

Next Steps Project Vision Statement

Individualised Supports for an Ordinary Life

Defining what we mean by 'individualised supports' for an ordinary life:

Individualised services defined in the Final Report of the Disability Policy Review (Oct 2011)

Individualised supports are a personal social service which includes a range of assistance and interventions required to enable the individual to live a fully included life in the community. Individualised supports require the provision of a flexible range of supports and services that are tailored to the needs of the individual, and are primarily determined by the person. This provision enables people with disabilities to live as full citizens instead of having to fit into standardised models and structures.

Supports include assistance provided by others, whether in the form of personal care, communication or advocacy support, learning support, therapeutic interventions, aids and equipment, adaptations to the physical environment, and so on. Individualised supports are characterised as being primarily;

- determined by the person (in collaboration with their family/advocate as required and in consultation with an independent assessor) not the service provider or other 'experts';
- directed by the person (with their family/advocate as required);
- provided on a one-to-one basis to the person and not in group settings (unless that is the specific choice of the person and a 'natural' group activity, such as a team sport);
- flexible and responsive, adapting to the person's changing needs and wishes;
- encompassing a wide range of sources and types of support so that very specific needs and wishes can be met;
- not limited by what a single service provider can provide
- having a high degree of specificity. Provision that is expressed in terms of residential, day or respite does not capture the specific nature of an individual's support needs.

Being supported to live a life on one's own terms - [Extract from National Federation Vision Statement]: http://www.fedvol.ie/National_Federation_Publications/Default.757.html (2009)

Above all people have a deep rooted desire to belong, to be in relationship, to live within the intimacy and security of their family and friends, to be included in the greater life around them with all its attendant possibilities for hope and fulfilment and to do so, to the greatest extent possible, on their own terms. The implications of this simple truth will determine our actions on behalf of all citizens with Intellectual Disabilities.

Individualized Supports Think Tank, John O'Brien 2009

We define individualized supports as an array of supports, services and resources that are person-centered, based on the unique interests and needs of the person, afford the person as much control over their supports as they desire, and are adaptable as the person's life changes. This means that supports are created around an individual's distinct vision for their life rather than created around a facility or funding stream.