



MODULE 5:

Working in partnership with people and families



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Don't forget!

Make sure you save your work by downloading and saving this PDF to your own computer before you write in it.

Introduction

It is easy to forget just how radical the NDIS aimed to be when it was first conceived. Fortunately, the very first part of The NDIS Act (after the definitions) sets out what is still intended to be achieved by the Scheme. Object (1)(a) reads: **in conjunction with other laws, [The Act gives] effect to Australia's obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities done at New York on 13 December 2006**. This key point gets spelled out and repeated a number of times in the Objects and General principles guiding actions under The Act and highlights how the Scheme is intended to be a rights-based entitlement scheme.

This is significant also because the UN Convention explicitly shifts decision making authority from 'other people making decisions in the best interests of a person with disability' to the person themselves having the right to make their own decisions. The NDIS Act explicitly echoes this shift in decision making authority in several of the Objects and Principles as we saw in Module 4.

If the NDIS is to succeed, service providers need to ensure that their services support and enable people to make their own decisions about their lives and services. As these modules are demonstrating, Shared Management is one way of building people's capacity to do that. In WAiS's view it makes good long-term business sense to think seriously about offering Shared Management.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

1. Identify behaviours and practices that promote people being in control of their decision making
2. Support and empower your organisation's staff to build the autonomy, capacity and capability of people and family members
3. Discuss three ways to integrate the knowledge, skills, strategies and experiences of people you support into your organisation's systems and practices
4. Describe three ways in which you can engage the people you support to share their knowledge, skills and experiences with other people and families
5. Identify two or three strategic initiatives your organisation could implement to improve how you work in partnership with people and families in the lead

Activity 5.0: How do you rate for working in partnership with people/families in the lead?

Take a few moments to review your scoring from Module 1. Either transfer your scores from the Module 1 workbook into the table below, or do the quiz now. Using the scale below, rate your response to each of the following statements. Write your score for each statement in column to the right.

Non-existent: 1

Patchy: 2

Average: 3

Very good: 4

Can't be better: 5

Your Score here

Our organisation can demonstrate how it empowers and supports people to make their own decisions about how they live, what they do, what their services are like and who works with/for them	1	2	3	4	5	
Our organisation can demonstrate how it supports people with high support needs to find and hold socially valued roles in the mainstream community	1	2	3	4	5	
People and families we Share Manage with have access to accurate, real-time data about their budget, expenses and services	1	2	3	4	5	
Our organisation is comfortable with having people, families and/or frontline staff try things that sometimes may not work	1	2	3	4	5	
Our organisation has employment targets about the number of people with disability who work for us	1	2	3	4	5	
Our organisation has processes for checking in with people using Shared Management to identify and solve issues before they become big problems	1	2	3	4	5	

Total Score

Activity 5.1: What behaviours and practices promote people being in control of their own decision making?

This activity requires you to reflect on your answers to Activity 5.0. Where you indicated that your organisation is doing some of these things, make notes that describe in more detail what evidence exists to support your assessment, including specific observable behaviours. What would an observer see your organisation's employees doing or hear them saying? Also think about what behaviours you would like to see in the future, especially if you scored low on some of these items in Activity 5.0.

Criteria	Evidence - what does your organisation do?	Evidence - what would we like to see in the future?
Our organisation can demonstrate how it empowers and supports people to make their own decisions about how they live, what they do, what their services are like and who works with/for them		
Our organisation can demonstrate how it supports people with high support needs to find and hold socially valued roles in the mainstream community		

Criteria	Evidence - what does your organisation do?	Evidence - what would we like to see in the future?
People and families we Share Manage with have access to accurate, real-time data about their budget, expenses and services		
Our organisation is comfortable with having people, families and/or frontline staff try things that sometimes may not work		
Our organisation has employment targets about the number of people with disability who work for us		
Our organisation has processes for checking in with people using Shared Management to identify and solve issues before they become big problems		

Activity 5.3: How can you integrate your people's knowledge, skills and experience into your services and systems?

In the Table on the next page, identify up to four people you support or know who are organising at least some of their support arrangements in creative or innovative ways. Plan to have a conversation to learn more about what they're doing and how their ideas can become part of your organisation's systems and processes.

List the people there. Who will have the conversation and when will they be approached about it? What sort of questions might you ask them?

People/ skillsets	Who will have the conversation?	When will the conversation happen?	What questions might you ask?	What were the answers?	How can you integrate this into your organisation?
E.g. Kevin - recruiting staff	Me	Before the end of this month	How does he advertise and where? Who assists him? What do they do? What is his role? How does he decide and choose?		Which of Kevin's ideas and approaches can we use or trial as a way of: letting people choose from among our staff? Helping us with our recruitment? Talking to our HR!! Does IR limit our options? How might we be able to change that?

People/ skillsets	Who will have the conversation?	When will the conversation happen?	What questions might you ask?	What were the answers?	How can you integrate this into your organisation?

Use this table with your team or your organisation's leaders to discuss how you can integrate the knowledge, skills and experiences of your people into your services and systems. You might need to do some more investigating and research before it all comes together.

The art and skill of asking good questions

Andrew Denton is a master interviewer because he listens really well, and asks terrific questions. Andrew knows the value of good questions and he works hard behind the scenes to determine what questions will work well with specific people. In some situations he also anticipates what their responses might be, thus enabling him to develop some options for follow up questions that depend a little on what the person says. By listening really well to the person, he stays present to what is happening for them and is better able to trust his intuition when it comes to knowing what to ask next.

While none of us are likely to be as good as Andrew Denton when it comes to interviewing someone, we can recognise that asking good questions is a skill that we all can learn. Without over-complicating things, here are some ideas you can use to assist you.

1. Prepare well beforehand - spend time getting to know about your interviewee: who they are; what they like; what they're interested in; what do they know about the topic you want to interview them about; and why you think it is worth interviewing them.
2. 5WH is a good place to start when drafting questions: Why? What? Who? Where? When? How?
3. Create questions that can uncover motives and assumptions ("why" questions often do this well)
4. "Who else would it be valuable for me to speak to?" can be a good last question in lots of contexts.
5. And don't forget to practice listening better. We can all become better listeners if we work at it.
 - a. What feeling comes through when someone is telling you something? Practice identifying what you think the feeling is and offering it back to the person (e.g. "It sounds like you were really scared when that happened").
 - b. Practice summarising what someone tells you and offering it back to them (e.g. "So what you seem to be saying is that when blah blah happened, the most important thing about that for you was ...").

Activity 5.4: How can you engage the people you support to share their knowledge, skills and experience with other people?

- a. Identify two individuals you support or know who have been innovative in how they organise their support arrangements.

- b. What opportunities already exist or could be created to enable them to share their skills, knowledge and experience with their peers?

- c. If you were to have a conversation with these two people about how they might share their knowledge and experience with others, what could you discuss? When will this happen? Who else inside or outside your organisation could help to create opportunities?

- d. What will you do with the answers you get once you've had conversations with these people/families?

Activity 5.5: What strategic initiatives can your organisation implement to ensure you are constantly improving your ability to work with people and families in the lead?

Identify two or three strategic initiatives your organisation could implement to consistently improve how you work in partnership with people and families in the lead

Consider what you have learned in this module and other modules. Reflect on your answers to this module's activities. Also have a look at your answers to Activity 2.3 in Workbook 2.

What practices need to change in your organisation? What can you do to facilitate these changes happening? Who else needs to be involved? What are your next 3 actions?