

Quality Management Framework

Quality Evaluation

My Place WA Pty Ltd
Whole of Organisation
Subiaco

Final Report
26 August 2011

This report was prepared by an Independent Evaluation team comprising members of the Panel Contract of Independent Evaluators. The Panel Contract is managed by the Disability Services Commission.

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1. The evaluation visit

This report describes the findings of the Independent Evaluation team who visited My Place WA Pty Ltd on 18 July 2011 and completed an assessment of the service point's progress towards meeting Outcomes under the Quality Management Framework (QMF) and compliance with the Disability Services Standards. The preliminary meeting was held on 9 June 2011 and the Independent Evaluators visited the organisation on 30 June, 15, 18 and 19 July 2011. A post evaluation meeting was held on 25 August 2011.

Independent Evaluation team members operate under the Guidelines for Independent Evaluation. The team comprised:

- Noreen Fynn
- Kellie Rakich

The organisation uses the term consumers to refer to people with disability, family member/s of people with disability, or unpaid carers of people with disability. The organisation uses the term personal assistant to refer to support workers.

NB Under the Carer's Recognition Act 2004, a carer refers to a person who provides care or assistance to another person who is frail, has a disability, a chronic illness or a mental illness, without payment apart from a pension, benefit or allowance.

2. Acknowledgements

The Independent Evaluators would like to extend thanks to individuals, families and carers and staff for the assistance they provided throughout the evaluation visit. The Independent Evaluators acknowledge the commitment of the staff in providing services. This was evident from the evaluators' observations and discussions with individuals, families and carers; observations of staff interactions and discussions with staff; and from the positive comments about staff, evaluators received from individuals, families and carers. Findings documented in this report have been selected to support the outcomes of this evaluation and highlight background evidence for good practices, required actions and key priorities for service improvement.

3. Service point profile

The profile provides a brief overview of the service point evaluated.

Disability sector organisation:	My Place WA Pty Ltd
Service point name:	Whole of Organisation
Outlet name(s):	Accommodation Support Service Alternatives to Employment/Post School Options (ATE/PSO) Community Living Support Corbett/Rowe Shared Care Intensive Family Support Family Living Support
Chief Executive Officer:	Darren Ginnelly (Managing Director)

Brief description of the service point (including mission/vision statements and brief history)

My Place is a highly individualised service that works in partnership with individuals and families so that they can live the life they choose with service options that are personalised, flexible and that seek to maximise community inclusion and natural networks. Each individual receiving services from My Place is considered a service point in their own right with an individual budget.

My Place was established in 1996, as a private company, in response to the need for more flexible, individualised and consumer-controlled services. This commitment is reflected in the organisation's Vision "Enriching Lives", its Mission "My Place enables people with a disability and their families to choose and enjoy a lifestyle that reflects their individual preferences and needs", its by-line "My Life, My Choice" and its values.

My Place Foundation is a not-for-profit incorporated association established by My Place Pty Ltd as a provider of direct care services. It has a Board of six members including a Consumer representative and a Community Representative who is the Chair. Any unspent funds are used to support other people with disability receiving services from My Place who are in need of additional support. This is determined in line with the guidelines for consumer contingency funding.

Individuals and families have the choice of three models of service provision:

- Shared Management
- Shared Coordination
- Provider Management

The website at www.myplace.org.au has clear and comprehensive information about each of the options, including the costs involved.

Services are provided in the metro area and in two regional centres, the Bunbury/Busselton region and the Lower Great Southern region.

Until recently service coordinators were allocated consumers with a mix of models and service options. An operational goal for 2011, aimed at better services for consumers and

better support for service coordinators, has been the implementation of Service Coordinator Customisation with each service coordinator specialising in one of:

- a) Home sharer - where a person with disability lives in the home of another person or family
- b) Co-resident - where a person with disability has their own home and engages someone to live with them
- c) Mentor – where a person with disability is quite independent but needs some support and guidance, or
- d) Community and Home – where a person with disability requires regular routine support.

Each service coordinator has responsibility for between nine and 15 individuals depending on the model. In the South West region the service coordinator will still have a mix of service models and options. The restructure has meant a change of service coordinator for about 48 individuals and families with early feedback indicating that the positive outcomes are outweighing the undoubted short term impacts on individuals, families and staff.

Resources (eg building/s, staffing, IT systems, vehicle/s, budget)

My Place employs 200 people directly as personal assistants (support workers) and mentors; individuals and families who are Shared Management employers employ approximately 180 people and 33 consumers are supported in a Home Sharer arrangement.

Managing and coordinating these services are the Managing Director, a Manager Corporate Services, two Managers of Direct Care Services, one Manager of Consumer Support, 14 Service Coordinators and four Administration Support Staff. My Place management and administration are based in Subiaco while service coordinators work from their own homes.

The budget for 2010-2011 is \$13 682 110 of which \$11 863 820 is for direct care services.

The IT capacity is being strengthened and control centralised with the employment of an IT specialist, a focus on streamlining electronic documentation processes, centralised records for all individuals and improved IT support for service coordinators.

Brief description of people using services

My Place provides services to 206 consumers, male and female, ranging from 12 to 73 years of age. The majority have intellectual disability while others have cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, autism spectrum disorder, acquired brain injury and muscular dystrophy.

Consultations

During the evaluation assignment, the Independent Evaluators consulted with 12 individuals with a disability, 21 families, five direct care staff, two mentors, six Service Coordinators, three Managers and the Managing Director plus two external stakeholders. Six individuals, one family and six staff attended the preliminary meeting and one individual with a disability, two families and three staff attended the post-presentation meeting.

4. Executive summary

A. Good practices

This section reports the Independent Evaluators' findings of the service point's strengths in relation to addressing Outcomes.

The Independent Evaluators were particularly impressed by:

- The life which individuals have, as a result of the highly individualised My Place supports, the level of engagement with individuals and families, the genuine commitment to individual choice and decision making and the starting point of community inclusion.
- The choices that individuals and families have in service models, depending on the level of responsibility they wish to assume, and the ability to transition between these options of Shared Management, Shared Coordination and Provider Management.
- The feedback from individuals and families about the flexibility in service delivery relative to personal choice, changing circumstances and timing of services.
- The way My Place support individuals to participate in activities of choice in the community, including evening and weekend activities, and to use and further develop their skills.
- The way in which My Place, and particularly the mentors, do not tell consumers they cannot do something but instead explore options in helping the individual to understand steps that need to be taken to reach goals, to recognise the consequences of actions and if need be to modify their goals.
- The satisfaction expressed by individuals interviewed with personal assistants who are respectful of being in their homes, and who provide not only personal care but also assistance with domestic chores and who have the positive attitude of not doing everything for the individual - of allowing them the choice, the time and space to accomplish the task at hand. The result is a greatly enhanced lifestyle at home.
- The satisfaction expressed by a number of families who spoke of personal assistants assisting with other household matters like cooking bulk meals, cleaning and home duties. The families in all instances are grateful for the extra support they receive around the home and the benefit to the family unit.
- The targeted recruitment of staff to fit with My Place values and with the individuals and families they support. A service coordinator spoke of looking for staff who do not just want to work with people with disability but who identify that they enjoy working with people with disability. The result was evidence of close rapport between individuals and their support staff and mentors as well as strong relationships with service coordinators.
- The two-day orientation training for all staff. This is highly values based and the results can be seen in the services provided as well as in the interactions between individuals, staff and families.
- The model for Shared Management with the comprehensive resource file and templates, the support for employment processes and employee entitlements and the additional problem solving advice and support provided.
- The new version of My Plan including the Action Plan which is a living outcomes based document linked to the Quality Management Framework outcomes for each program.
- The continuous improvement through a strong culture of seeking feedback, of questioning and challenging service provision and of an annual operational plan which acts on these reviews.

B. Required Actions

Disability sector organisations are required to meet all contractual obligations of their Service Agreement with the Commission. Required Actions focus on the minimum satisfactory level of service and must be implemented by the specified date.

The rating scale used to assess the Disability Services Standards is met / not met.

Based on observations and corroborative evidence examined as part of this assessment, it is assessed that the service point meets Disability Services Standards 1-7 and 9.

The service point does not meet Disability Services Standard 8. It will be met upon the implementation of the Required Action specified in this report.

Required Action 1

Standard 8 – Service Management

- To develop simple information about fire, evacuation and safety for individuals living independently to be available in their homes.

Evidence that this Required Action has been implemented is to be provided to the Disability Services Commission's Quality Unit by 31 October 2011.

C. Key Priorities for Service Improvement

Key Priorities for Service Improvement identify actions to enhance practices in addressing Outcomes for people with disability and meeting Disability Services Standards.

They need to be carefully considered by service management as part of contractual obligations and normal organisational planning processes and implemented. They are required to be reported upon in the next Self Assessment as evidence of continuous service improvement.

The Independent Evaluators identified the following Key Priorities for Service Improvement:

Key Priority for Service Improvement 1

Program and Outcome – Accommodation Support Services, Alternatives to Employment Services and Family Support Services – all outcome areas

- To enhance the organisation's commitment to transparency by having individual budgets as a standard item for discussion at meetings between service coordinators, individuals and families with copies available to be left on request.

Key Priority for Service Improvement 2

Program and Outcome Accommodation Support Services, Alternatives to Employment Services and Family Support Services – all outcome areas

- To extend the system of independent contact by managers with individuals and families living independently to facilitate improved communication and increased avenues for feedback.

Key Priority for Service Improvement 3

Program and Outcome Accommodation Support Services, Alternatives to Employment Services and Family Support Services – all outcome areas

- To develop a documented individual risk management process to assist and support staff in decision making about individual choice where there are also major duty of care considerations

D. Issues arising

This section reports the Independent Evaluators' summary of other issues arising from the evaluation of the service point.
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- A strength of My Place is the employment of service coordinators who are highly autonomous, who work from home, who engage with individual and families to identify exactly what supports they would like and who then recruit specifically to these requirements. The outcomes speak for themselves. It is a model which builds relationships, trust and community inclusion. There are, however, a number of issues it gives rise to and which are addressed in the Required Actions and Key Priorities for Service Improvements above. In making these recommendations, the evaluators are aware that My Place are already cognisant of some of these issues as evidenced in the Organisation Plan for 2011.
 - A few individuals spoke of a lack of respect in the way they were spoken to by their service coordinator and in the way they were treated. There is little opportunity for managers to directly get this sort of feedback from individuals unless the individual asks to speak to a manager or lodges an official complaint, which some were reluctant to do. Given that people living independently can be particularly vulnerable, a system of independent contact by managers has been recommended.
 - The security of client information held in service coordinators' homes is variable. Not all have lockable systems and all have their own backup systems. The organisation is currently addressing these and other IT matters.
- The safety of individuals living on their own in relation to fire and evacuation. While it is commendable that My Place prioritise independence and choice, it was clear to evaluators that some individuals did not recall discussions which had taken place and which had been documented in relation to fire and emergency situations.
- My Plan and Individual Budget reports provided on request. While a number of individuals and families indicated they did not see the need for written documentation and did not want copies, others indicated they had asked their service coordinators time and time again and had not been given up to date copies, or the financial reports or level of information requested.
- The Resource file for the Shared Management model does not currently contain information about the Quality Management Framework and Outcomes. It would be improved with the addition of this information.

5. Meeting Outcomes

This section reports the Independent Evaluators' findings of the service point's achievements in relation to addressing Outcomes.

Meeting Outcomes - Accommodation Support

For all outcomes, individuals, families and staff gave overwhelming feedback about a life based on the individual's choices and interests. My Place services are described as being strengths based and empowering while those from other organisations are sometimes considered to be disenfranchising.

Wellbeing

Outcome: Maintenance and/or improvement of the social, mental, physical, emotional, spiritual, sexual and cultural aspects of the individual.

Evidence noted (eg observations, feedback and documentation):

- Individuals and families all spoke of My Place asking what you want and how can we help you achieve it, rather than being prescriptive about the services they could offer. The tailoring of supports to their choices gives greater control and independence. This was highly praised and the result was clear evidence of the benefits in terms of the individual's wellbeing together with numerous examples of how supports contribute positively.
- An individual who had previously tried a number of unsuccessful living options now has her own place and spoke of being much happier, of having new friends and of a life that was going in positive directions.
- Others had health goals that were being supported. Individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for their own health, with information and support around matters such as nutrition and food choices, and to handle their own medications. My Place only administer medications in exceptional cases. The preferred position is for the individual to be trained and assessed as competent by Silver Chain.
- A parent spoke of My Place treating her son with respect, talking with him first and then with her. "It's all about him, he has fun with people his own age, they let him make the decisions but inform, consult and do a lot behind the scenes. They help with working through consequences in making choices".
- Wellbeing is enhanced through the close match between individual's needs and choices and the nature of the supports provided. The success in matching individuals and the support staff leads to more consistency, stronger relationships and trust.
- Personal assistants interviewed described being satisfied with this arrangement and enjoying their roles. A written Action Plan and My Plan information is available to personal assistants as a further point of reference regarding individual's support needs.
- For a small number there were some issues. One family felt that the choices being exercised were detrimental to the individual's health and wellbeing while another had questions about the responsibility for overseeing health status when the parents were unable to do so.

Summary of evidence:

- The strong consensus was that wellbeing is maintained and enhanced with supports that are respectful of individual independence and choice together with satisfaction with services that are according to individual need, flexible, responsive, and reliable.

Relationships and Social Connection

Outcome: Relationships are diverse and contribute to the individual's life and social connections.

Evidence noted (eg observations, feedback and documentation):

- A life in the community and a range of social connections were described by a significant number of individuals and families, with opportunities to establish new friendships being encouraged through the focus on inclusion in everyday community activities.
- One family in Shared Management described how being able to select their own supports and staff has given her daughter a life and she has a person who is right for her. The individual goes to concerts, out for meals, shopping, and has joined a scrabble club in the local community. Another described how her son lacked friends his own age and is now being supported by a number of different mentors to go to TAFE, to visit cultural facilities, to go to the gym, to visit family and to work towards his own business in the future.
- An individual living independently has chosen to have a personal trainer while another who loves dancing and is artistic has chosen, from a range of options, to attend a local boot scooting group and will be supported to attend a pottery group. Dancing, bowling, drives, music and swimming in summer were the activities of choice for others.
- For some individuals it is the support in areas of personal care in particular which is crucial to enable them to get on with their lives, including having contact with people important to them. One individual spoke of the "huge relief" and "importance for my dignity" of having staff attend to her personal care needs such that friends do not have to be relied on in this regard.
- Two individuals spoke of previously having difficulties with interactions with neighbours, families and in many activities in the community. With the support of mentors both were now participating more fully in a range of activities and spoke of improved relationships.
- A service coordinator spoke of how they facilitate community inclusion describing how they are clever about what they choose and how they lay the groundwork – the disability was irrelevant, it is about what support is needed for the individual to participate.
- Documentation viewed showed that plans and actions were based on the expression of individual needs, wishes and goals.
- The importance placed by the service on strengthening natural networks is also shown by the goal in the Operational Plan 2011 to "better identify and utilise natural networks" with a range of strategies including to "foster at least one additional unpaid person in each consumer's life".
- An issue identified by one individual was that of difficulties in having a relationship with a person living in supported accommodation with another disability sector organisation. The issue was not with My Place but with the restrictive practices of the other organisation such that they found it hard to set up outings, had been let down a couple of times and were not able to go out after dark even with the offer of My Place support for transport.

Summary of evidence:

- The nature of the support services provided facilitates a community and social life for individuals with activities chosen to suit their interests and with an emphasis on utilising and strengthening natural networks.

Lifestyle

Outcome: Participation in a lifestyle of the individual's choice.

Evidence noted (eg observations, feedback and documentation):

- There was strong evidence of lifestyle planning and informed choices for all individuals and families interviewed together with the provision of highly personalised supports. The early planning in collecting information about the individual, in determining what their interests are and what supports are needed drives the My Plan, the Action Plan and the recruitment of personal assistants. This clearly resulted in the building of relationships, trust and positive outcomes. Feedback about My Place was overwhelmingly favourable.
- Evaluators interviewed individuals and families with a range of accommodation options, from independent living with personal assistance or mentor support, to home sharer, sharing, and co-resident models. Some were receiving Provider managed services; others had chosen Shared Management or Shared Coordination.
- In one example interviewed and the documentation sighted, three mentors have been retained with specific skills to match an individual's goals – one for fun activities with people his own age, one for budgeting, cooking and other independent living skills and another with experience in setting up an online business. The family described the difference in the individual's life and in their own as being huge.
- In three cases individuals were being supported with transition to independent living with interim supports giving time to identify the right option of choice and timing for the individual and family.
- Overall individuals and families had high praise for all levels of staff and expressed confidence they could speak with personal assistants, mentors, service coordinators or managers knowing My Place were always open to discussion. Nothing was seen as too much trouble. A number singled out as praiseworthy the fact that the Managing Director personally meets with them at the beginning.
- Families also spoke highly of being able to have a say in recruitment and that compatibility is checked before employment is confirmed, of having consistent staff and being able to build relationships. Some contrasted this with group homes where changes of shift see constant change even where there is staff stability.
- Staff too spoke of their enjoyment in their work, of changing people's lives in the way that the individuals want and of being confident individuals and families get what they want.
- A small number of individuals though, described a lack of respect in the way they were spoken to by their service coordinator and of difficulties in making contact. A number of families also spoke of a lack of communication and of a lack of ability to question the organisation since there is no public Annual Report or Annual General Meeting.
- The biggest issue raised regarding staffing was changes in service coordinator and that each time this happens it feels like starting from scratch. One individual had had four service coordinators in four years and one family identified a similar number.
- A number of individuals and families also did not have copies of their current plans but would have liked to, and in one case the plan on file was very out of date. On the other

hand, not all members choose to have a My Plan, stating that “I don’t need a piece of paper to tell me what I like, dislike and what my goals in life are.”

- A further issue raised was that of financial accountability. My Place is committed to transparency and to providing reports on individual budgets on request. However a number of individuals and families spoke of their difficulty in either getting copies of the reports or in getting the detailed information requested. One individual spoke of having asked but not being told exactly what they get for their funding and three families expressed frustration in relation to not getting reports in a timely manner or with the details sought.

Summary of evidence:

- There was strong evidence that individuals received supports based on their lifestyle of choice with highly personalised services from staff recruited to match their lifestyle and interests.

Home

Outcome: The place where a person lives is safe, secure and comfortable, and where they can be themselves.

Evidence noted (eg observations, feedback and documentation):

- All individuals clearly identified their house as their home and many spoke of their pleasure and pride in their homes. Feedback and observations identified that individuals are surrounded with their belongings.
- Two individuals with disability, sharing and living independently, described how a My Place mentor supports them including such matters as staying friendly with neighbours and learning to keep noise down.
- A number of individuals spoke of how they have been able to tailor their supports to increase independence. One used to have live in support and now lives independently with support nearby. Two others described how their mentors check in with them and are there when they need them but that they no longer have the set days and hours.
- For those individuals receiving personal assistance, they all expressed satisfaction that personal assistants are respectful of being in their homes and that their lifestyle at home is greatly enhanced by not only the personal care provided but also the assistance with domestic chores that personal assistants are happy to provide. This domestic assistance is a relief to some individuals who value the appearance of their home for its own sake, and in terms of having visitors to their homes.
- A service coordinator described how safety and security had been assessed in a unit for a person moving to independent living and how additional features had been requested.
- The evaluators spoke with a number of individuals living independently about fire and safety. Some were quite clear and confident in describing good neighbourhood relations and an awareness of actions to take. A few others were less clear and had not retained the information from discussions as noted in their files.

Summary of evidence:

- Individuals expressed satisfaction with and pride in their homes and valued the supports that enable them to live in their own homes.

Meeting Outcomes - Alternatives to Employment

For all outcomes there was clear goal planning, identification of individual interests and choices and a matching of supports. For individuals under Shared Management, goal planning and documentation was not deemed to be important and this was particularly so for those who direct their own care and supports.

Social participation

Outcome: The individual participates and engages in activities in natural settings that are enjoyable and reflect their needs, interests and culture.

Evidence noted (eg observations, feedback and documentation):

- All individuals interviewed and files reviewed showed evidence of engagement in activities of choice according to their identified interests. Documentation shows clear goal planning with strategies to meet goals. In most cases all outcome areas are clearly being worked towards.
- My Place put a lot of groundwork into ensuring options in the community. There is no centre based service and all activities take place in the community. Individuals are picked up or use public transport to and from home.
- Individuals, families and personal assistants have regular contact with service coordinators and personal assistants are supported in their role to achieve community inclusion for individuals.
- An example is an individual who is slowly working towards having the confidence to participate in his local community with just his personal assistant and without the reliance on his parents being present. For a person with disability living in an aged care facility, his quality of life is immeasurably enhanced through support to participate in activities of choice, including fishing, bowling and going to the movies. Another individual, who was very isolated, now participates in activities with support and also independently.
- All individuals spoke of their funding being used to specifically enable the maintenance of their social and community lives.
- Personal assistants conveyed a willingness and enjoyment in supporting individuals in these and other areas of their social lives. While they take their lead from individuals and families, they also described suggesting ideas to enhance their consumer's social participation.

Summary of evidence:

- Individuals were engaging in activities of choice in natural settings which were considerably enhancing their quality of life.

Personal Independence

Outcome: The individual makes decisions and undertakes the activities of everyday life using natural supports.

Evidence noted (eg observations, feedback and documentation):

- From interviews and from documentation viewed it was clear that My Place strongly support individuals to exercise choice and to make their own decisions about the activities

they wish to take part in. Individuals are supported to the degree necessary to access their chosen activity in the community. This may include personal care or assistance with mobility. Individuals are also encouraged to use, to maintain and to develop their skills and knowledge.

- Support staff have the positive attitude of “not doing everything for the individual, of allowing them the choice, the time and space to accomplish the task at hand.”
- One individual spoke of how the mentor phones, consults, goes with her if there are any appointments and will come round and go out with her when she asks for it.
- Another who is aiming for employment is being supported and encouraged to identify what she would like to do and in the meantime to increase her independent living skills and social networks.
- Individuals spoke highly of the support staff and of how there is consistent enthusiasm in supporting them in the community and in the desire to achieve true community inclusion.
- A high degree of satisfaction was expressed by individuals and families who described flexibility in service delivery relative to personal choice, changing circumstances and timing, including support to attend evening and weekend events.

Summary of evidence:

- Personal independence is maximised through the individualised options, the processes to aid making choices and supports that focus on community inclusion. The supports were seen to be flexible according to client need and also to let the individual take the lead in deciding what was wanted.

Life Long Learning

Outcome: The individual acquires and develops skills, competencies and knowledge to support their independence, personal interests and inclusion in their community.

Evidence noted (eg observations, feedback and documentation):

- In all interviews there was evidence of the acquisition and development of skills and knowledge to support independence, personal interests and inclusion. Some individuals did not identify goals in this area, but were more concerned with simply getting on with life, for which the support provided is very important and of a high quality.
- Support staff reported that skills such as using transport, cooking, social skills and money handling are being fostered and learned by individuals in their homes and each time they go out in the community with My Place personal assistants.
- Some have formal goals such as taking part in extra learning, going to TAFE, to community centre courses or by involving themselves in an area of interest and learning from their peers.
- One individual interviewed had been with his mentor on a six week course to learn how to better manage his diabetes and what nutrition and food choices to make.

Summary of evidence:

- Individuals are supported in their choices and are encouraged to seek new learning opportunities as well as learning opportunities in everyday life situations.

Enhanced Natural Support Networks

Outcome: The individual establishes and enhances networks and relationships beyond their family and those developed with paid support workers.

Evidence noted (eg observations, feedback and documentation):

- The nature of My Place ethos and all options for models of support ensures that individuals have options for community activities and for establishing and strengthening networks and broader relationships.
- All individuals have choice in the activities they take part in, with many choosing to either attend a regular community group or to receive assistance to catch up with friends.
- Individuals told evaluators about their experiences in a range of community activities and how they have developed new friendships as a result of their involvement.
- Many described other friendships such as people who took them to church and how they also accessed the community independently. An individual with no family spoke of how good it was that if personal assistants change, My Place would bring the new person to the home and introduce them to other staff as well as checking compatibility.

Summary of evidence:

- The strong focus on community inclusion and utilising natural supports as opposed to centre based or disability specific services means all individuals appeared to have relationships with people other than paid support and all spent time using natural networks in community activities.

Meeting Outcomes - Family Support Services

For all outcome areas, individuals and families interviewed spoke of their satisfaction with My Place, with the options, the choice and the ability to choose one's own options while knowing that there was back up support. All spoke of the strong rapport they have established with their support staff, describing them as being like part of the family.

Positive relationships

Outcome: Individuals, families and carers have healthy, strong relationships and social connections within their families and broader communities.

Evidence noted (eg observations, feedback and documentation):

- Supports clearly fostered relationships with positive results for all within the family. For individuals it was identified that the majority are better able to maintain their range of relationships through having access to the service. One individual spoke of being able to attend an art group while their family carer had "me" time or ran some errands.
- All families commented on being able to spend more time with other family members while the person with disability had support services. Many spoke of being able to maintain their roles as mother/father; husband/wife; son/daughter rather than the role of "carer" due to the supports from My Place.
- Individuals and families spoke of the relationships they had built up with their personal assistants, of trust and of never feeling judged. My Place is seen to be very sensitive and responsive to individuals and to families.

- A parent from a family which had broken down described a “remarkable turnaround” in relationships such that even the school has noticed the difference. Their service coordinator was singled out for being available and always helpful to all members of the family.
- Families in Shared Management all spoke highly of the advantages in being able to employ their own supports and of how this had allowed them to employ personal assistants of their choice at times to suit them. One family spoke of how it had allowed them all to have a life and they would have fallen apart otherwise. For another it has given much needed support for individual and family at times of their choosing and the personal assistants had also developed a positive behaviour reward system which was working well.
- Many families and individuals commended the Shared Management system where My Place give you the information, the templates, help with recruitment, the employment spreadsheets and then do the payroll, tax, necessary insurances and workers compensation and are always there for support.

Summary of evidence:

- Supports positively contribute to stronger relationships and social connections for all members of the family

Lifestyle of choice

Outcome: Individuals, families and carers have choice and control over the lifestyle they want to live.

Evidence noted (eg observations, feedback and documentation):

- Individuals and families interviewed were clearly central to decision making about services and had a lifestyle with highly tailored individualised supports. The majority expressed that the service is very flexible, reliable and adaptable to their own needs. Individuals and families are therefore able to maintain their lifestyles in a manner that is far more satisfactory than if My Place support were not provided in this way.
- A number of families spoke of support staff assisting with other household duties. The families in all instances are grateful for the extra support they receive around the home and the benefit to the family unit.
- Some individuals and families compared their experiences of My Place with those of other similar organisations and spoke of how they found My Place service to be far superior. This was largely attributed to the ability to control one’s own services, to have options and to know that there was back up support as needed. One family spoke of how they had chosen to change from Shared Management to Provider Management and were able to stay with the plan which had already been set up.
- All of those interviewed in Shared Management valued being able to employ their own choice of supports, to have flexibility, and to choose hours. An individual spoke of wanting reliable accurate services and of using funds to broker a range of essential services including Silver Chain. For a new Family Living Plan under Shared Management, the funds are used to support the individual to pursue interests and to go to TAFE. Many stated that they would not have this level and type of support otherwise.
- A need for training for their support staff had been identified and My Place will provide the necessary training to take place.

Summary of evidence:

- My Place model is proving highly effective in facilitating individuals' lifestyles in the manner that they themselves see as important.

Support networks

Outcome: Individuals, families and carers have confidence in their support networks now and into the future.

Evidence noted (eg observations, feedback and documentation):

- Families spoke of how the support enables them to maintain their caring role. Before this, no one was listening, only My Place. One family spoke of how they would not have pulled through without them and could not ask for more. Another spoke of having high expectations, knowing of the service, and of not being disappointed.
- An individual with a mentor spoke of how happy he was with the support, and how different it was to the old do and don't. He is now given information and supported to understand consequences in making choices.
- Overall there was very positive feedback relating to the ability to employ one's own supports and the flexibility. Some individuals and families already had their support networks in place, the most important aspect of which was the immediate family. Most of these had supports to provide the necessary personal care and assistance needed to access their own supports. At the same time most consider My Place and the personal assistants concerned to have become a critical part of their overall support network.
- Many families were very positive about Shared Management describing how My Place made it easy for you. "They are there when you need them but leave you alone otherwise". They are wonderful, do the tax, insurance, workers compensation and give you all the spreadsheets to fill in with workers hours which you email back to them. They always call and remind you if you're late.
- Many singled out the great help at the start of Shared Management with ideas on how and where to recruit and templates you could use "everything is there, you just have to fill in the questions and forms". A number of families were very conscious that if they didn't get the right personality the plan would not work.
- Staff were praised as being very person centred and skilled while service coordinators were seen as professional, helpful and sensitive. There was no feeling that you were just a number to them. The majority of individuals and families were happy with My Place and felt they have a solid relationship.
- An individual interviewed noted that recently information about managing allocation of funds has been delivered with more clarity and greater knowledge and that administration of the plans has improved.

Summary of evidence:

- Individuals and families interviewed are satisfied with the services which are an important part of their overall support network. Those who receive the Provider Management option expressed a sense of relief that support staff are recruited and trained before coming to work with them.

Wellbeing

Outcome: Individuals, families and carers maintain or improve their sense of wellbeing.

Evidence noted (eg observations, feedback and documentation):

- Individuals and families spoke of increased wellbeing and clearly demonstrated that achievement of the outcomes above immeasurably enhances individual and family wellbeing
- Individuals are encouraged to exercise control over their own wellbeing and many look to My Place only for support in personal care and assistance areas. They expressed satisfaction with this balance, and with the quality of support provided. Three individuals who go regularly to church noted their appreciation for the timely manner in which support staff assisting in personal care always attend to their needs. Another described how support staff are assisting with movements to exercise his legs and that this has enabled him to regain stronger movements.
- For others their wellbeing is enhanced through support to participate in activities, to enrol in further learning, to continue studies and to enable employment.
- Families spoke of the huge difference to their lives and sanity. One now has a bit of time out and the supports enable her to go to the gym to build up her own strength. Another spoke of services helping with a happy home front and that this offers freedom and wellbeing knowing that there are structures in place to assist in day-to-day living. A parent familiar with the outcomes spoke of My Place definitely helping all of them to realise all the goals the Commission stipulates for Family Support Services.
- Personal assistants conveyed being very flexible, willing to learn from the individuals and families and to support in whatever areas were needed - whether personal care, assistance in and around the house, participating in activities or getting to appointments.

Summary of evidence:

- Achievement of outcomes and satisfaction with supports immeasurably enhances individual and family wellbeing
- Individuals who are able to express their own needs and direct their own supports are finding the service to be extremely beneficial in the maintenance of general wellbeing.

6. Compliance check

Standard 8 - Service Management - *Running the service well* Supporting Standards 8.1 & 8.2

Observation	Yes	No	N/A	Info source
The service provider conducts National Police checks for Board members, staff, volunteers and contractors prior to commencement.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			2,5
National Police checks are regularly updated for Board members, staff, volunteers and contractors.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			2,5
The service knows what to do if an unsatisfactory National Police check is received from a Board member, staff, volunteer or contractor.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			2,5
The service has an emergency evacuation plan.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			1,2,5
The service regularly practises its emergency evacuation plan.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			2,5
The service keeps records of evacuation trials.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			1,2,5
The service has policies and procedures on the administration of medication.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			2,5
The administration of medication occurs as detailed in the policies and procedures instructions.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			3
The buildings are maintained in a condition that does not pose a risk to service users.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			1,2

Information source legend: 1 direct observation; 2 discussion with management staff; 3 discussion with direct care staff; 4 discussion with consumer/s; 5 documentation; 6 self assessment; 7 Commission staff; 8 not determined.

- The evacuation plan and records apply only to My Place organisation offices. With each individual being a service outlet it was not possible to evaluate compliance for each consumer. For those interviewed and for documentation reviewed there was varying awareness of fire and safety issues. Some were very clear about steps to take, while others had no recall even where the file showed evidence of discussions.
- My Place only administer medications in exceptional cases. The preferred position is for the consumer to be trained and assessed as competent by Silver Chain.

Standard 9 - Protection of Human Rights and Freedom from Abuse and Neglect - *Being protected from harm*

Observation	Yes	No	N/A	Info source
Supporting Standard 9.6: The service provider has procedures in place to respond within seven days to allegations of abuse and neglect, including reporting mechanisms and strategies for protecting people with disabilities from abuse.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			2,5

Information source legend: 1 direct observation; 2 discussion with management staff; 3 discussion with direct care staff; 4 discussion with consumer/s; 5 documentation; 6 self assessment; 7 Commission staff; 8 not determined.

7. Appendix

A. How the quality of your service is measured

Outcomes

- The outcomes refer to the impacts, benefits or changes that an individual experiences as a result of using a service or support.
- Outcomes also identify what an individual with a disability, their family and carer can expect from a service or support.
- People focused outcomes and performance indicators have been developed for each service type: accommodation support, advocacy, alternatives to employment, disability professional services, family support, local area coordination and recreation.

Performance Indicators and Performance Measures

- Performance indicators describe what is measured and performance measures describe how well the service is doing in supporting individuals with disabilities to achieve good outcomes. Measures include time spent in activities of the individual's choice and satisfaction with services.
- Satisfaction is defined, in the context of this report, as a comparison between how an individual feels, the expectations and standards of the service (i.e. what "should be") and the experiences of the service (i.e. what actually happens).
- Disability sector organisations are expected to progressively improve services and supports to help individuals with a disability achieve beneficial outcomes.

Independent Evaluation

- Independent Evaluators collect evidence from multiple sources to verify the quality of services and supports provided, in relation to both outcomes and compliance with the Disability Services Standards.
- People with disability, their families and carers are invited to comment on the services and supports they receive through the evaluation process.

Disability Services Standards

Standard 1 Service Access - *Getting disability services*

Each consumer seeking a service has access to a service on the basis of relative need and available resources.

Standard 2 Individual Needs - *Getting the right help*

Each person with a disability receives a service which is designed to meet, in the least restrictive way, his or her individual needs and personal goals.

Standard 3 Decision Making and Choice - *Having choices and making decisions*

Each person with a disability has the opportunity to participate as fully as possible in making decisions about the events and activities of his or her daily life in relation to the services he or she receives.

Standard 4 Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality - *Keeping things private*

Each consumer's right to privacy, dignity and confidentiality in all aspects of his or her life is recognised and respected.

Standard 5 Participation and Integration - *Being part of the community*

Each person with a disability is supported and encouraged to participate and be involved in the life of the community.

Standard 6 Valued Status - *Valuing each person*

Each person with a disability has the opportunity to develop and maintain skills and to participate in activities that enable him or her to achieve valued roles in the community.

Standard 7 Complaints and Disputes - *Sorting out problems*

Each consumer is free to raise and have resolved any complaints or disputes he or she may have regarding the service provider or the service.

Standard 8 Service Management - *Running the service well*

Each service provider adopts sound management practices which maximise outcomes for consumers.

Standard 9 Protection of Human Rights and Freedom from Abuse and Neglect - *Being protected from harm*

The service provider acts to prevent abuse and neglect, and to uphold the legal and human rights of consumers.

C. Disclaimer

The evaluation assessment is necessarily limited by the following:

The methodology used for the evaluation has been designed to allow a reasonable degree of assessment in all the circumstances, particularly cost effectiveness of the evaluation process.

The standards against which assessment is made involve subjective terms and this entails an exercise of subjective judgement.

The assessment involves a reliance on multiple sources of evidence, including observations, feedback and some written records. The accuracy of written records cannot always be completely verified.

Where outcomes for individuals are of a high standard, and observation and other evidence indicates no apparent gaps in meeting the Disability Services Standards, the Standards are deemed to have been met.

The assessment will often involve a determination as to which of two or more versions of the same facts put to the evaluation team is correct under circumstances where this issue cannot be determined with absolute certainty.

The assessment will involve the Evaluation Team raising issues with a sample of individuals with a disability, their family members and carers. On some occasions information gathered from a sample will not reflect the circumstances applying over the whole group.

For these reasons the Evaluation Team cannot and do not accept responsibility for the veracity of any information on which they have based their reports and for a subsequent incorrect assessment that may have occurred based upon that information.