

Actions for Service Providers from the Provider Workshops

What customers with Individual budgets will want from service providers:

- Quality
- Choice
- Good customer service with user friendly access to the service
- Services tailored to the individual's needs
- Adaptability and flexibility
- Good knowledge of the product
- Accountability
- Reliability, sustainability and dependability with good cover arrangements
- Good communication-listening to people and taking them seriously
- A clear process for dealing with complaints and putting things right.
- Honesty and transparency
- Timely response
- Reasonable price -value for money
- Appropriately skilled staff

What needs to change

- Individual budgets will mean cultural change for care management staff, service providers and service users
- The private sector, voluntary sector and statutory sector need to work in partnership
- Providers need to treat people as equal partners
- Providers need to look at the persons experience when they try to get support
- Providers need to be less defensive
- People need a menu that they can dip in and out of not a list of services that people have to fit in to
- Services should be built around the needs of service users rather than around the needs of the staff/service
- There needs to be different, more flexible contracts of employment for staff
- Providers need to identify their niche, know what their strengths are and focus on providing what they are good at
- Services need to diversify and start to provide additional things that people say they want such as providing support to live a life –include: employment, education, social life, hobbies, training, as well as personal care

Challenges

- HR issues/changing staff contracts and terms and conditions
- Sustainability

- Flexible rostering and use of staff hours
- Keeping professional boundaries between support worker/customer
- Recruitment and retention of staff in certain areas
- Providing consistency of staffing for the individual
- Achieving balance between a workers need for work/life balance and security of income and the citizen's need for a flexible and responsive support service
- Empowering staff through training so that the provider has relatively autonomous local teams with flexibility to monitor their own rostering
- Developing flexible support for people to live a life with choice and control -. its not just about personal care
- Develop a bespoke service for individuals
- Become an innovative specialist provider
- Develop a much less bureaucratic response to changes in needs
- Develop smaller ' matched to need' staff teams
- Getting support plans right when operating Individual Service Funds
- Look at alternative ways of providing services
- Marketing
- Contracts to be clear with mutual accountability
- Monitoring standards

What a service should look like

Flexibility

The service will provide 24hour support which will be flexible to accommodate customer's needs.

The service will ensure that the service will respond to the needs & provide the support that it has agreed to provide

Customer comes first

It should not provide a service which has tight contracts which don't allow flexibility for the customer. Contracts need to be flexible – it's about saying yes – but also managing risk taking and managing expectations

Value for money

Support will be affordable to give choice. The service will have a transparent approach to cost of services

Support planning

The service will develop a support plan with the customer to ensure a seamless service. If their needs change the service will work with them to adapt the support provided to meet their changing needs. The service will help them to stay in control of their life and the decisions they make. There will be one to one planning of what people want and how it will be provided to ensure everything is included and there are no hidden gaps/costs

Staffing

The service will have a fair, legal recruitment process as per correct legislation. Customers will write a person specification for the type of support worker they want to enable a matching process. The service will match customers to support workers – to provide reliability and consistency. Support users are made aware of their responsibilities in the process. The service will provide staff who are appropriately skilled and trained in delivery of support to individuals. The service will provide a description of staff and clarity of role for staff. The service will utilise strategies that recruit & retain good/excellent staff e.g. incentives for high quality feedback on individual good workers.

Safeguarding

The provider is clear about what their safeguarding responsibilities are

Communication

The service will talk to customers regularly. The service will listen to customers and respond accordingly. Information will be freely/widely available. The service will start with a description of who they are – it will have a mission statement in Basic English. The service will say what its values are and how it values its staff. The service will clearly state what the provider service is offering e.g. brokerage, signposting, hands on delivery, advocacy and be clear about signposting to our partners who may be able to bridge the gap.

'Menu'

The service will have a menu – broad speaking e.g. social care & leisure options to enable the customer to identify what their preferences are. This moves away from 'one size fits all'. The service will provide a choice of different options and support to live a life

Partnership

The service will engage in genuine partnership with other companies marketing similar services. Sharing of knowledge and resources e.g. in times of crisis. Areas of expertise in different agencies will enable sharing amongst other agencies e.g. training expertise/recruitment expertise

Quality Assurance

The service will have systems of quality assurance to monitor performance and identify customer satisfaction through genuine feedback. Suggested options are star ratings, random/ mystery shopper approach, inviting feedback in addition to official monitoring

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