

PERSON-CENTRED PLANNING

The Enable Ireland Person-Centred Planning Co-ordinator for Dublin Adult Services, Leah O'Toole, recently completed a course on Optimal Individualised Service Design, run by writer and theorist Michael Kendrick. Below she shares her experiences and talks through some of the features of the course.

The issues raised here represent a small portion of the challenges posed to us by Kendrick. They are his thoughts and I simply present them to you as topics for debate.

'Self praise is no praise

According to Kendrick, we need to view our services in a realistic light, avoid complacency and self-congratulation and constantly question our values, procedures and working practices so as to ensure genuine movement towards real improvements in people's lived experiences.

We need to be careful to avoid a simple renaming of practice to make it seem responsive to individuals. Instead, to be truly person-centred, we need to develop supports uniquely tailored to and "from" the person. The very notion of individualisation is that we should do things differently from one person to another. Standardised practices, models and systems undermine this purpose even if these are well intentioned.

If we believe that we are already "there" when it comes to person-centredness, we run the risk of not seeing where we might be able to improve. Intentions do not equal actions.

Challenging assumptions

Modern disability services don't just exist simply to meet the needs of the named service users. These services, and those who struggle to make them work, have many agendas to see to. To attempt genuine person-centredness means to enter the fray on the side of the person knowing full well that this might bring us into collision with any number of other interests competing with those of the person themselves. Kendrick poses the challenge, "Perhaps we want the goal without seeing that the price of it will be struggle".

In the majority of cases, services start with a service model in mind, and see their task as being one of tailoring it to accommodate



Dublin Adult Services Telethon 2007 People in Need challenge
L to R Demot Madson (goals), Dessie McConomy, Jason O'Reilly & Padraig Mulcahy

the person i.e. "what kind of day program is needed?" as opposed to "what kind of lifestyle does the person need or want?". Models should fundamentally evolve from people rather than for people's lives be fitted into a pre-existent service. Kendrick challenges us to start with the assumption that no ideal model exists and whatever model arises from planning should draw its authority from who the person is and what their actual needs are.

Meeting needs 'normatively'

The word 'normatively' means 'in normal settings', and Kendrick strongly maintains that having your needs met normatively is the most effective way of getting your needs met. This means that we should not be comparing the life of a person with a disability to those of others with disabilities, but rather to the lives of people of similar age, location etc. We should constantly be asking ourselves: "Would I be happy with that lifestyle?" If the answer is no, then why are we so quick to accept such a lifestyle for a person of similar age and background, just because of the arbitrary fact that they have a disability?

There are so many questions to be asked in the development of a service for a person. Questions such as: 'Who is the person?', 'What are their needs? – All of their needs?', 'What are their fundamental needs?', 'What do people without disabilities do to meet their needs in the community?', 'What do people normally value?', 'What would meet each of those needs?', 'What sort of people would be the right people to implement those needs?'

Could it be that at present are we asking only: 'What can we do to make things better for the person within the service we already have?'

Kendrick also offers some pointers on how to make this happen, and a lot of work is going on at national and local level with the aim of entering the next phase of PCP, and working towards exemplary person-centred services for Enable Ireland. Watch this space...

Leah O'Toole
PCP Co-ordinator

NEW SENSORY ROOM FOR ENABLE IRELAND MEATH SERVICES

Minister Noel Dempsey officially opened a new sensory room at the Enable Ireland Early Service in Trim on 21 November 2007. Enable Ireland are indebted to the Trim Ladies Circle who raised over €80,000 at the Gala Summer Ball, in May 2007, for the children of Meath. The Ladies circle divided the proceeds from the ball between two organisations: Enable Ireland and the ISPCC.

The funding was used to install a Sensory Integration Therapy Room at the centre, which is located in St. Joseph's Hospital Complex Trim. Families and staff now have access to a state of the art facility which will be of great benefit to children accessing the services.

At the opening, Minister Dempsey recognised the excellent service which Enable Ireland provide, adding that Meath is very fortunate to have had an expansion in early services through the partnership arrangement between Enable Ireland and the Health Service Executive.

Grainne Potterton, chairperson of the Ladies Circle, presented a cheque for €40,969 to Mary Fox, Director of Service Enable Ireland North East, and a cheque for the same amount was presented to the ISPCC Teentext service. The official opening was attended by parents, staff from Enable Ireland, representatives



Minister Noel Dempsey TD (Left) with Mary Fox, Director of Service, Enable Ireland (Back 2nd from right) and members of the Early Intervention Team (0-6) (L-R) Ursula Cregan, Sandra Hatton, Grainne Stone, Liz Hughes, Nicola Comiskey, Pauline Baker and Ragu Raman at the official opening by Minister Dempsey of the Sensory Integration Therapy Room by Enable Ireland in St. Joseph's Complex, Trim

from the Health Service Executive and members of the Ladies Circle. Mary Fox acknowledged the Ladies Circle and stressed how long awaited this facility has been by staff and families. She also recognised the dedication and commitment of the Enable Ireland services team throughout County Meath. Services are now provided to 300 children and families from Trim, Navan, Dunshaughlin and Kells.

WICKLOW PHYSIOTHERAPY DEPARTMENT PROCEDURE PLAN

When a child undergoes an orthopaedic surgical procedure, it can be a challenge for us, the services team, to ascertain what exact procedure was carried out, at what level and if there were any specific post-operative instructions. As this information was often staggered and delayed it impacted on our ability to liaise with each other and plan for the child's/ family's needs upon discharge from hospital.

To address these issues, we designed a 'Procedure Plan Pack'. This is comprised

of three sections (pink, blue & white). The first (pink) is the physiotherapy plan document. It is completed prior to the proposed procedure by the child's physiotherapist and family together. It gauges the parent's knowledge of the proposed procedure and provides a forum for further discussion.

The Cover Letter (white page) and Information Sheet (blue) are given to the child's parent to bring to the hospital and submit to the orthopaedic team for completion prior to their child's discharge.

Feedback from families who have used the Procedure Plan Pack has been positive. We have certainly found it an excellent tool in improving communication lines between orthopaedics, parents and therapists. It has also enabled us to provide more informed and efficient post-operative intervention. An audit is planned for the future to more formally explore the benefits and areas for further improvement.

Wicklow Services Team

HOLIDAY ADVENTURE WEEKEND TO THE SHARE HOLIDAY VILLAGE FERMANAGH



Back Row Daniel Brooks Alet De Bruin (O.T.) Julie O'Brien (Physio) Carina Coyle (Pre School Support), Ailish O'Shea (Social Care Worker) Ona Hamidu (Physio) Claire Gillen, Maria McDonnell (Social Care Worker). Front Row: Arron O'Connor, Karl Kelly, Arron Edwards, Cian Gavin, Kate Kelly, Amy Glynn, Michelle Melia.

August 07 saw the first Annual (hopefully) Adventure to Fermanagh to the Share Holiday Village. Arriving en masse at Maynooth train station on a Friday morning, we loaded up staff and kids, bags and wheelchairs onto a busy train to Sligo. On arrival in Sligo, it soon became apparent that we had underestimated the storage capacity on the bus and three of us were left stranded with six wheelchairs at the train station, with the task of figuring out how to get us and said wheelchairs to Fermanagh. One of our not so shy physiotherapists approached a man with a very spacious Citroen Berlingo, who happened to be unloading his guests onto the train. With some eyelid batting and a bit of persuasion the lovely Reverend Alan Mitchell offered to drive the three hour round trip to drop us to Fermanagh. Thanks Alan! And yes we did manage to fit four people and six wheelchairs into the Citroen.... just about!!

So several hours, and a bus trip (or van journey) later, we landed on the rainy shores of Lough Erne. Spirits still high and not dampened by the weather, we were housed in our chalets and briefed for the stay ahead by one of a number of enthusiastic staff. Our weekend was to include canoeing, keel boat sailing, swimming and t-shirt painting. That night, we took advantage of the swimming pool to drain some energy from our excited adventurers.

Fed and rested, we rose the next morning and started the weekend by customising hand made T-shirts, some of crazy design. After a hearty lunch was settled in our stomachs, we next ventured out onto the lake in two sets of rafted Canadian canoes. Amid songs and laughter, we paddled (and stirred) our way out and back across the water. Paddling being tough work, a few of our dare devil adventurers decided that a jump (or a throw in!) from the pier was in order to cool off. So clad in life jackets and aided by some of the many volunteers at the centre, 5 foolhardy kids, dismissive of the temperature of the water and the drizzle of the rain, launched from the pier for a shock immersion..... or five or six or seven (staff were also forced to join the madness!!)

The swimming pool was right beside the water activity area, and so it was next on the agenda to warm up those smiling, shivering bodies, followed swiftly by a mountain of well appreciated nosh!

Energy levels astonishing not completely depleted, we donned our fineries and headed to the hall for several hours of dancing fun as the disco DJ belted out song after song. Congo lines were made, with feet stomping, smiles sparkling, and moves to amaze.

Sunday, after some much needed rest, we ventured out onto the lake once again. We were supposed to be going keel boat sailing. However, the kids had seen the speed boats out on the water the day before and a general consensus saw a change of event. So life jackets on again and, four to a boat, we zoomed around the lake, drawing loop de loops and hopping over waves.



Kate Kelly, Julie O'Brien (Physio), Michelle Melia

Once again, the staff and volunteers were fantastic in including everyone and helping to get everyone on board. We got so carried away we were late for lunch!

Smiling and chatting, we headed off on the bus back to Sligo and the train back to some well rested parents.

The weekend was for some their first ever weekend away from home. It was a fantastic opportunity for respite for both parents and children, whilst offering the experience of travelling away with friends and taking part in some unusual activities. All in all the weekend was fantastic. So much so that we are hoping for a repeat next year and hopefully for a great many more to come.

Located on the shores of Upper Lough Erne, The Share Holiday Village is an activity centre that works for the inclusion of disabled and non disabled people by providing opportunities for all to participate in a wide range of educational, recreational outdoor pursuits and creative arts programmes. For more details on things to do and on the wide range of board and accommodation options available, visit www.sharevillage.org.

Julie O'Brien, Physiotherapist, Enable Ireland Kildare



Back Row; Daniel Brooks, Cian Gavin, Ona Hamidu (Physio) Front Row Arron Edwards, Arron O'Connor, Michelle Melia, Claire Gillen

CLARE SPORTS PARTNERSHIP AWARDS - TRIPLE CROWN CHAMPIONS IN ENNIS



Stephen Hickey and Garrett Culliton of the Gaelic Warriors in action at the Clare Sports partnership and Enable Ireland Sports Day to promote Disability Awareness at St Flannans College. Picture by Eamon Ward

Members of the Irish Wheelchair Rugby Team (2007 Triple Crown Champions) the Gaelic Warriors, were in St. Flannans College, Ennis in January for the concluding day of the Enable Ireland / Clare Sports Partnership Disability Awareness through Sport Programme. This 8 week programme has proved to be a big success with the Transition Year Students from St. Flannans College, Ennis.

The programme incorporated aspects such as understanding disability and the barriers people with disabilities encounter and how best to interact and communicate with people with different disabilities.

Adults from Enable Ireland adult services facilitated the programme. While there was some theory aspects to the

programme, the main content of the 8 weeks included practical elements such as group discussions/activities, role plays, scenarios, and practical activities to give the students an understanding of various disabilities. James O'Donoghue Lead Organiser said 'the programme proved a great success over the past two years'.

The final session of the programme gave the students an opportunity to experience through participation, various sports such as Wheelchair Rugby, Boccia, Goal Ball, Wheelchair Hurling and Wheelchair Soccer. Development officers from Munster Rugby, FAI, Cerebral Palsy Sport and IWA explained their involvement in sports for individuals with disabilities.

On the day, James Murrphy was introduced as the New Sports Inclusion Development Officer (SIDO) for County Clare. A former Clare GAA development worker, James is a member of the Irish Paralympic Soccer team. James will have the responsibility of ensuring that disability sport is developed in the county. Speaking about his appointment James said that "my ultimate goal is to ensure people with disabilities in the county have an opportunity to participate in sport and physical activity."

John Sweeney, Clare Sports Partnership co-ordinator said "we are delighted to have received funding from the Dormant Accounts for this important position. We all should have the opportunity participate in sports and physical activity to our own ability."

Former Enable Ireland Clare manager, Ruan native, Niamh Daffy, has been instrumental in the success of this awareness programme. Her new position as co-ordinator of the CARA Adapted Physical Activity Centre in Tralee will be to act as a support to the 19 Sports Inclusion Development Officers that have been appointed throughout the National Network of Local Sports Partnerships.

INTERCENTRE BOCCIA LEAGUE 2008

Once again, Cerebral Palsy Sports Ireland and the Enable Ireland Centres are running their Intercentre Boccia League. This years pilot is following on from the success achieved at the pilot program that was run last year between four centres in the west of the country. Clare, Limerick, Cork and Kerry participated in the league throughout the months of March, April and May and they all battled it out for a place in the final.

Over the duration of the pilot, the teams developed and learned new skills in relation to playing boccia. The stronger teams demonstrated the skills and

concentration levels required to play the game and the developing teams learned the rules and regulations of game play and gained some experience of playing with developed teams.

Our overall objective of the program is to get teams from each centre to compete in the league. This is in turn helping to bring Enable Ireland centres together for a dedicated sports event and helping Cerebral Palsy Sport Ireland to observe the level of play across the country, hopefully finding players that would be able to compete at national and international level.

Since the final of the league last year, boccia development days have been run by Cerebral Palsy Sport Ireland around the country. The training days are run to help staff of the centres develop a better understanding of what the game is and how they can run it successfully in their own centres.

Any centre interested in participating in the league or running a development day, please contact Brenda Hopkins, National Sports Development Officer, Cerebral Palsy Sport Ireland @ 01 6251160 or email Bhopkinscpsport@eircom.net.