

Disability Services

Streamlining Individualised Support Packages

(HomeFirst, Support & Choice, Community Options, Futures for Young Adults Years 1-8)

What it means for disability service providers

May 2008

Individualised Support Packages relevant to this information sheet are Support & Choice, HomeFirst, Community Options and Futures for Young Adults, Years 1-8. These packages are currently individually attached and enable choice of service provider.

What are Individualised Support Packages?

Individualised Support Packages are Disability Services funds that are allocated to a person for support to meet their disability related support needs. The funds may be used to buy a range of supports chosen by the person to assist them to achieve their goals. This may include individually delivered supports and/or group based supports such as a day service.

An individualised planning process will assist the person and their family to consider how their support needs may be met and to develop the person's support plan.

What do we mean by 'streamlining Individualised Support Packages'?

Currently, the packages operate under different guidelines. Some people also get some funds from more than one of these packages for different types of support. This means they have different rules for different parts of their funding.

People have told us that they want disability funded supports to be simpler, with clear guidelines and to be more responsive and flexible.

From 1 July 2008, the different packages will be streamlined into one Individualised Support Package with a single set of guidelines and processes.

What are the changes from 1 July 2008?

People who currently access one or more of the existing funding packages will continue to receive the same funding allocation and supports until the next time they come up for review.

The review does not mean people will need to change their supports or support provider(s), however, it will provide the opportunity to look at what else might be available and think differently about what supports would meet their needs.

People will also have the option to decide how their funds are managed. People may choose to continue to have their funds paid to the service provider who provides the support, or they may choose to use a financial intermediary. A financial intermediary is an organisation that holds funds, makes payments at the person's direction and keeps records of the funds.

A third option is where people receive the funds directly and manage it themselves. This will only be available to a small number of people at first, but will be more widely available over time.

What does it mean for disability service providers?

The supports that are provided for people and the total amount of their funding allocation will remain just as they were before 1 July 2008. Where an individual currently receives multiple packages that will be combined into one, the targets will be adjusted to reflect the number of individuals supported.

Funding

Funding to disability service providers from Disability Services will be transferred under the Individualised Support Packages activity rather than the previous separate activities.

Funding will continue to be based on the unit prices contained in the Disability Services Policy & Funding Plan 2006-2009.

QDC Reporting

Reporting against the HomeFirst and Community Options activities will cease and organisations paid via SAMS for Individualised Support Packages will report against this activity.

Monitoring of individual budgets

Disability service providers will need to maintain the capability to monitor the funding for each individual, as is currently required for HomeFirst, with effect from 1 July 2008. Disability Services will work with providers to refine budget monitoring and reporting requirements and systems capability.

There will be no requirement at this stage to individually monitor funding for individuals who use their Individualised Support Package to purchase a place in a day service.

From 1 July 2008, there will be no loss of capacity to carry forward unspent funds where that currently applies, such as in HomeFirst. This capacity will be extended to all Individual Support Package users. In future, the carry forward will be expressed as a dollar amount and not as 'hours'. Funds in excess of the amount carried forward will be returned to the department for reallocation.

Where an Individualised Support Package is used to buy a block of time in a day service, there is no carryover or return of funds.

New guidelines

New guidelines are currently being developed and they will be available before 1 July 2008.

We will also be providing a User Manual so that all people with a disability can find out about the changes and what their options are so they can make informed decisions about their future supports.

For more information

If you would like more information contact your Departmental Program & Service Advisor.