

# Families and person centred planning



**This information is to answer the questions you may have about person centred planning:**



- What is it?
- How could it help me?
- How can I be involved?
- How can I find out more?

*"For me, person centred planning helped me to see the person behind the labels. I thought I knew my son, but now I am learning about him, and the real person behind the label."*

Margaret, Martin's Mum 

## What is person centred planning?

It means that the person is at the centre of planning their life.


<b>Person centred planning is about:</b>	<b>Person centred planning is not:</b>
✓ Listening to and learning about what people want from their lives	✗ The same as assessment and care planning
✓ Helping people to think about what they want now and in the future	✗ The same as reviews
✓ Family, friends, professionals and services working together with the person to make this happen	✗ Owned by services
✓ A commitment to keep learning about the person	✗ Just a new type of meeting
✓ For everyone who wants one	✗ Only for children or adults who are 'easy to work with'



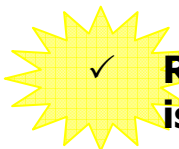
Many families have been doing this already, like Jan and Wendy, for their daughters Gemma and Katy. Gemma (23) and her friend Katy (22) have profound and multiple learning disabilities. Jan and Wendy were very concerned and depressed at the lack of options for Gemma and Katy to leave home. In desperation they decided to get together and write a vision for their daughters' happiness. They didn't know it at the time, but what they produced was very much like a person-centred plan. This vision formed the basis of a comprehensive booklet detailing the exact level of support they needed and how it should be provided. The person centred plans have been important in their journey to find a suitable bungalow for Katy and Gemma and funding to pay for their support. Two and a half years ago Gemma and Katy moved into their bungalows, with the support they need.



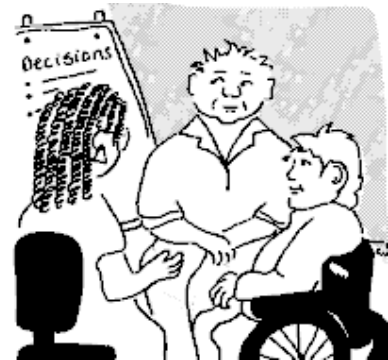
*"I know Sophie best. I am the expert in her life. Person centred planning helped me to know that what I was thinking was right."*

Julia, Sophie's Mum 

## How can it help me?



**Recognising who my son or daughter is – their gifts, aspirations, what they can bring to their local community**



*"Through person centred planning we see Martin for the wonderful character he is, not the labels they give him. It has given our family an understanding of what is important to him so he can be himself, and what support he needs to achieve his aspirations."*

Margaret, Martin's Mum 

*"There are so many reviews, reports and everything else that they put together about your child. They do not talk about the person, their character, their gifts or anything like that. I had never been asked what I liked about my child until I did person centred planning"*

Joan, Layla's Mum 

✓ **Thinking about what is important to my daughter or son, what help they need and how this should happen**

*"I didn't realise how important snugs (a cuddle in the morning) are to Sophie. If she didn't have a snug in the morning, it would ruin her day. I never knew that until I started planning with her."*

Julia, Sophie's Mum 

✓ **Finding a different way to communicate with professionals**



Martin was in a mainstream primary school and it was time for him to leave school. Naturally his Mum, Margaret wanted him to go to a mainstream secondary school. She knew that the school reports about Martin were full of labels, what he could not do, and behaviour issues. She decided that she wanted the new school to see who Martin really is instead. She send the school a copy of Martin's person centred plan and a video of him. The head teacher told Margaret that if he had just seen the primary schools report, without the plan and the video, they would not have believed Martin could go to mainstream school.

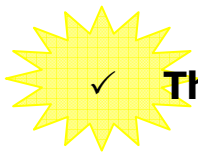


✓ **Helping services change for the better**

*"Now that I have done a plan I know what Sophie wants out of her life. I am different in her reviews now because I insist that they listen to what is important to Sophie"*

Julia, Sophie's Mum 

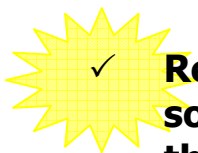




## Thinking about the future

*"Person centred planning has given us hope and a vision for a better future for Mohammed. We feel now we can have a say in how and what service support he receives. We no longer believe that only professionals know best for our son. Mohammed's faith and cultural needs are recognised and responded to."*

Joynab, Mohammed's mother 



## Recognising what has happened in my son/daughters life, their history, what they have experienced

*"I did not grow up with my sister Frances, because she was sent away before I was born into a long stay hospital when she was only 12. I was only told that I had a sister and that she would visit at Christmas which she did. When the long stay hospital where Frances was living wrote me a letter to say that the hospital was going to close I had a sigh of relief but then feelings of panic. A woman called me from the hospital and invited myself and my brothers to a meeting to discuss Frances future. We had a meeting in a very comfortable room with refreshments and Frances looked really nice. There were lots of posters on the wall and blank sheets of paper. Frances started the meeting by handing out an invitation with information on how the day was going to be spent. It was done up very nice and Frances had signed it and had done a drawing. I could tell some of the drawings on the wall, Frances had done. With help Frances pointed and 'mumbled' the best she could about the posters. The person next to her, (who I had met once) helped us to understand what Frances was saying. She talked about Frances history; she had lived at two large hospitals over 22 years of her life. I learned Frances had been treated very badly over the years in the hospitals that made her very angry and hurt. I learned that*



*Frances could do a lot of things for herself if people gave her the chance. That day was around Frances letting people know what she wanted and did not want out of a new place to live.*

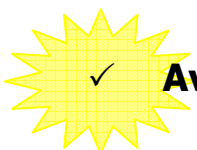
*We met once every month, most of the time at my house since Frances really liked to take the trip and go out to dinner after the meeting. I was amazed at the friends that Frances had who really worked hard to get Frances what she wanted. What I appreciated most was that Frances had people who cared about her enough to deal with the 'system' stuff that always seemed to get in the way of me being a sister to Frances.*

*I was told the meeting we were having were called 'person centred planning meetings' - I think that is what they were and still are because we still meet every other month at 6:30 a.m. for breakfast to make sure that things are going well for Frances. This has been helpful due to all the problems with staff turnover and Frances' ill health. It has also made sure that the Frances nightmare of living in a group home or nursing home has never happened and that she has been able to live in her own place, under her own rules.*

*Thanks to all who have been there for us and those who are still with us. Because of the planning and the committed people who have been there from the beginning when we had the first meeting at the hospital Frances has been able to enjoy her life living on her own with supports. She has been reconnected to family, and her church where she used to attend with mom. She enjoys the life of a retired woman, going to various activities with her community senior clubs - theatre, cinema, plays, socials, lunches, etc. She leads an active life and has always lived close to me and our brother.*

*I am now a sister and friend."*

Rowena, Frances Sister 




### **Avoiding our 'nightmares'**

*"I never realised the gifts that my son had until we spent a day with people who had supported him over the years in the service. When he was born we were told he would never be able to do anything or learn*

*anything because of his profound disabilities. What we have realized by spending time with Steven and others who really know him and have known him over his 19 years is that he is learning every day just like us. Just because he can't use words he tells us many things by the way he uses his eyes, nods his head, points, pouts, smiles, yells, laughs, cries.*

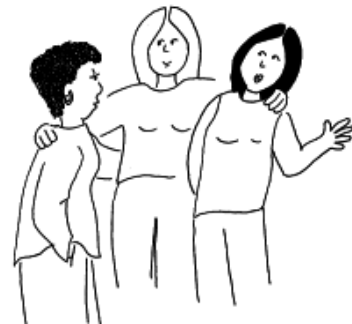
*I have learned that Steven has not really been listened to until we started to plan a future for him. We have learned that we can never, ever let the 'nightmares' of being in the long stay hospital happen again. We have learned that we need others to help us his family and Steven to live his life to the fullest in the community. That may mean work, play, university, or hobbies. But it will never again mean that Steven cannot learn or can not give something to others which we are learning everyday."*

Jan, Steven's Mom 

### **Building more friendships and relationships**

*I thought I knew my son so well but until we started planning with John. We were helped by a person who was very skilled in getting John's family and his supporters to share their experiences and stories about John. We began to look at John's movements (eye, hand, facial, feet, body, etc.) as ways he was communicating.*

*This changed our whole way of thinking about what John was capable of doing now and in his future. He no longer is going to a day centre, which we found out was making him very anxious and upset. He now is getting supports from home to go and do the things he enjoys and with the people he enjoys doing things with. We are still learning about John, as we will for the rest of his life. But through regular planning meetings with the people who care and work for John we see a different future. We recognised that John needs to establish relationships with people he shares interests with rather than it*



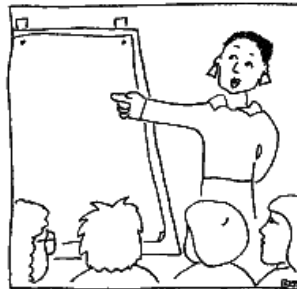
*being just based on family relationships and support workers. We are starting to look into expanding John's social networks and giving him more opportunities to experience different things. We learn something every time John experiences something new and then we build on this.*

Tom, John's Dad 

## How can I be involved?

Families will want to become involved in person centred planning in different ways, and at different times in their lives:

**Trainer**



**Family Mentor**



**Aware of person centred planning and know what to expect**

**Leading the plan for their own son or daughter**



## Awareness

The Government's guidance on person centred planning says that all families should have an opportunity to learn about person centred planning and decide what involvement they want. Some families simply want to know what person centred planning is, what they can expect from services and how they can contribute to their son or daughters plan.



## Leading Planning

Other families will want to play a more direct role and lead the development of their son or daughters plan themselves. There are different ways that people can have help to do this:

- *Training with staff*

Some families want to join in facilitator training with staff. This is usually four days long, over a few months.

- *Training just for families*

Sometimes families want training sessions just with other families. This may be monthly sessions over a number of months.

- *Individual support*

Some family members will want help and support on an individual basis, from family mentors, independent facilitators or service staff.

Many families will be happy to be involved in training through sharing their experiences.

## Family Mentors

Some family members want to help other families in planning with their son or daughter. These 'family mentors' will need to have experience in planning with their own son or daughter as well and support



or training in becoming a mentor. Parent mentors are being trained by working with a trainer on a course for families, and then being supported as their work with another family mentor to plan with a family. Family mentors, like all facilitators, will need on going support.

## How can I find out more?

### Partnership Boards

In each local area there will be a Partnership Board. Each Partnership Board has developed a framework that describes how they are going to put person centred planning into practice. This should include training and support for families. There is a family/carer representative on each Partnership Board. Contact them to find out what is available.



### Parent and Carer Groups

There are many local parent networks and groups. They may be able to help you learn about person centred planning.

### Books and Websites

- Book: A little book about Person Centred Planning. Edited by John O'Brien & Connie Lyle O'Brien Available from: Inclusion Distribution (tel: 01625 269243)
- Book: People, Plans and Possibilities - exploring Person Centred Planning By Helen Sanderson, Jo Kennedy, Pete Ritchie & Gill Goodwin Available from: Scottish Human Services (tel 0131 538 7717)
- Websites: [www.doh.gov.uk/vpst](http://www.doh.gov.uk/vpst)  
[www.familiesleadingplanning.co.uk](http://www.familiesleadingplanning.co.uk)  
[www.helensandersonassociates.co.uk](http://www.helensandersonassociates.co.uk)

“Person centred planning changed our lives, my son receives a service that guarantees meeting his personal, spiritual needs in the way which is important to him. We now have hopes and aspirations for his future.

One in particular, which is to help him buy his own house. Through planning it has equipped me as a parent to influence service design and delivery”

Parveen, Hamad’s mother 

By Helen Sanderson, Molly Mattingly, Jan Roast, Julia Erskine, Joan Black, Mandy McDonald, Naz Khan and Margaret Cook  
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