



Checklist for
Managed Care Organizations
Implementing Participant-Directed
Service Options

May 2012

INTRODUCTION

Participant direction is an increasingly popular service delivery model that is changing the lives of older adults and people with disabilities. It offers individuals more options for getting care at home by helping them manage their own workers and/or a flexible, monthly supportive care budget. Individuals may decide for themselves what mix of goods and services will best meet their needs. They can use their budgets to hire family members or friends to assist them. They may also make purchases that will help them live more independently if they have a budget to work with. In this way, individuals can preserve their independence while living at home.

Cash & Counseling, a demonstration and evaluation project for Medicaid consumers in three states, with twelve states subsequently added, was the forerunner of participant direction programs. It showed that growing old or living with a disability does not have to mean living in an institution. An evaluation of the three Cash & Counseling states found that individuals were more likely to have their health needs met, to be happy and satisfied with their care, and to have lower acute care costs than individuals using traditional services.

Today, there is at least one publicly-funded participant direction program in every state and more than 250 programs across the country offer participant direction.

Essentially, participant direction gives individuals the dollars and the freedom they need to decide what kinds of services they want to receive at home, from whom, and how. Instead of living in a nursing home, people can live in their own homes, deciding for themselves how they want to live at home and what types of support they need to do that. They manage and pay their own workers and can terminate them if they choose to.

Participant direction programs may also offer individuals support and assistance when managing an individual monthly budget. The amount of a budget is often determined based on what Medicaid would have paid a home care agency. The supports may assist the individual in deciding how to spend the funds allocated to them for approved goods and services. These participant-directed options include counseling to help individuals put services and supports in place, and financial management services (FMS) to pay workers, manage associated taxes, and meet other requirements such as Social Security.

The following checklist outlines the key infrastructure and components for a successful participant direction program prior to startup. Many of these items will be intuitive to managed care providers, which may already have some of these policies and procedures in place. All of these items are important to assuring compliance with legal requirements, and to facilitating the balance of participant (member) control and risk mitigation. For managed care providers seeking more detailed guidance or support, contact us at info@participantdirection.org.

PROGRAM INFRASTRUCTURE		
Item	In Place?	Notes
1. Procedures and protocols are in place to ensure the member maintains full control and decision-making capacity, especially in regard to workers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
2. All information is provided in a range of formats to be accessible to individuals with a variety of disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. All members who may be eligible have the opportunity to make informed consent or refusal of the participant-directed option	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. The following supports are available to managed care members who self-direct:		
a. Counseling supports: may include assessment, service planning support, training to self-direct, risk negotiation, or other supports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
b. Financial management supports: operate in compliance with federal, state, program, and employment rules and regulations; supports are in place for hiring workers, processing payroll and ensuring payments are in compliance with individual budgets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
5. Self-direction support and managed care staff are trained in participant direction philosophy, components, and evidence-based advantages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
6. A customer service system is in place that supports participants and any other authorized stakeholders to obtain information regarding participant direction in a timely manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Program and member manuals are complete and include policies, procedures, and reference materials for members and staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. A designated staff person holds overall responsibility for ensuring that participant direction components operate in compliance with policies and assuring continuous quality management	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. A system is in place to collect, analyze, and report process and outcome measures applicable to the goals of members who self-direct	<input type="checkbox"/>	

PROGRAM COMPONENTS		
Item	In Place?	Notes
1. The intake process meets the following criteria:		
a. Allows for the informed choice of all members	<input type="checkbox"/>	
b. Is goal-oriented, person-centered, and comprehensive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c. Includes written materials to describe policies, rights, and responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	
d. Includes an option to have a representative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. The needs assessment process meets the following criteria:		
a. Includes identification of barriers to meeting goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	
b. Includes personal preferences for task performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c. Includes assistive technology and addresses home/community accessibility needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. There is an established methodology to determine each member's self-directed budget amount (if applicable) or number of authorized hours of employee services	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Assistance with participant direction service planning features the following:		
a. Reference materials and worksheets	<input type="checkbox"/>	
b. Tools to help the member identify potential workers and items to purchase for the plan (if applicable), including problem-solving strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c. Risk identification and mitigation policies are in place	<input type="checkbox"/>	
d. Emergency back-up plans are required of each member	<input type="checkbox"/>	
e. Community resource guide/directory is available	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Implementation of participant direction plans feature the following:		

a. Curriculum and process for member training on how to be an effective employer is developed	<input type="checkbox"/>	
b. Assistance and written guidance (e.g., member manual) is in place for employment paperwork flow, including time sheet submissions	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c. Process for purchase of non-employee goods and services (if applicable) is established	<input type="checkbox"/>	
d. Timelines and process for reassessments and changes to an established plan are in place, including identification of changes in a member's level of need	<input type="checkbox"/>	