



ELHAP Person Centred Support Policy

Introduction

The person-centred approach is a process of life planning with individuals using the principles of inclusion, and a social model rather than a medical model. With a medical model, a person is seen as the passive receiver of services and their impairment as a problem; this often leads to segregation and places to live and work that are away from the community. A social model sees a person as being disabled by society. In this model, a person is proactive in the fight for equality and inclusion.

In 2001 the UK government published the White Paper *Valuing people: a new strategy for learning disability for the 21st century*. It had four key principles: rights, choice, independence and inclusion. This led to the adoption of person-centred planning by all local authorities. There is legislation in place to support the White Paper, including the *Community Care Act (1990)*, the *Human Rights Act (1998)* and the *Equality Act (2010)*.

Benefits of the person centred approach

For the person

- Having more control over their life
- To be listened to and valued
- Having their rights recognised and supported
- Developing confidence, skills, abilities and knowledge
- Having support to try new things, including activities which might be considered risky
- Having access to a support network when needed

For family and friends

- Being valued and listened to
- Being in partnership with professionals
- Knowing the person they care about is valued
- Being part of a strong support network

For professionals/staff

- Increasing understanding of the person, their needs and aspirations
- Working in partnership with the person, their family and friends
- Learning from the person, their family and friends
- Having their skills and knowledge put to good use
- Being part of a strong support network

For the community

- Embracing diversity
- Supporting and welcoming people
- Resources in the community becoming more accessible to people
- Listening to what people want
- Increasing awareness of support needs

Person Centred Support at ELHAP

Person centred support is not just about a plan but about shared values, person centred thinking and evaluating the entire process regularly. ELHAP's person centred approach is an ethos that directs all aspects of ELHAP service provision. It has developed over many years and can be defined by five separate but interrelated elements:

1) Values

The 'Valuing People Now' principles underpin every part of the ELHAP Day Service:

1. **Rights:** People with learning disabilities and their families have the same human rights as everyone else.
2. **Independent living:** This does not mean people living on their own or having to do everything themselves. All disabled people should have greater choice and control over the support they need to go about their daily lives; greater access to housing, education, employment, leisure and transport opportunities and to participation in family and community life.
3. **Control:** This is about being involved in decision and being in control of decisions made about your life. This is not usually doing exactly what you want, but is about having information and support to understand the different options and their implications and consequences, so people can make informed decisions about their own lives.
4. **Inclusion:** This means being able to participate in all the aspects of community – to work, learn, get about, meet people, be part of social networks and access goods and services – and to have the support to do so.

2) Person Centred Support Plans

We all think about, and plan our lives in different ways. Some people have very clear ideas about what they want and how to achieve it, others take opportunities as they arise. Some people dream and then see how they can match their dreams to reality. Person centred support planning is a process of continual listening, and learning; focused on what is important to someone now, and for the future; and acting upon this in alliance with their family and friends. It is not simply a collection of new techniques for planning to replace care planning. It is based on a completely different way of seeing and working with people with disabilities, which is fundamentally about sharing power and community inclusion.

Each person who attends the ELHAP Day Service has a person centred support plan. It is a living document that is continually updated, changing and adapting to changes in people's lives, interests and preferences.

3) Person Centred Support

For people being supported by services, it is not person centred planning that matters as much as the presence of person centred thinking. If people who use services are to have positive control over their lives, if they are to have self directed lives within their own communities then those who are around the person, especially those who do the day to day work need to have the aptitude, skills and commitment to deliver a person centred service.

Our day to day support is influenced and underpinned by John O'Brien's five accomplishments (Based on the work of John O'Brien, <http://thechp.syr.edu/rsa.htm>):

- a) **Choice:** To ensure the autonomy of individuals both in making decisions about everyday issues and also in determining the major directions of their lives.
- b) **Competence:** To encourage individual personal growth in competence and experience including the level and variety of home, work and leisure activities.
- c) **Respect:** To afford to people the same respect as those without learning disabilities and encourage their acceptance as valued individuals in society.
- d) **Community Presence:** To enable individuals to have access to mainstream rather than segregated, community facilities and services.
- e) **Community Participation:** To enable people to mix with non-disabled people in their daily lives and to develop meaningful relationships

4) Person Centred Reviews

In the past, reviews seemed to be a 'tick box' meeting where the service user was either not present or not properly listened to. ELHAP believes that people should be in control of their own lives and at the centre of any meeting held to evaluate the services they receive.

There are 6 key elements to a person centred review:

- a) The person is at the centre of every aspect of the review
- b) The person chooses who to involve in the review process
- c) The person chooses the setting, timing and format review meetings
- d) The person is consulted throughout the review process
- e) Staff, family and friends fit into the person's review meeting (and not vice versa)
- f) Where it is difficult to identify the person's choices, everyone works collectively to help establish goals, interests and wishes now and in the future

5) Independent Person Centred Advocacy/Evaluations

A critical part to ensuring the Day Service delivers person centred support is person centred advocacy and evaluations. These are undertaken by an independent advocate without staff or family or friends present. Service users regularly meet the advocate to discuss their choices, whether they feel listened to, if they have any concerns but also to evaluate the person centred plans.

We believe that independent person centred advocate is a most powerful mechanism to ensuring that real person centred support is delivered.

6) Working proactively with Carers

We always work proactively and in partnership with carers. When there is a disagreement or difference of opinion, the service user's opinions and wishes will be paramount.

This policy works in conjunction with the following other policies:

Decision Making Policy

Communication Policy

Positive Risk Taking Policy