"Cash and Counseling: A Model for Self-Determination"
Suzanne Crisp

Consumer-Direction

"Not doing things by yourself - but being in charge of how things are done."
- Judith Heumann

! Consumer controls
--what, when, how & who

Consumer-Direction
! Consumers are the best judge of their needs & approach

! Should be able to choose services & who provides those services

! Use flexibility to tailor solutions

! Crosses disability (types and degrees), culture, funding & age

Consumer Direction Myths
! Fraud
! Abuse
! Exploitation
! Not interested
! Lack ability
! Health will decline
! Too vulnerable
! Case managers know best
! Agency services are superior

Cash & Counseling
! Sponsors - Robert Wood Johnson Foundation & US Health and Human Services
! Use Medicaid funding
! Large scale
! Rigorous evaluation
! Develop the national model

Why Cash and Counseling?
! Offer more choices
! Expand work force
! Tangible advancement to show disability community
! Opportunity for technical assistance
! Save $$$$

Independent Choices

The Arkansas Approach:

An opportunity to exchange Agency personal care services for a monthly cash allowance

The Cash
! Allowance
-- Based on personal assistance needs
-- Approximately $8.00 per hour
-- Average allowance is $375.00 a month
! Uses of cash
-- To meet personal care needs
-- Hire personal care assistant
-- Purchase items & services related to personal care

The Counseling
! Counseling
-- Explain program
-- Develop expenditure plan
-- Offer skills training
-- Monitor
-- Perform reassessments

! Fiscal support
-- Issue allowance
-- Maintain savings
-- Write checks
-- Monitor uses of cash
-- Pay taxes
-- Report wages

Who Is Interested?

! Began December 1998

-- Over 2,000 choosers
-- 73% age 65 or older
-- 44% use a representative
-- 76% live in rural areas
-- 60% White, 30% African American
-- 15% of population enrolled

Uses of the Cash

! 82% hire a personal assistant
! 85% family members
! 15% friend or neighbor
! 16% personal supplies, medicine or home modifications
! 2% save

How's It Going?

! AR 1st in nation
! 100% satisfied
! 80% satisfied with lives
! 93% would recommend
! 98% know who they hire
! 4 -5 say lives have improved
! Most have chronic illnesses
! 95% pleased with assistant times
! Zero say worse off

Ms. Millie
"Hiring my daughter makes me feel independent. I know she is always there. She knows what I like and what I don't like."

Ms. Lillie
"I understand Grandma better than anyone. When it's your own you're looking after, you pay more attention."

The Observations

! Comfortable with self-direction & enjoy independence
! Capable of Responsibility
! Biggest benefits:
-- Choose assistant/items
-- Know when and who
-- Non-traditional times
! Allows more services at same cost
! Matches preference with needs
! Amount of services still insufficient

The Verdict

! Consumer direction works
! Respects preferences
! Honors dignity/privacy
! Recognizes rights
! Will never replace traditional models
! Considered in ALL program designing

More Information
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