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## Personalisation briefing



September 2009

# Implications for voluntary sector service providers

### Key messages

Personalisation for voluntary/third sector service providers means:

- thinking radically about what service provision and support is locally available, how it is delivered, what difference it makes to people's lives and how innovation and continuous improvement can be achieved in partnership with people using the service and their carers
- building open, co-productive relationships with the people using the service, commissioners, local authority care managers and the wider community
- being clear about what personalisation means for the particular service so that everyone involved has a shared understanding of principles, practice and outcomes
- agreeing a 'personalisation statement' for the service with everyone involved, including frontline staff, people who use services and carers, and using this to evaluate current delivery and identify areas for improvement
- ensuring that all staff training and development is informed by the principles of personalisation and promotes person-centred and relationship-based working.

This At a glance briefing examines the implications of the personalisation agenda for voluntary/third sector service providers, particularly service managers.

Personalisation means thinking about care and support services in an entirely different way. This means starting with the person as an individual with strengths, preferences and aspirations and putting them at the centre of the process of identifying their needs and making choices about how and when they are supported to live their lives. It requires a significant transformation of adult social care so that all systems, processes, staff and services are geared up to put people first.

The traditional service-led approach has often meant that people have not received the right help at the right time and have been unable to shape the kind of support they need. Personalisation is about giving people much more choice and control over their lives goes well beyond simply giving personal budgets to people eligible for council funding. Personalisation means addressing the needs and aspirations of whole communities to ensure everyone has access to the right information, advice and advocacy to make good decisions about the support they need. It means ensuring that people have wider choice in how their needs are met and are able to access universal services such as transport, leisure and education, housing, health and opportunities for employment regardless of age or disability.

## What are the implications for voluntary sector service providers?

The managers of voluntary/third sector service providers have a critical leadership role to play in ensuring a personalised approach to service delivery and in monitoring person-centred outcomes for the individuals using the services. As for all service providers, developing and delivering personalised services fundamentally means:

- the individual is the primary focus



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- there is a vision and strategy for continuously improving services based on the experiences of people who use the service
- resources are used flexibly, including staff
- staff are supported to think about their roles in new ways
- a learning, person centred culture and listening mind-set is encouraged to flourish at every level
- ways of working, particularly policy and planning systems, and governance arrangements promote cultural change
- building co-productive, problem solving relationships with people who use the service, carers, care managers and commissioners, and the wider community.

This requires being prepared to think radically about *what support* is available to people who use the service currently, *how it is delivered* and *what difference it makes* to their lives. It means harnessing the energies, goodwill and talents

of everyone involved, particularly individuals who use the service, staff, families, friends and carers, volunteers, care managers and the wider community, in order to create vibrant networks of support and a shared approach to providing support and opportunities for social inclusion.

### Voluntary sector service providers should:

- Be clear about what personalisation means, so that everyone has a shared understanding of the principles and practice. (*See page 4 for additional resources*).
- Develop, with people using the service, their carers, families and friends, staff and advocates, an explicit 'personalisation vision statement' – describing what a personalised service would look like and how it would work in practice. (*Techniques such as using focus groups to generate ideas and independent facilitators can help this process. Critically the voice of the person using the service must be listened to*).

### MacIntyre (My Way): Joe's Story

MacIntyre (My Way) worked with Joe, a young man with autism and learning disabilities, who doesn't use words to communicate, for two years to facilitate his transition from school. With intensive brokerage support from My Way Joe chose his house, housemates, the provider organisation and his staff team. Joe attends the local college, has made new friends and many community connections.

Success for Joe was determined by the following:

#### • Information gathering

Person-centred reviews were facilitated by the My Way broker fully involving Joe, his family and all relevant stakeholders.

#### • Finding solutions

Joe chose people to live with, then My Way's broker worked with support providers to investigate who could develop a service according to the support plan.

#### • Workforce development

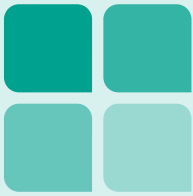
My Way's broker, the support provider and Joe identified the skills his staff would need and then recruited them accordingly. The induction and training was tailored to working with Joe as an individual.

#### • Service development

Joe and his family are actively involved in reviewing the outcomes and have the opportunity to shape the service as Joe's needs change.

#### • Changing organisational culture and practices

The local authority worked closely with My Way because this approach matched their aim to offer people more control and choice over their lives. Children's and adults' services worked together and managers agreed to alternative commissioning methods. This required developing a shared understanding of needs and costs, building trust and ensuring an individual, person-centred approach to commissioning.



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- Review the existing service against the agreed personalised vision statement, being clear where the service is currently and where it needs to get to. Support staff to review their roles and their current approach to service delivery in the light of this statement, identifying what attitudes, practices and/or systems may need to change, or new ones be developed. Particular attention should be paid to quality monitoring systems. *(This can be carried out using a 'personalisation readiness' checklist. Ask people using the service to carry out this review for/with you, along with independent expert support if necessary. The VODG can offer advice and guidance on this process).*
- Review how people who use the service and their supporters (personal assistants, advocates etc), are involved in staff recruitment, their deployment, and wider decision making about how the service operates. *(The use of independent advocates, peer support, and training for service users in selecting staff can assist this process).*
- Ensure all staff development is firmly underpinned by the principles of personalisation. A learning environment with the aim of continuous service improvement needs to be systematically planned, promoted and evaluated. *(Service user and carer satisfaction surveys, staff training plans which are shaped by service user experiences and user-led training are all important elements).*
- Ensure management systems and financial processes reinforce and promote personalisation, whether in the form of person-centred planning, quality monitoring or back office functions, including costing exercises and fee negotiations. *(Service user and carer participation in evaluation, governance and decision making needs to be central to and embedded in policies, structures and attitudes as a fundamental part of continuous service improvement).*
- Develop outcome driven service improvement plans, based on user feedback with clear targets, milestones and success measures and regularly monitor. *(Ensure everyone's experience counts and use this feedback to evaluate how you are doing. Regularly discuss progress with all stakeholders, including the regulator).*

### KeyRing – Living Support Networks

KeyRing Living Support Networks and Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council are working to transform their traditional provider-commissioner relationship to facilitate the implementation of personal budgets (PBs). This involves increased dialogue, joint problem solving and investing in a high degree of mutual trust.

Regular meetings are crucial to setting up the infrastructure to support PBs. These focus on getting things right for PB holders and developing new supports. Involving front line workers enables a consistency between strategy and the reality on the ground. Implementation difficulties are raised

early on and there is a shared responsibility for resolving them.

For instance, potential PB holders often find themselves in a position where they have been offered general needs housing by a local housing provider, and support from KeyRing, before they have been allocated a PB. In these circumstances, the council has agreed bridging funding to ensure that people are safely supported in their own choice of accommodation.

Clear communication at all levels has helped to minimise confusion for people receiving support by ensuring information is consistent; reducing stress for workers during a period of significant change.



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### RNIB: Supporting Choice

Sophie is 23, and visually impaired, with learning disabilities and other complex needs. She attended a 3 year programme at RNIB Redhill College, a specialist residential college in Surrey. In her final year, Sophie moved into a studio flat on the college site. This supported her to develop independent living skills. She also attended a weekly training session on the transition into independent living.

When the college closed and the new RNIB

Community Living Service (CLS) began, Sophie was able to stay on in her studio flat. Her care manager, from her funding authority, supported her to stay with the CLS for a further year while they looked together at appropriate supported living environments in her home area.

Once a place was found, Sophie, the RNIB staff and care manager, worked together to ensure that the transition was a smooth one and that an appropriate Personal Assistant was recruited to support Sophie on a daily basis.

### Further information

Contact the Voluntary Organisations Disability Group (VODG): [info@vodg.org.uk](mailto:info@vodg.org.uk) for further advice or support on any aspect of this personalisation briefing.

### Acknowledgements

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*Personalisation: a rough guide* tells the personalisation story so far – exploring what it is, where the idea came from and where it sits within wider public service reform. It is freely available online at [www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk). This briefing is one of a series explaining the personalisation agenda and what it means for different groups.

Briefings in this series:

At a glance 06: Personalisation briefing: implications for commissioners

At a glance 07: Personalisation briefing: implications for home care providers

At a glance 08: Personalisation briefing: implications for housing providers

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