

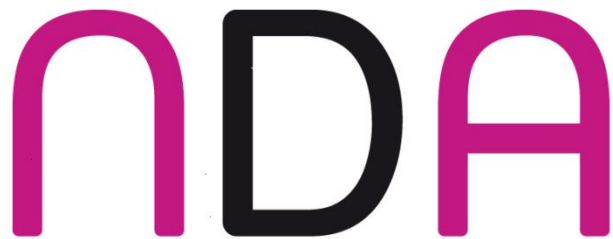
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**Údarás Náisiúnta Míchumais**  
**National Disability Authority**

# Linking money to needs in disability services

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# The National Disability Authority

- the independent state body providing expert advice on disability policy and practice to the Minister and the government

# Outline

- Value for Money and Policy Report
- Resource Allocation systems
- NDA study
- Next steps

# Background

- €1.4bn spent on disability support services
- Most of it goes to service providers based on what they got last year
- No explicit link between people's needs and the money going into their service
- Change is on the way
  - Link what providers get to the needs of the people they serve
  - Move towards giving people their own budgets to choose their services

# Value for Money report

## Recommendations - 1

- We need to know what people's needs are
- We need to count them in the same way for everyone
- We need to know how much it costs to meet people's needs
- The money spent on services for any person should be related to that person's needs

# Value for Money report

## Recommendations - 2

- Change to a model based on
  - service user needs
  - amount of money and staff available
  - fund people, not places
- Create a system to distribute available money in a fair way to meet assessed need
- Create fair rules for who qualifies, and who gets priority

# Value for Money report

## Recommendations – 4

- Build on NDA research and VFM review, move to new model over medium term
- New model must be
  - Fair and transparent
  - Allow flexibility and innovation
  - Address exceptional needs
  - Take into account any overarching resource allocation model across social care
- Incorporate new model via Service Level Agreements



# Value for Money report

## Individualised services -1

- Move to person-centred service model
- Based on unit costs
- Forms of individualised budgeting
  - Money follows the person
  - Mix of supports from different agencies
  - Personal budget administered by individual

# Value for Money report

## Individualised services - 2

- Transfer of choice and control
- First pilot, test and establish alternative service options
- Analyse benefits in Irish context
- Set up adequate financial management, resource allocation and governance structures

# What is a resource allocation system

- Process to assess needs in a consistent way
- How many hours of support needed, of what kind?
- Needs assessment scores can link to budgets
- Can be used as basis for
  - resource allocation within agencies
  - funding as between agencies
  - personal budgets

# Potential benefits

- Fairer matching of resources to needs
- Scarce resources go to where they are most needed
- Individualised budgets can support greater choice, better quality
- Individual funding can drive innovation in services
- Potential for cost savings?

# NDA resource allocation study

- Review of literature
- Test questionnaires with people across a range of disabilities
- How do tests results translate into scores
- How do assessments translate into costs
- Can we find a formula to link test scores to costs

# Testing different needs assessment questionnaires

- Phase 1 test - complete
  - Supports Intensity Scale developed in US
  - In Control's RAS 5 used in England
- Phase 2 test – about to start
  - InterRai, the assessment tool chosen for older person's services
  - FACE questionnaire used in England and in some Irish mental health services

# Questionnaires

- Measure the factors that drive care support needs
- All four cover a range of common ground
- Some go a bit wider
- Some go a bit deeper
- Scored in different ways
- How can scores convert to a cash budget?

# Supports Intensity Scale

- Measures support requirements across 57 life activities and 28 behavioural and medical areas (frequency, amount, and type of support)
- Raw scores translated into where you score relative to other people (e.g. in top 10%)
- SIS scores only one part of the cost formula



# In Control's RAS 5

- Simpler, shorter assessment tool
- Variations used across different UK councils
- 'pounds for points' formula used to determine budgets

# NDA study – phase 1

- 112 people with disabilities participated
- Broad range of disabilities, living circumstances
- All data anonymised, fully confidential
- Each interviewed on SIS and on RAS
- Interviewers came from another service, and received prior training
- Feedback showed people happy with both questionnaires

# Phase 1 findings

- Both assessment tools highly acceptable
- Small tweaks needed – e.g. how challenging behaviour recorded and scored
- SIS took twice as long, but gave richer information
- But scores on both very highly correlated except in very small no. of cases

# Phase 1 findings continued

- Why scores differed for a small number of people
  - The person wasn't clear if they were being asked about present service or what supports they would like for the future
  - The same person answered differently in two interviews e.g. need help getting dressed
  - RAS did not capture as well a need for supervision if there was challenging behaviour

# Phase 1 findings continued

- The SIS took twice as long to do as the RAS, and would cost more as royalties to pay
- But it could give richer information to support service planning
- Do we want one assessment tool to do many things?
- Or a quick and simple way to decide on budget per head?

# NDA study – phase 2

- Test the other two questionnaires we were asked to check out
- Revisiting participants in the greater Dublin area from the first study
- About 45 participants, across a range of disabilities and living arrangements

# Next steps

- Carry out and evaluate phase 2 study
- Compare results across all four questionnaires
- Commission a study to look at how best to translate assessment scores into budgets
- Advise the Department of Health and HSE on what way to go

# Conclusion

- Current allocation system needs to change
- Money should match people's needs
- NDA research providing the evidence on which to choose what system
- The new system be fair and seen to be fair
- It must be straightforward to operate
- This is a key stepping stone to giving people more choice and control over their lives