

Emerging Practices for Support Plan Development

JANUARY 2016 - NOVEMBER 2020

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Sedgwick County Developmental Disability Organization (SCDDO) quality assurance activities brought forward trends throughout the network regarding deficiencies with the support plan. This highlighted a perceived need to explore opportunities for improvement. ***What is the support plan?*** It is a working document which describes an individual's preferred lifestyle (day, home, community), as well as preferred activities and the services and supports needed to assist them in reaching their preferred lifestyle, desired outcomes and goals of greater independence.

BACKGROUND

Research began January 2016 with a network survey which included day and residential service providers to learn about the use of the support plan and potential challenges which they were experiencing. There were 49 out of 62 individual responses received, resulting in a 79% response rate. In addition, 13 interviews were completed with individuals and 9 interviews completed with parents/guardians to better understand their experiences with the planning process. These interviews were conducted between December 2016 and April 2017. Following the survey and interviews a network meeting was held in May 2017 to explore the data gathered and offer potential solutions.

A workgroup was established in June 2017 to examine the support plan process which was comprised of multiple stakeholders throughout the network to include a parent/guardian, a community member, two day program supervisors, Direct Support Professionals (DSP), two Targeted Case Management (TCM) Directors, and one SCDDO staff member. There were 9 consistent members through the process; with additional stakeholders joining throughout the project. The focus remained consistent throughout the project; to ensure that every individual receives the highest quality services which can be achieved through collaboration with all team members in development of a thorough support plan.

CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED

1. Multiple TCM support plan templates used throughout the network could be seen as confusing by the DSP who are tasked with reading and interpreting information within the plan.
2. The support planning process seemed inconsistent between the 11 TCM agencies as well as between those TCM's employed within the agencies.
3. The DSP working with the individual may not be involved in the support planning process due to personnel constraints.
4. Distribution of the final support plan to team members and providers did not appear to be timely.

EXPERIMENT

The workgroup created an experiment which intentionally included all support team members, the individual, guardian (when applicable), as well as their family for the development and implementation of the individual's plan. The experiment has been identified as a set of emerging practices for support plan development; which includes a tracking worksheet and a set of questionnaires in the development of the plan. **Emerging practices can be defined as professional procedures that are accepted or prescribed as being correct or most effective.**

The **Tracking Worksheet** is a tool for TCM's to document the planning process. The worksheet contains a set of time lines that should be considered when developing the support plans. These timeframes will allow for sufficient time to gather the necessary information and data when preparing for the support plan meeting.

Questionnaires were developed to capture perspectives of those involved in the person's life and services. The **ME Sheet** is a guide for TCM's to have a conversation with the individual and ask specific questions related to their goals and preferred lifestyle. The **Parent/Guardian Questionnaire** is a set of questions to examine current information and any concerns they may have about the supports being provided. The **DSP Questionnaire** allows the staff member providing supports to have the opportunity to provide input in the planning process. The set of questions are directly related to current supports provided and offers staff a way to ask for information and identify areas of clarification within the individual's plan.

The TCM, who is typically the designated plan coordinator, arranges the support plan meeting based on the timeframes identified within the **Tracking Worksheet** and utilizes the questionnaires to gain information for the creation or revision of the support plan.

EXPERIMENT- SCENERIO

What does it look like?

During the pre-planning process the TCM would speak with the individual and use the **ME Sheet** to gain information in order to update the support plan. The TCM would engage with the individual's parent and/or guardian to discuss the meeting date/time and to review the **Parent/Guardian Questionnaire**. The questionnaire may also be mailed out to obtain written responses as the TCM prepares for the support plan meeting.

In addition to those conversations, the TCM would send out the **DSP Questionnaire** to the service provider, who in turn is asked to distribute to all DSP's who provide supports to the individual. If there are multiple DSP's involved in the care of an individual the service provider may determine if multiple questionnaires are completed or a single questionnaire.

Once conversations and questionnaires are returned, the TCM will work on preparing a DRAFT plan, to include identifying all areas which need to be discussed at the scheduled support plan meeting. After the meeting, the TCM will complete all the plan revisions, obtain required signatures and distribute the support plan based on the timeframes developed within the **Tracking Worksheet**.

PILOT PROJECT

A pilot project was initiated to experiment with the process as developed. There were two TCM agencies who implemented the use of the tools sporadically and provided feedback based on their experiences. In addition, one day services provider implemented the **DSP Questionnaire** as part of their planning process and provided feedback based on their experiences with the tool.

A second pilot project was implemented February 1st through July 31st, 2020. The participants in the pilot included three day service providers, three TCM agencies, and two residential service providers. Outcome measures consisted of tracking specific aspects of the planning process. Please note that the pilot was affected by the Coronavirus pandemic as services were closed and communities implemented public health orders. TCM's agencies provided data for the number of participants invited to the meeting, and the number of **Me Sheets**, **Parent/Guardian Questionnaires** and **DSP Questionnaires** completed; plus documented the timeframe from plan completion to distribution.

PILOT PROJECT CONT.

The day and residential service providers who participated in the pilot provided data for the number of **DSP Questionnaires** submitted to TCM's and how long it took for a completed plan to be returned to the agency.

The data from the pilot project indicated that a sufficient number of support team members were invited to participate in plan development. During the pilot, there were 259 support plans completed by the TCM agencies participating. Of those plans, there was an average of 64% **Me Sheets** completed, 34% **Parent/Guardian Questionnaires** completed, and 85% **DSP Questionnaires** completed. It should be noted that one individual may not have had any questionnaires completed, while another individual had multiple completed. TCM's reported an average of 12 days between the plan completion and distribution to the service providers.

The day and residential service provider data resulted in 37 **DSP Questionnaires** completed during the pilot. On average, they received the questionnaire from the TCM within 11 days of the support plan meeting. It was reported that the questionnaires were returned to the TCM within an average of two days. Providers reported an average of 11 days to receive the completed plan from the TCM. The slight variance between data for TCM and service providers related to plan distribution can be seen as displaying reliability in the data provided.

CONCLUSION

The Emerging Practices for Support Plan Development is intended to promote collaboration and enhance the planning process for each support plan developed. The anticipated benefits of the emerging practices identified are threefold; (1) all support team members are valued as a part of the process, (2) TCM is provided comprehensive information for the plan, and (3) the individual and staff implementing the plan feel supported. The set of emerging practices is anticipated to be a helpful guide in the plan development process; this is not meant to be a mandate. Once implemented, this process will be promoted within the Sedgwick County affiliate network through Relias on-line training and SCDDO website.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

There have been many changes to the support plan development process since this workgroup started meeting; including the implementation of a standardized template and use of virtual meetings due to the pandemic. Based on the perceived benefits and the pilot project outcomes, the workgroup would recommend that the Emerging Practices of Support Plan Development be available for use by all service providers. Ideally, the TCM agencies would utilize the process in full. If TCM agencies choose to not utilize these emerging practices the service provider would have access to tools as part of their planning process. It is further recommended that SCDDO Quality Assurance team consider this process for implementation when agencies demonstrate deficiencies related to support plans.

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Workgroup Members: Arlett Chrisman, Catholic Charities Adult Day Services; Kristen Wares, The Looking Glass; Rachel Ryan, Arrowhead West, Inc.; Jessica Christian, SCDDO; Mary Hovey, community volunteer; Susan Krogmann, community volunteer and Kathy James, Life Works, (formerly Dream Catchers Case Management).

First Pilot Project: Catholic Charities Adult Day Services; The Looking Glass; Arrowhead West, Inc. TCM Services; Dream Catchers Case Management (now Life Works).

Second Pilot Project: Catholic Charities Adult Day Services; The Looking Glass Arrowhead West Residential, Day, and TCM services; The Arc of Sedgwick County TCM services; Starkey, Inc. Residential, Day, and TCM services.



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