

Q & A

What is Person Centered Planning?

Person Centered Planning is a philosophy and an approach that has emerged from nearly 25 years of development by a diverse number of people with disabilities, their families and friends, practitioners, academics, and others.

It is a way of organizing around one person to define and create a better future. It is about allowing people's gifts to shine through, inviting imagination and creative action, and challenging everyone to think more about what is possible for people with disabilities.

What are the beliefs/foundations of Person Centered Planning?

Person Centered Planning assumes that each individual and their loved ones are the primary authorities as to what that individual wants and desires.

The individual is the driver of the process and effort is made to ensure that decision-making power remains with the individual and their family. Person Centered Planning is a process of ongoing learning through shared actions that are the result of planning together. PCP also seeks to uncover the gifts and capacities of a person to assist in working together to create the quality of life experiences of opportunities desired by each individual.

Why Person Centered Planning?

Person Centered Planning offers the tools to give people as much control and direction about their lives. It is consciously designed as an inclusive process. It draws attention to people's gifts and capacities and takes these as the starting point for planning. The focus shifts from planning a person's life around programs and services to planning around the person being served.

I meet every year with 'my' service provider. How does PCP differ from what currently occurs?

Many service providers do great work in trying to tailor supports to meet each person's individual desires and PCP is a way of reinforcing that approach. Person Centered Planning tries to reinforce that individuals are the primary voice for planning and decision-making.

The focus of PCP is not necessarily on areas in which the individual requires supports (e.g. functional skill deficits) – rather the focus is on the skills and abilities the individual currently has, their interests and preferences, and the overall outcomes they would like to achieve for their lives.

Also in planning, different people come – not just staff, but also friends and family are equal contributors in the meetings, alongside professionals. People come by invitation – it is up to the person to say who he/she wants at the meeting.

For some people Person Centered Planning may result in having different questions asked during planning meetings. Questions will focus on the person's current connections with others, the person's dreams and wishes, who might be able to help the person achieve desired goals, and what kind of outcomes are being sought.

A complete listing of resources available to the individual is also compiled (including community based services, PDD funded services, family and/or friends who could contribute), and decisions are made regarding who would be in the best position to assist the individual in particular areas. This also provides additional opportunity to further develop the capacity of the community in supporting the individual.

Out of the planning, an individual's Person Centered Plan would emerge. This Person Centered Plan is owned by each individual or family.

Service providers can then develop a **service plan** to assist the individual in achieving the desired outcomes. This may include services that PDD can then provide funding for, but it may also include support from many others.

This 'service plan' or 'service agreement' can be adjusted based on changing desires of each individual. A family may continue to meet with a service provider to review progress on the various services and on how well those services have contributed to helping the person achieve the things they identified as important to them.

Person Centered Planning is not about doing things to the person or for the person. It's about people who know and like the individual are doing things with them, and recognizing that they-like all of us- need other people's support to be their own person.

What is key to understanding PCP?

It is not just tools and techniques to learn. It is a philosophy and approach that tries to ensure that each person has those closest to him or her involved in planning and in acting to support that person.

How can I learn more about PCP?

PDD has developed a number of resources that are available for individuals, families, and anyone else who has an interest in learning more. Information sessions are being scheduled in communities across Central Region. A library of print resources is available in each community and there are wide ranges of websites available. A great place to start is at www.pdd.org the link to Central and click on Person Centered Planning.