Self Directed Support, Individualised Budgets, and In Control


1. Introduction

At the meeting of 14th February 2008, Cabinet approved the Midlothian Joint Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities ‘What Does it Mean for Me?’ and agreed to receive further reports on specific aspects of the redesign of services. The strategy recognises the pressure on Social Care services caused by demographic change, as well as the changing expectations of people who use them, and emphasises the need to redesign our Social Care services to ensure that they are fit for the future. Self Directed Support and Individualised budgets represent one such aspect of this redesign. Although the initial focus is on Learning Disability Services, it is envisaged that this approach will be applied with other Social Care client groups.

This report seeks approval for the further development of Self Directed Support and Individualised Budgets as a route to people who are assessed as having a Social Care need organising and having control over how these needs are met.

2. Background

Midlothian Council, through the Social Work Division, provides or commissions care for people who are assessed as requiring it. Personalisation is increasingly driving the shape of public services and people now expect that services will meet their needs, and help them to achieve their personal goals and aspirations. (Changing Lives report of the 21st Century Social Work Review 2006 - Appendix 5.4).

Self Directed Support has the overarching philosophy that people themselves, with the support of their families, and circles of support, are best placed to decide on the outcomes and priorities for their own lives. This Self Directed Support is facilitated by individual budgets, based on assessment of individual needs, which the person can manage themselves to meet their own requirements. These individual budgets are central to the delivery of Self Directed Support. The system allows people to know at the outset what resources are available to them, and these resources are clearly expressed in cash terms as opposed to hours or services. The person themselves can then organise the support that they choose.

Direct Payments (Appendix 5.3) were one of the first developments of Individual Budgets. These are payments made by the Council to service users who then make their own arrangements to commission their own care. In Midlothian, as in other parts of Scotland, uptake to date has been relatively low.

‘In Control’ (Appendix 5.2) is a national programme to change the organisation of Social Care so that people who need support can take control over their own lives and fulfil their role as citizens. This is a process of Self Directed Support that is based on a Resource Allocation System. Individuals are assessed against this system and become entitled to a level of funding based on that assessment. A process of support planning enables people to choose between Direct Payments, Brokered Support, or Care Managed Support.
The individual budget available may come from a variety of sources including Independent Living Fund.

People are offered a choice of how their funding will be managed:

- By the individual themselves (A Direct Payment)
- By a representative of the person
- By a trust acting on the person’s behalf
- By an intermediary agency
- By a service provider using an individual service fund
- By Midlothian Local Authority commissioning on the person’s behalf.

**The ‘Person Centred Outcomes Project’** (Appendix 5.1), is an 18 month project targeted at adults with a learning disability funded by the Scottish Government through the Improvement Service Innovation Fund. The aim is to develop a service planning and implementation system with the three key elements of Person Centred Planning, the ‘Shaping the Future Together’ service planning tool, and ‘In Control’. The key outcome for people with a learning disability will be a person centred approach to strategic planning and the delivery of support services, and the project will address the specific service user outcomes within the draft national Performance Improvement Framework.

3. **Report Implications**

3.1. **Resource**

The report seeks no further investment at this time, but to address the pressures on learning disability services within existing resources. The methodology of Self Directed Support seeks to clarify existing patterns of expenditure on individuals and the relationship between expenditure and assessment criteria. This will have significant implications on the way in which services are commissioned and the way in which individual care arrangements are resourced. Representatives from Social Work and Corporate Services Finance are in the process of assessing the implications for Social Care systems using research and experience from a number of English Local Authorities where the system is being piloted or implemented. To this end, a full day event has been organised for 29th May 2008 with representatives from Mid and East Lothian meeting with people from In Control England, and from local authorities who have experience of implementing self directed support.

3.2. **Risk**

We need to have a simple and fair means of accessing services and make sure that assessment involves people, and fully recognises carers as partners.

The development addresses the risk to the Local Authority of not being in a position to modernise and personalise Social Care Services in line with national and local policy and strategy.

We need to ensure that the resources that we target at Social Care services are commissioned more effectively around people’s needs and aspirations. The risk of not doing so is that budgets are spent on expensive and reactive services.
3.3 Policy

Strategy


Consultation

A comprehensive programme of consultation with stakeholders has been undertaken both in Midlothian and across Lothian as part of the development of the Midlothian Partnership in Practice Agreement and Learning Disability Strategy (What Does it Mean For Me?), the Lothian Learning Disability Strategy Review, and The Lothian Joint Physical and Complex Disability Strategy.

Equalities

The central principle of Self Directed Support is that of equal access to health and well being and social inclusion, as well as a shift of power from professionals to people who use Social Care services. This is achieved by a transparent budget allocated on an equitable basis.

Sustainability

The growing budgetary pressures on learning disability and other Social Work services, and the increasing numbers of people, make it imperative that there is a clear, fair, and transparent system for the allocation of resources based on assessed need.

4. Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

- Approve the policy direction of Self Directed Support, Individualised Budgets, and In Control
- To receive further, more detailed, reports about the implications of moving to Self Directed Support and Individualised budgets.

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5.1 The Innovation Project- Person Centred Outcomes

The Innovation Project which commenced in September 2007 builds on existing commitments and work in progress by Midlothian Council and East Lothian Council in their respective joint planning processes and other initiatives across all adult services.

The Project meets the broad objectives set out in the Scottish Government Review of Learning Disability Services "The Same as You?" (2000) and addresses some of the specific service user outcomes identified within the draft National Outcomes Framework, local Partnership in Practice agreements and the Joint Improvement Team Capacity Planning Workbook. A joint bid to the Scottish Government “Improvement Service” was successful in attracting £50,000 over 18 months to accelerate the development of person-centred approaches in the field of learning disability. Although the Project is focussed initially on adults with a learning disability, it will also impact on young people in transition between children and adult services, and people living at home with older parents. The outcome of the Project will also inform service development for other adult services - Older People, Mental Health Services and People with Physical Disabilities and Sensory Impairments.

Development is being undertaken in partnership with The Thistle Foundation (Midlothian) and Capability Scotland (East Lothian) in relation to service planning.

Project activity comprises a number of key elements:

- Person Centred Planning
- Shaping the Future Together (a database and service planning tool)
- In Control (a new and innovative self-directed support system which includes direct payments as one of a number of options)
- Citizen Leadership - which places service users and carers at the heart of planning

In Midlothian, the process of person centred planning activity is gaining momentum. Currently 26 Person Centred Plans are being undertaken by Day Service staff, Person Centred Planners from the Thistle Foundation, and the Project Co-ordinator. The main focus for activity is in relation to modernisation of day opportunities and re-provisioning of residential services. Over an 18 month period, it is anticipated that 150 people with learning disabilities in Midlothian will have a completed or ongoing person centred plan.

The Shaping the Future Together database has been introduced to capture the outcomes from individual plans and inform strategic planning and a number of entries have already been made in relation to data collected from completed person centred plans.

The Project Co-ordinator is supporting staff in Midlothian and East Lothian to improve the quality and quantity of person centred reviews and plans by facilitating training and development opportunities for day services staff, care managers, local area co-ordinators, independent providers and Children & Families Services. Additional support seminars focussed on person centred planning are also provided, and co-facilitation of plans is being undertaken by the Project Co-ordinator and
Thistle Foundation and Capability Scotland Person Centred Planners. A Person Centred Planning Network is being re-established to encourage reflective practice.

5.2 In Control

‘In Control’ is a new and innovative way of providing individualised budgets and self directed support. People eligible for services can choose between a direct payment, an individual service fund, or have their support purchased on their behalf by a care manager. The seven steps to being ‘In Control’ are initiated by a simple self assessment, followed by person centred planning. Once the plan is agreed, the individual takes as much control as they want, with additional support made available to support the person with managing a budget or organising the support required. The money can be used more flexibly to achieve the outcomes that make a positive difference to their life. Accountability to the local authority is important and financial reports are provided to the local authority as required.

A pilot ‘In Control’ project introducing individualised budgets as an option will be available for interested individuals and their families towards the end of 2008 and in 2009.

Joint multi-agency workshops, training events, and activities have been held to support the development of person centred approaches to self directed support. Midlothian Council is a member of “In Control Scotland”. In May 2008 ‘In Control’ Scotland, along with representatives from ‘In Control’ England, will host an event for Councillors and senior managers from Midlothian and East Lothian at The Thistle Conference Centre. In July, three representatives from each council will undertake a leadership training programme provided by “In Control” which is offered to member organisations.

5.3 Direct Payments

Local Authorities give Direct Payments to individuals under the Community Care (Direct Payments) Act 1996 implemented in April 1997, and amended by the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001. In July 2007, further national guidance on self-directed support was published. This national guidance was based on the findings of three national working groups, the recommendations of the Scottish Parliament’s Health Committee Care Inquiry and a public consultation. Direct Payments put the principles of independent living into practice and self-directed support builds on the platform provided by Direct Payments legislation.

Since the appointment in January 2006 of a Direct Payment Officer, we have seen a steady increase in the uptake of direct payments. There was a slight blip in the uptake during late 2006 and early part of 2007 which was due to the change in eligibility criteria which meant that there were delays in getting approval for service through the Adult Resource Panel. There are currently 38 people receiving their service by means of a direct payment, and the Direct Payments Officer has provided information and support to a further 21 individuals.

Support for people to manage and maintain their Direct Payments is, in the main, provided by the Direct Payment Officer and Lothian Centre for Integrated Living.

An internal Direct Payment/ILF (Independent Living Fund) support group was set up to provide staff with the opportunity to discuss and share experiences in relation to the
uptake of direct payments and ILF. One of the first tasks of the group was to develop a Direct Payment/ILF information pack for all Care Management and Access Team staff which was followed by a briefing for all Care Management and Access Team staff.

Significant changes to the Independent Living Fund (ILF) trust came into effect on 1 April 2008. The local authority weekly contribution to care package has increased from £200 to £320 and that the eligibility criteria have changed with priority being given to people wishing to access employment.


The Changing Lives Report emphasises the importance of building capacity to deliver personalised services and recognises the growing public expectation that services will meet their needs, helping them achieve personal goals and aspirations. This may pose a particular challenge for social work, given the need also to manage growing demand and complexity as well as the need to protect the public by taking measures to control some people’s liberty. To be effective in meeting that challenge, social work services will need to engage individuals, families and communities and to work in new ways with other parts of the public sector, focusing increasingly on prevention. Chapter 5 sets out five recommendations that will build our capacity to design and deliver personalised social work services through building individual, family and community capacity; refocusing on prevention and earlier intervention; creating whole system response to problems; and making effective use of the mixed economy of care.