Next Steps, presentation on Iplanit

Slide 1

Good Morning, my name is KH, I am development manager at Sunbeam House Services and together with my colleague Ed Byrne, who uses our supports at Sunbeam, would like to tell you about an interesting project we are involved in as part of our Next Steps, Self Directed Supports case study. Ed will join me in a moment and has very kindly agreed to share some of his life, through the lens of iplanit.

Slide 2

Sunbeam supports just over 350 people. Our mission is to empower people with the necessary skills to live full and satisfactory lives. In other words, to achieve a "good life", whatever that is for the individual.

Sunbeam is committed to quality and we were the first in Ireland to be accredited by CQL under POMs more than ten years ago and more recently through Person Centred Excellence. We have also survived the first round of HIQA visits.

We are committed to moving towards "Self Directed Supports" and this commitment is embedded in our strategic plan.

Slide 3

We are very aware of the challenges that this represents, particularly in the transition from traditional services.

Many systems and processes in group settings may not work in a SDS setting so at Sunbeam we are looking to assistive technologies to help with this transition.

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One technology we have piloted and tested is iplanit. Iplanit is a tool , in many ways no different from this power point setup here.

However, we have found that this type of technology, used appropriately, has the potential to bring the Personal Plan to life and involve the "person supported" in a much more substantial way than its paper based alternative.

Slide5

The extracts from the personal plan in this slide are the same. The iplanit version on the right is more visual, is more accessible and is much more supportive of change as directed by the person.

As a tool, iplanit's function is to assist Self Directed Supports. Ed and I are not here to endorse or support one specific piece of software. It is quite possible that an alternative application will do just as efficient a job in supporting people to direct their own services and supports.

So where did iplanit come from, While prioritising my ever growing inbox, I was about to hit the delete key on what I thought was one more piece of unsolicited advertising, I spotted the word *iplanit*, and what I thought was a misspelling, was in fact the cleaver title for an interesting piece of software, designed to help with individualised supports and whose basic premise was putting the

person first. It was this premise that whetted my appetite and encouraged me to pause over the delete key and have another look

Following this very unscientific piece of research on my part, I checked the vendors website and had a look at some interesting you tube videos and webinars . I made contact with the vendors by dialling a UK number. In true globalisation style I was connected to an office not five miles up the road from our base in Bray, Co Wicklow

In turns out iplanit is an Irish developed product, though primarily marketed and used in the UK. It is used extensively in Self Directed Support organisations and housing associations across England Scotland and Wales, so it is well tested.

On a touchy note perhaps, it is probably fair to assume that, historically, design of supports and services in our sector was on the basis that, we, the designers, know best and as we all know these designs are in group settings. This is off the point slight and a discussion for another day, but there is no doubt that times are changing. These changes are being driven by new thinking, legislative and policy pressures and a desire for natural justice.

It is also a reasonable assumption to suggest that the efficient cost effective delivery of supports is much more complex in an "individualised" environment than it is in a group one.

This is where we see the value of systems like iplanit.

Firstly, "The Person" side of the software, which is designed to be accessible for someone who struggles with the written word, is used to allow the "person supported" to take the lead in saying what their needs and wishes are. Their goals, and all the elements leading to the achievement of these goals are turned into the performance indicators for those of us who are paid to support the person. It can also be used to inform and involve those who have a natural support role, such as the family or a less formal role such as neighbours, friends etc. The extent to which the "person supported" shares this information with their circle of support is entirely directed by them.
Ed and I will show you how this works in a moment.

You would be forgiven for thinking that this is all well and good for a person who has the capacity to use the system. No matter how accessible the software, there are always those for whom, it is out of reach, unless they have assistance. The "objective intervention" of an advocate can make the system available to all. Needless to say, the word "objective" is crucial or we fall back into the pitfall of "we know best" all be it in an individualised environment.

Let me briefly tell you Sunbeam Houses iplanit story before I hand over to Ed.

We piloted the software at Sunbeam House Services by bring together a group made up of, people supported, family members, frontline staff and service managers. The vendors assisted us with the start-up and training for all stake holders was provided.

Iplanit is our Next Steps Self-directed Supports case study and we reported on its progress throughout last year as part of the Next Steps reporting structure.

We selected a project coordinator who, by her own admission, struggles with computes, but who is very experienced in individual planning. This was to emphasise that this was a "support delivery project" using assistive technology and not an IT project, an important distinction in our view

For the participants , we replaced the paper based Individual Plan with Iplanit and in addition to the next steps reporting process we fed back to the working group on a regular basis.

Time does not allow me to go into too much detail about the project's progress but one interesting comment made by a family member during the pilot was their concerns about handing over control. In their view, the system allowed the person to, "keep secrets from the family", if they wished. This was a struggle for a family who traditionally shared all, with their family member.

However, this concern was balanced by the potential for the family member's siblings to be involved in the person's plan, using iplanit, despite the fact that the siblings lived in Australia.

I wouldn't like to understate the challenges that were identified, both from a cultural and technical perspective, during the course of the pilot. Despite the very positive elements of the system, there is a reasonably steep learning curve, ironically on the support and organisation side rather than on the "Person Supported's part of the system". We did have to go back to the drawing board a few times when we were transferring the paper based personal plan to iplanit. However, these are training issues and when the pilot group reported to the organisations senior management team, at the end of the pilot period, the value of the system was recognised and there was an agreement in principal to support its introduction.

I would now like to ask Ed, who participated in the pilot project to join me and to share some of his experiences, by answering a few questions

I am sure you will all agree it is a daunting task to present in front of such a large crowd I applaud Ed and all those self-advocates who are doing that today.

Conversation with Ed

Summery Slide

To sum up, Sunbeams commitment to Self Direct Supports was cemented by a formal launce at the end of 2013.

Seven people are participating initially with others to follow during the year. The move from traditional services to SDS will take the form of an invitation to existing people who use our services and supports and also, by offering opportunities to people who are considering using Sunbeam House to support their lives in the future.

We are committed to using iplanit as one assistive technology system to help with the management and organisation of our fledgling SDS.

While the person directed element is, in our view, the biggest attraction, Iplanit's ability to monitor and report on key performance indicators, in a complex support environment is another reason why Sunbeam has integrated it into our future strategic plan.

Further information on iplanit is available from this website and Ed and I will attempt to answer any questions you might have.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Kevin Hoey

Senior Development Manager

Sunbeam House Services