The Whole Life Approach to Personalisation

A brief introduction to the Whole Life Approach to Personalisation drawing on examples of work and practice from across the In Control membership, including work with a growing number of children's services, health trusts and with community organisations.

Nic Crosby
Rita Brewis
Andrew Tyson
February 2010
About this Paper

This paper is one in a series from In Control. It is intended to provide local authorities and the wider leadership of partner services; health, economic regeneration and others, with a model, which they can use as an aide for managers and staff in the writing of policies and procedures, in this case of commissioning plans. In this paper we refer several times to 'the local leadership', we define this as the key senior 'leaders/directors/people' with responsibility for taking forward work across the local area. In most cases, and based upon past experience, it is likely that the whole life approach will in reality be driven by one or more champions who if not within local services will have a clear voice across sectors.

This material is open-source and can be borrowed or adapted as desired. We ask that In Control is informed and credited when this happens.

Local circumstances and priorities differ. This means that we are unable here to provide detailed guidance that is applicable universally: instead we provide what we believe to be an appropriate basis for guidance, which we will supplement with suitable local examples as these become available.

This paper draws on a variety of sources and a range of experience, particularly since the development and testing of the seven-step model of Self-Directed Support from 2003. It takes a wider view of personalisation, not simply an agenda linked to adult services, but of 'whole life' and in so doing draws on sources including the work of the DH Putting People First programme and the work led by OPM and the DCSF Commissioning Support Programme; key texts are listed in the appendices.

Finally, this is paper is, by necessity, brief; the subject matter is not. In Control will be publishing a comprehensive library of policy and guidance alongside reports and papers detailing much of what is outlined in this paper. We will be keeping all our members up to date with our work and new publications as and when launched.
A Strategy

A 'whole life approach' to personalisation is one that supports individuals to self-direct all aspects of their lives and over the whole course of their lives within the context of community - acknowledging the full extent to which services should support people to live lives that are connected and purposeful.

Further a whole life strategy entails;

- a cradle to grave approach - supporting children to self direct, even if in this case it might be a mother or father who makes decisions on a child's behalf - and extending self-direction right through to the end of life through application for instance in palliative care.
- ensuring that services work better together - for instance ensuring the intent and impact of children's and adults services are aligned at a policy and operational level.
- seeing the person 'in the whole' - a commitment to building services around the person and their life, meaning that success is not judged in terms of outcomes of a particular service - but seeing impact on 'whole lives'
- equitable allocations of resource where needed, not linked to categories of need or diagnosis
- delimiting the extent to which services see themselves as 'responsible' for people's lives and for outcomes (services 'assist' - are not 'responsible for')
- services that draw on individual and community resources and invest in and strengthen these resources.
- services that promote connectivity between individuals - and not separation/isolation - supporting the creation of stronger communities that will in turn support individuals.

This paper is written for a local 'leadership' audience in the first instance; the authors acknowledge that to fully understand 'whole life', and to fully appreciate the extent to which this will impact on local partnerships of agencies, communities and services a much wider picture will need to be drawn which pulls in the whole local partnership of citizens.

In practice...

For local authorities and their health partners the challenge is to put this in to practice; there is little argument with the aspiration and the ideal however the practicality is a major and transformational challenge. The characteristics of a whole life focused approach could include examples such as these...

For a young child this might mean exploring how mainstream opportunities such as nurseries and children's centres along with individual budgets can offer the individual child and those caring for them the chance to self-direct the support they need. (Halton)

For a teenager who has been in the care of the local authority and struggled in get in and stay in the mainstream education system it can mean being able to find training opportunities that suit, provide a laptop, a smart set of clothes, driving lessons; thus enabling them participate in
The Whole Life Approach

learning and gain the skills they need to enter the job market. (Gloucestershire)

For Children's and Adult Services it will mean taking a new look at transition and the impact of individual budgets, what this means for the way in which they allocate and enable young people and their families to make good support plans which draw on the opportunities available to young adults and support young people to live the life they choose as young adults. (Cambridgeshire)

For local people it means being able to find routes in to their local community, to make best and better use of what is already situated within their home area, to find ways to become 'members' of local friendship, faith, common interest networks. (York)

For families where both parents and children are receiving support the development of 'family' budgets will both be a common sense approach to keeping the family together and also to ensure the efficient use and deployment of support around a child and family situation. (Wigan)

For an older man who has in the past relied on a meals on wheels service it can mean using funding to set up a contract with his local public house and being able to get a hot meal there, meet friends and have more of a social life than previously. (Oldham)

For a child or adult nearing the end of life or with a life limiting condition it means that they and their family can plan ahead and decide how things should happen, with whom present, where and when...most often at home in the company of loved ones. (Hull)

These are real examples drawn from across the In Control membership of work which suggests the potential in a 'whole life approach'. They are by no means exhaustive; routes in to work, the role of public health strategies and health facilities, the broadening of education opportunities, some of which are already in stages of becoming established offer further examples of, if combined under a single vision of a local authorities role, a whole life approach to supporting the local population, investing in their individual and community resources and enabling citizenship.

The challenge then is for the local authority and their partners across ages and sectors to put in place, working in partnership with their local community (co-production) such a system which views citizenship as an entitlement for all, and the necessity of supporting self-direction for all.

Policy Environment & Context

This note draws heavily on In Control's emergent programmes with Children’s Services, with Health services, our Community development work alongside the more the established evidence from work with adult services.

There is a void in the policy environment around whole life. However since the principle of 'whole life' is larger than any individual service - encouraging as it does services to see their joint impact on the 'whole life' of the person - we wouldn't necessary expect to see much at the level of individual government departmental guidance. We look therefore to the local leadership of local authority,
Taking forward 'whole life' assumes that the whole local authority is united in both work and vision; this can only be an agenda which brings together all internal and external partners, whether or not it is being driven by one or more champions. Local Authority wide guidance should take heed of the fact that most people don't compartmentalize their lives in the way that services currently enact their duties.

More recent policy statements i.e. CLG 2008, *Communities in Control: Real People, Real Power* recognize the need of local authorities, health agencies and partners to promote the creation and growth of community. There is also an increasing recognition of the importance of 'connectedness' and the degree to which this provides the context within which individuals can shape meaningful outcomes. 'Whole life' guidance should locate itself in terms of citizenship - a commitment to respecting the dignity and capacity of all individuals at all ages to self-direct and the importance of community.

In Control's history and roots are in driving forward Individual Budgets and Self-Directed Support, however as the scale of uptake and the government's own personalisation agenda across services gathers momentum In Control sees it necessary to view Personal Budgets and Self-directed Support as only one part of a wider approach to change, defining this as 'whole life' as opposed to 'personalisation' is necessary. Personalisation to date is a term associated with Putting People First and more recently with proposed health reforms (although for sometime personalisation in the form of 'personalised learning' has been key the national education strategy). As stated this is not an approach governed by compartments but by a simple understanding of people as whole, and as such the local authority, its partners and in a sense the national government need to adopt a similarly 'whole life' approach to their actions and their offer to their local population.

Reflecting the re-centring of the agenda on whole life, on the local population, investing their individual and community resources and respecting each person's entitlement to living as active and healthy citizens will need a similarly transformation of the relationships between local services, partners, people, and communities. This relationship should be described as one underpinned by 'co-production', where people and local communities sit as equal partners with their service colleagues in planning, decision making and guiding how actions such as investment in individual and community resources are played out. In Control's understanding of 'co-production' is one of equal relationships, where people have a genuine and real choice and in support of this a clear and audible voice which leads action.

**Local Authority Policy and Practice**

This paper offers the basis for a whole life approach to be adopted and taken forward by local leaders from across sectors. The responsibility for leading this will be in part owned by the Local Authority but must reflect the wider partnership of people and services. It is therefore suggested that the local leadership set out a 'whole life' policy, This policy may echo in ways the Putting People First Cross Governmental Concordat where departments and government bodies signed up to support a single approach to 'putting people first'. This policy will;
The Whole Life Approach

- stipulate a commitment for all other policies to frame themselves within a recognition of 'whole life'
- set out a vision - focusing on the aspiration of 'whole life' over which there is little argument - but also on making this practical and 'felt' at operational level.
- set out a vision of roles and responsibilities for individuals, voluntary organisations and other community stakeholders as agents working together to create meaningful outcomes.
- Will be underpinned with an understanding of citizenship that values the importance of community
- recognise responsibility and entitlement to support.
- communicate an understanding of 'wealth' at the individual level - sufficiently permissive to embrace diversity, but clear enough to give all services an idea of what they are working towards - a suggested starting place for this is In Control's Real Wealth model.
- Contain examples (as above) to instantiate its meaning.
- be backed by commitment to action, and judges success in terms of whether it leads to examples of good practice such as those outlined above.
- set out explicitly to be challenging both of individual services - and enjoining services to work better together.
- link to the work of other (external) agencies - i.e. health partners and locates itself within existing partnership frameworks such as JSNA1s and LSP2s

The development of this policy will model the local leadership's commitment to 'co-production', local citizens, community representatives and groups and others will participate in the drafting and finalising of this policy.

A Model Pathway

The core components of a pathway for those citizens requiring additional support to enable them to live as fully active and healthy citizens within their local communities.

1. Clarity of the Local Offer

A Simple and Clear Statement relating to how the Local Authority will support the ‘whole life’ aspirations of its local population. This statement will set out clearly a local authority’s understanding of its role in enhancing the life experiences, choices and opportunities of local people in the context of strong and supportive communities. It will develop a common view of individual wealth - and therefore what individual resources should be taken into account and working to enhance these resources. It will share some principles of how services can enhance individual outcomes and make clear that different parts of the authority - with health and external agencies - should be working together with similar understanding and intent.

2. Commissioning ‘whole life’

---
1 JSNA -
2 LSP – Local Strategic Partnership
Appreciating the 'whole life' of a local population, understanding that there are different ways to support the whole population, the different communities and the diversity of the populace sets out a commissioning agenda. Adult Services, Health Services and Children's Services are being challenged to practice intelligent and clever commissioning underpinned by co-production already, yet setting out a whole life offer is unlikely to mean simply compiling all three strategies in to one. The figure below which draws on the four quadrants of personalisation as explained in Putting People First gives a picture upon which commissioning can be based. Simply put commissioning will take place across the quadrants and at different levels; from the regional/strategic to the individual.

![Figure Whole Life – Referencing the four quadrants of personalisation (DH)](image)

In Control acknowledges the need to ensure efficiency across the agenda; simply expecting the individual budget agenda to meet the needs of the local population who require additional support is both inefficient and likely to further segment and separate different communities (there will never be enough money in the pot). Individual Budgets and Self-directed Support, falling within 'Choice and Control' form but one part of a whole life approach. It will be the roll of commissioners to open up the universal services world to all; to put in place early intervention services / prevention services which are able to react swiftly and in a personalised way to the support needs of those presenting; to ensure that a sufficiently diverse market opens up for those managing Individual Budgets; to invest in the capacity and strength of the local community to accept all and support all local citizens.

Further to this, and awaiting exploration is the impact on commissioning when children’s, health and adult services join forces to explore whole life and how their interaction in terms of commissioning can impact both on their efficiency agenda and upon the offer of support to their local citizens. 'Total Place' pilots, recently initiated will be starting to explore this agenda.
3. In Community

The starting place for thinking in a 'whole life' way is community. Community (in the broadest sense) is the context in which individuals live their lives. There is increasing recognition of the need for services to promote connectedness - as an end in itself but also as a precursor to actualizing citizenship especially for more often excluded groups.

A service focused approach to whole life will not suffice and is unlikely to generate the sorts of efficiencies which will mean the local authority is equipped to meet the growing demands on its resources by the increasing numbers of children and adult eligible for support. Investment in social capital or in a wider sense the capacity of a local community to offer opportunities and support to all its members will be key to delivering a genuine whole life approach.

A suggested starting point for whole life guidance is to acknowledge the context within which people live their lives. What is the nature of community in a local area - urban, rural etc. & taking account of diversity?

Clarify the role of the LA is to strengthen people in their relationships with others, supporting different experiences of community and encouraging a diversity of ways of discharging citizenship within this context. Guidance should set out to support facilitative ways of strengthening capacity within communities.

Guidance may seed an awareness of ‘power’ - the aspiration of the local authority to ‘be of service’ to local people, supporting people who don't have much power to gain more in the context of their life and community.

The Local authority is one agent amongst others and it is suggested that ‘whole life’ policy should recognize this and advocate co-productive approaches. In Control's understanding of co-production recognizes the role of statutory agencies alongside other agents including the third sector and businesses - and including individual citizens - in producing outcomes that are valued by all stakeholders. And the existence of suitable advocacy routes through which citizens can hold statutory agencies to account.

4. Real Wealth

Real wealth provides us with a simple way of understanding what is important at the level of the person - therefore what services should acknowledge when thinking about interventions if their purpose is to enhance real wealth.
Local authorities may find the concept of real wealth helpful when seeking to generate a common understanding - across services - of what adds value to people’s lives, and therefore of how services can find a common ‘whole life’ focus in supporting people to enhance their wealth, i.e. the local authority invests in the wealth of its population.

The key components of real wealth are:

**Connections**
- Our family networks, the people we know and socialise with, our extended networks, the groups and people we know in our community and more widely

**Capacities**
- Our abilities, strengths, skills and those we can draw on from our connections.

**Access**
- Access to knowledge, the physical environment, information, trusted advice and guidance

**Assets**
- Financial, capital, material wealth

**Resilience**
- Our physical and mental health, our emotional well being, our inner strength

Acknowledging the wealth of the individual underlines the relatively minor part which finance (an Individual Budget) will play, ensures that, when we think about living as an active and healthy citizen we make best use of all the resources at our disposal and also acknowledge the poverty some people experience; poverty is not simply a financial issue.

Thinking about how we support people to make best use of the wealth they have to draw on, and at the same time re-investing via the local community, the universal services, learning, work and providing information and help at an early stage actually sets out what lies at the base of a 'whole life' approach; investing in the real wealth of the local population.

### 5. Enabling services

The following steps should underscore way that all individualized services operate - based on enhancing real wealth in a community setting.

The following four elements are based upon our substantial learning from using the Seven Steps of Self-directed Support; these steps are broader so as to capture practice from across a wider sector of
services and resources. They do not replace the Seven Steps but rather offer a wider picture outside the confines of social care. Their focus is on whole life and integration of funding around an individual or family.

Similarly these elements do not incorporate every detail of the processes which will 'be kept' or those which will be consigned to history; they are offered as a basic way of understanding how the 'choice and control' agenda applies across ages, how a new system will need to be built on both the strengths and weakness of the existing system and to explain individual budgets within the context of the wider personalisation agenda.

Figure 1 – A whole system approach to Access, Allocation, Planning and Review

**Initial Contact:** An accessible front door / multiple points of access and referral

A front desk where all members of the local community can find information and guidance about activities, local groups, community support networks, self-help organisations and community participation opportunities.

Although focused on being open to all ages it may be that children and families find they can use a children's centre attached to a local school whilst older people look to their local community centre. The key is to ensure an open front door which promotes mainstream and universal opportunities as a key part of tackling isolation and exclusion. This front door can then offer ways to early intervention/prevention services and via assessment pathways on to choice and control opportunities including individual budgets and/or individual commissioning.

An appreciation of the 'wealth' of an individual at this early stage may help identify solutions and
support existing in community and universal services. There should be no expectation that every child or adult needing support requires an Individual Budget.

Allocation: A simple and transparent outcomes based approach to resource allocation

Preferably co-produced this allocations system will set out how resources are being allocated, what is being allocated (with reference to 'Clarity of Offer') and the outcomes upon which the allocation is based. Where funding from different streams is being allocated at the same time, for example social care and adult learning simple rules will explain both the interaction of the resources and the global outcomes which this resource must be used to achieve. It is likely that these outcomes will be shared and identified in more detail through the assessment process.

Planning: A core offer of support based within the community

Across all ages there will be a need for easily accessible support to develop plans, make best use of what is available locally and draw on expertise when it comes to the local community. This support for many may be short term and simply be about assistance to develop a support plan, for others there may need to be longer term support offered around managing a person's plan, employment and also their money/Individual Budget. Embedding such capacity within the local area as a free core level of support can also play a vital part in the wider safeguarding agenda championed by the local authority and community.

Backed up with Expertise
This offer of support will, bearing in mind the different resources which may be included in an Individual Budget, and also complexities of support and care needs, need to be backed up with access to expertise whether health based, education, support of other. Similarly this expertise may be part short term focused in developing a plan, or longer term where perhaps a professional acts as an 'appointee' managing an Individual Budget on behalf of an individual.

Managing Money
Part of developing a plan will mean clarifying how the 'money component' will be managed. A support system for this will need to be in place to offer people the choice of managing it themselves, asking someone to manage it for them or asking the local authority to manage it on their behalf. This offer will need to be consistent and be underwritten with the same flexibility in use whoever manages the money; it would not be a healthy situation if one person who was willing and able to manage themselves had a greater choice than an individual who lacked capacity to manage the money and had to rely on the local authority had less choice or flexibility in how the money was used; thus discriminating against an individual based on their ability.

Money Management Systems will also be a key device in the management and prevention of financial abuse.

Outcomes
The Support Plan will set out clearly what outcomes will be achieved for the child or adult. How these outcomes are achieved will be individual and based upon the flexible and
personalised use of the resources (both the Individual Budget and wider community opportunities).

**Review: A Simple and Efficient Approach to Review and Monitoring**

A transparent approach to reviewing and an efficient approach to both reviewing and monitoring the use of resources to meet identified outcomes will need to be in place. Alongside which a long term approach to ensuring quality and outcomes achieved by local people will need to be in place, i.e. the system must work and if not the fault easily identified.

Together these elements encapsulate a process which works for any age, in any situation and for the naturally diverse array of support needs within a population. Most needs of the population will be met within the universal/mainstream offer, some may need short term support, low level intervention or conversely speedy and responsive support at a time of crisis whilst others with their own or family members with long term support needs will need access to both an individual resource and the support they need to plan and manage their desired support package.

**6. Safeguarding – A community wide responsibility**

Keeping safe is not the sole responsibility of the local authority nor simply it and its partners. It is about the community taking upon itself the responsibility for safeguarding its members. In a practical sense it is the responsibility of the local authority, the police, the health services and their statutory and non-statutory partners to have clear lines of communication and agreed approaches for dealing with instances where child or adult protection intervention is needed. However this is only one part of the community wide approach to safeguarding where citizens and community see it as their responsibility to support those more vulnerable children and adults.

Through the work of In Control with a number of local authorities on the Total Transformation programme, and the wider work of Putting People First the emerging models of community and voluntary organisations taking up a role of supporting people with Individual Budgets, developing user-led organisations and the wider commissioning agenda there is a growing potential to embed a sense of responsibility for safeguarding within the local community.

**The Funding Challenge**

Whether it be meeting the needs of a child at risk of exclusion from school, to support an adult hold down a job or enabling an older person to move home from hospital there will not only be a challenge to professionals to work closely together but to see the 'flexing up' of resources, the integrating around an individual of these resources as an Individual Budget and the use of this budget to address a range of needs. This is not about the joining together of funding centrally, although this may be a possibility, it is about the integrating of funding from different sources to meet a range of different support needs around an individual.
The Whole Life Approach

Figure – Financial Assets

This integrated budget then becomes part of the financial assets and then part of the 'wealth' a family, in this instance' have to draw on to self-direct the support, opportunities, learning and activities their son or daughter participate and benefit from.

This 'funding challenge' is one key part of adopting a 'whole life' approach to supporting a diverse and varied local population. This paper aims to put actions into scale, to explain Individual Budgets and Self-directed Support as key parts of 'whole life' however they exist alongside many other actions, decisions and changes the local authority and their partner will need to make and develop in taking up the 'whole life approach'.

Summary

This paper sets out the key components of a whole life approach being driven forward by a local authority. It supports this, with the acknowledgment of the challenges and the, fact that it is not solely an agenda focused on self-directed support, although it is about supporting its citizens to self-direct their lives.

Within current practice, as set out 'In practice', and in emerging new systems, many of the key elements of a whole life approach actually exist, so a first challenge to local authorities is to begin to learn what is happening with their own area and to understand how much of this provides the structure upon which a genuine and united whole life 'offer' can be made to its population.

In Control and their partners will continue supporting it's membership to take forward this ambitious and transformational programme.