“This plan is part of our whole transformation programme to deliver modern social care services that fit the aspirations of the public of Cumbria. Much of this programme is associated with the “technology” of individual/personal budgets. This is an important element and getting it right will be key to ensuring successful long term changes to our systems of working.

With the development of individual budgets for healthcare, our partners in the NHS will also be joining us in this process of change. I look forward to working with you on this programme and delivering the changes that it requires.”

The Directorate Management Team has approved the phased approach being adopted for the implementation of self directed support. We continue to work towards a start date of 16 November 2009 for the second phase of the work when Cumbria’s Resource Allocation System (RAS) is implemented (see the May newsletter for more information about phase two).

Work on the RAS has started with some initial financial modelling completed. Further work is required with a proposed RAS to be submitted to the Directorate Management Team for approval later in the year. A phase of testing of the RAS is expected before its implementation planned for November 2009.

You can see the Programme Plan on our in Control Total website at:
<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/adultsocialcare/iCT/progplan.asp>.

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Self directed support, personalisation and the Law

To help us develop our policies on self directed support, two legal events have been organized which will be led by Belinda Schwehr a leading Legal and Training Consultant.

Both events are on 21 July and attendance is by invitation. If you have not received an invitation but are keen to attend, please contact Tina Rose to see if places are available or to add you to a waiting list.

You can contact Tina Rose on 01228 227126 or email tina.rose@cumbriacc.gov.uk.

Meet Liam Ryan, User and Carer Involvement Officer for the User Consortium

Liam Ryan was recently appointed to the post of User and Carer Involvement Officer as part of the User Consortium working with the in Control Total Programme.

Liam is 35 years old and is married with two children; he has worked in social care for a number of years and recently coordinated an advocacy service in Scotland.

He says; "It is important to me that anybody who will be affected by the changes that In Control will bring should have the opportunity to make their feelings about it known. The idea that vulnerable people should have decisions imposed upon them is a thing of the past, and it is only right that something as important as this should take account of the people at the sharp end".

To contact Liam to take part in the consultation, please phone 01768 895242 or email uci.project@live.co.uk.



Update on user and carer consultation events

The User Consortium working with the in Control Total Programme has held three workshops to seek users' and carers' views about the implementation of self directed support in Cumbria. The workshops were held in Ulverston on 20 May, Carlisle on 27 May, and Workington on 3 June.

Forty six users and carers were involved, including older people, people with physical disabilities, people with sensory impairment, people with learning disabilities, people with autistic spectrum disorders, people with mental health problems, and carers.

Each workshop included presentations from council staff on how self directed support is being implemented and the information being made available about the changes. Users and carers formed three groups to discuss three areas:

1. "What does independent living mean to me?"
2. "What information do service users, carers, and local communities need to promote independence?"
3. "Do the current booklets provide the information needed?"

As is often the case, events like this bring out various issues both positive and concerns. The following are some of the issues raised at the events which need some further work and clarification:

Independence

Independence means a person having the ability to control their own life and make their own choices in the same way as people without disabilities. It was felt that there is a need for spontaneity of choice about day to day living, and also that the scheduling of care agencies can be a barrier to this.

Safety

There is a need for services to be quick and responsive when helping a person to access services. They need to be available when problems arise but not intrusive when not needed.

Choice

Not everyone would wish to have the control or responsibility which would come with full self directed support. It was felt that this level of independence could prove a worry or burden for some people.

Information

There is a need for clear and concise information about how an individual budget can be spent. It was felt that a lack of clarity on this could lead to either abuses of the system or the service user concerns that they may not be using the money appropriately.

Culture

It was felt that some people may be resistant to accepting the choice that self directed support will bring, or may be too restricted in their ideas of what the money could be spent on. It was therefore felt that solid information and support from social workers would be important to overcome this.

Availability

Some people felt that where it is difficult to source good support, this could prove a barrier to independence under self directed support.

Finance

Some mental health service users expressed concerns about changes to their contributions to the cost of services. Information is needed about how an individual budget will affect a person's benefits, and also what effect savings etc. will have.

Literature

The present 'pink' booklets could be improved and suggestions were made on how to do this. There were also suggestions of other information needed and how this might be provided.

Community

It was recognised that paid support only forms part of a person's independence, and that true independence relies upon being able to connect with the community and form natural relationships with others. A holistic approach to care was called for.

Here are some examples of people's comments:

- "I want to live in my home, not a home."
- "People should be able to design their own independence."
- "You've got to be able to do what you want to do, not what people think you should do."
- "If I was told to go and buy a helicopter I wouldn't have a clue how to go about it, so why should social care be any different?"
- "We don't know what we need to know."
- "How long do I wait for the transition? If it is a long waiting game, my independence and life is on hold, and life is too precious to have on hold."

For more information on these workshops and how to get involved in the user consortium, contact Liam Ryan on phone 01768 895242 or email uci.project@live.co.uk.

Self directed support and carers

Work is under way to look at self directed support and how this can be applied to carers. At a recent meeting, the following areas were identified:

1. **Defining services for carers** - A group including team managers, change champions, Cheryl Page and Andy Woods will be making recommendations for this.
2. **Carers assessments** – A multi-agency group will look at how carers issues are reflected in the Short Assessment Questionnaire including clear triggers for a carer assessment. The group will include Tom Hendrie (in Control Total lead on user and carer engagement), carers support workers from local carers organisations and Adult Social Care practitioners.
3. **Support Planning** – This will look at whether a different support plan format for carers is needed.
4. **Engagement** – To ensure there is a clear route for engagement with carers and carers organisations in the development work.
5. **Systems** – The in Control Total Systems Project will ensure carer developments are linked in to its work.
6. **Resource Allocation System for carers** – We are considering whether the needs of carers and the people they care for can be met within one RAS or if a separate carers RAS is required. This will be considered alongside the implementation of the service user's RAS to ensure this does not disadvantage carers.

There will be a follow up article on carers and self directed support next month. This article will feature the recent National 'Carers and Personalisation' events.

Andy Woods, Development Manager and Carers' lead in Adult Social Care telephone 01946 506225 or email andy.woods@cumbriacc.gov.uk.

Programme updates

Nick McCarthy has been appointed **Operations Development Manager**. He is working with Cheryl Page as part of the Operations Project and is involved in work to deliver the Operations Project's action plan objectives.

A time limited post of **Innovation Market Development Manager/Lead** is being advertised internally within the council. This 6 month secondment opportunity will look at commissioning with providers. It will consider 'growing' and developing new services to enable user choice and develop the market to respond to users' support plans.

Graham Hodkinson, Head of Service - Older People and Performance and **Judith Whittam**, Head of Service – Disability are jointly covering as Programme Director while Nick Thomas is currently off sick. In the meantime, get well soon, Nick.