

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care: A Victorian experience.

**Gillian Damonze**



# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care

## Organisational objectives

- Committed to working alongside people with a disability and people who are frail aged.
- Our core business is the provision of case management.
- To look beyond traditional forms of support to meet the needs of participants accessing the service.

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care



## Objectives of this presentation:

1. Share information about how consumer directed care has been supported through Individualised Arrangements.
2. Highlight the benefits in using this approach.
3. Present some of the challenges and our learnings that have emerged through the evolution of this concept.
4. Share how work in this program has informed other areas across the organisation.
5. Reiterate the key elements for successful arrangements

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care



## Evolution of Individualised Arrangements

- The Individualised Lifestyle Project – 2002
- In Victoria there had already been much discussion about individualised approaches to funding.
- The Victorian Disability Plan 2002 – 2012 encourages individualised planning and support of people with a disability who rely on the service system.

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care



## Key elements of an individualised arrangement:

- The person and / or their family directs:
  - How a funding package is spent
  - Who provides their supports e.g. Selection and recruitment of staff
  - The purchase of supports and services that are tailored to their needs.
  - Supports and services are flexible
  - Families track expenditure of funding

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care



## Key elements of an individualised arrangement:

- The organisation is responsible for:
  - Provision of administration support (10% of participant's package)
    - Payroll
    - Processing timesheets and invoices
    - Human resource support
    - Team Leader support
  - Monthly financial reports

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care



## How does consumer directed care empower families ?

- People with a disability and their families have greater control and autonomy
- Participants can create / access supports that is meaningful and centred around their needs rather than be forced to choose from a fixed menu of services.
- Participants have more control over the package of funding that has been allocated.

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care



## Challenges in implementing the approach:

- The 'approach' has needed to be evolutionary to match the needs of the person and their family.
- Balancing organisational imperatives with the flexibility inherent in individualised arrangements.
- Creating consistent mechanisms with funding bodies about how to track funding that is individualised to a particular person and how this is recorded through formal funding and service agreements.

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care



## Challenges in implementing the approach:

- Growing support worker workforce due to the growth of families involved in this program
  - More administration time/ human resource time in this area
  - Balancing the conditions of UCCO's Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) with the needs of families
  - Specific knowledge needed around support work conditions and monitoring this.
  - Provision of adequate supervision of support workers

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care



## Challenges in implementing the approach:

- A cultural shift is still required with respect to funding bodies communicating with families.

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care



**Impact of this work on other areas in the  
organisation:**

- Planning and Facilitation Team
- Community Development Liaison worker
- Circles of Support

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care



## Planning and Facilitation Workers

- This role provides short term support to families who are experiencing crisis or who require support with planning.
- Planning and Facilitation workers can support families to undertake deep planning or facilitate a circle of support using a number of planning tools that include:
  - Maps, PATH

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care



## Community Development Liaison Worker

- This unobtrusive role works quietly in conjunction with partnership workers, team leaders, the pastoral care worker or directly with families.
- The purpose of this role is to:
  - Directly support the family make links within their community where this may be lacking.
  - Support the aspirations that are identified through deep planning through identification of links in the community.

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care



## Circles of Support

- Uses a skilled facilitator to build on the vision of a person or a family
- Mediates a process that builds on the confidence of a person to see through their vision with the help of friends, family and acquaintances.

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care



## Key elements of successful arrangements:

### Person / family perspective:

- Interest and capacity to be more involved in planning their family member's support assistance
- Information – knowing what to ask for
- Having appropriate supports to purchase
- The ability to 'imagine' better
- Mutual support from other families
- Support can be accessed when needed

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care



## Key elements for successful arrangements:

### Host agency perspective:

- Agency culture and values support 'ethical partnering' with families
- Clarity and transparency about costs and arrangements through formal agreements & monthly financial statements.
- Advisory structures that enable families to have input to agency processes
- Clear mechanisms that support both families and conditions of support workers.

# Challenging the myths around consumer directed care



## Key elements for successful arrangements:

### Host agency perspective:

- Accountability structures that support legal and funding requirements to be met.
- Capacity to act as an employer with families being involved in selection of staff and day to day direction.
- Where a Coordinator is employed, finding a person with appropriate skills and an understanding of family empowerment, ability to be flexible , manage risk but not be risk avoiding.