

Disability Policy Review

The recently published Report of the Disability Policy Review set out the following vision:

To realise a society where people with disabilities are supported to participate fully in economic and social life and have access to a range of quality supports and services to enhance their quality of life and well-being.

The disability policy review envisages the provision of individualised supports, and defines these as follows:

Individualised supports are a personal social service which includes a range of assistance and interventions required to enable the individual to live a fully included life in the community. Individualised supports require the provision of a flexible range of supports and services that are tailored to the needs of the individual, and are primarily determined by the person. This provision enables people with disabilities to live as full citizens instead of having to fit into standardised models and structures.

Supports include assistance provided by others, whether in the form of personal care, communication or advocacy support, learning support, therapeutic interventions, aids and equipment, adaptations to the physical environment, and so on. Individualised supports are characterised as being primarily:

- determined by the person (in collaboration with their family/advocate as required and in consultation with an independent assessor) not the service provider or other 'experts';
- directed by the person (with their family/advocate as required);
- provided on a one-to-one basis to the person and not in group settings (unless that is the specific choice of the person and a 'natural' group activity, such as a team sport);
- flexible and responsive, adapting to the person's changing needs and wishes;
- encompassing a wide range of sources and types of support so that very specific needs and wishes can be met;
- not limited by what a single service provider can provide
- having a high degree of specificity. Provision that is expressed in terms of residential, day or respite does not capture the specific nature of an individual's support needs.

The policy review sets out two key goals for achieving this vision:

Goal 1. Full inclusion and self-determination for people with disabilities

The underpinning principles of this goal are citizenship, control, informed choice, self-determination, responsibility, inclusion and participation

Goal 2. The creation of a cost-effective, responsive and accountable system which will support the full inclusion and self-determination of people with disabilities

The underpinning principles of this goal are equity, person-centred, quality, effective, efficient, sufficient, accountable and transferable.

"The first goal ...spells out the ultimate desired outcomes for people with disabilities. The second goal expresses characteristics of the disability service system which are required to support the achievement of the full inclusion and self determination of people with disabilities" p.13

The policy takes a **life cycle framework** and focuses on **mainstreaming** in provision of supports

This document was produced as an aide memoire for the participants of Next Steps Project. It provides a summary of the policy vision and key goals of the Disability Policy Review. It is not intended to be a full account of the policy. To read the full policy, please go to the following link:

http://www.dohc.ie/consultations/closed/disability_policy_review/