

Draft Interim Guidance

Personal Outcomes Plan: Guidance to Staff

1. The Personal Outcomes Plan is the pivotal component of Social Work Assessment and Planning with service users for whom Social Work involvement extends beyond assessment to the planning and implementation of the plan and for whom intended outcomes require ongoing intervention, services and/or supports.
2. The Personal Outcomes Plan should replace the care plan and should be developed and negotiated from the basis of a thorough child/ person-centred assessment and thereafter becomes the key document for future review and planning.
3. The grid format of the Personal Outcomes Plan is intended as a helpful prompt to areas of personal functioning in which service users may wish to affect some change. This format grid should neither dictate the content of the plan nor stifle creative recording which reflects individual needs and circumstances.
4. The Personal Outcomes Plan must be developed, negotiated and agreed with the service user and carer(s) as appropriate in each instance.

Intended Outcomes

5. Intended outcomes must be negotiated and discussed with the service user and carer to ensure that they are appropriate, meaningful and achievable.
6. Intended outcomes which require social work services or resources should be considered with regard to the social work prioritisation framework.
7. Intended outcomes should be specific and understandable, with clear details in respect of what needs to happen and associated timescales. Without these details, intended outcomes can seem vague aspirations, liable to drift and unlikely to motivate and focus activity.

How will we Know?

8. The indications that intended outcomes are being attained or not should be discussed and agreed with service users and carers. These indicators should be significant to those involved, concrete, measurable and anticipated on a fixed timescale, e.g. absence of criminal charges/convictions over a period of time; maintenance of health through abstinence from alcohol for a particular duration.

What needs to Happen

9. The activities required to realise the intended outcomes may involve a range of persons and agencies. Achieving positive change through the actions of service users, carers and their natural supports should be the preferred and first option in each situation. Self-determination and direct action on the part of service users and carers reinforces self-worth and capacity for change

When will this Happen/Who will be responsible

10. All agreed actions should be time-scaled and ascribed to a particular individual – delineated under “When will this happen” and “Who will be responsible”.
11. Personal Outcomes Plans should reflect consideration of the roles, responsibilities and expertise of all relevant agencies.

Outputs provided to plan

12. To access resources within social work, the plan manager/co-ordinator must comply with internal service procedures and prioritisation framework. Where resources require to be accessed from another organisation, this will be undertaken through the appropriate joint organisational arrangements. In community care this involves the existing Locality Planning Groups, while in children and families similar locality level partnership arrangements are being developed. It must be clearly recorded on the Personal Outcomes Plan how actions will be resourced. .
13. “How the plan will be resourced” should be noted before it is presented to the service user or carer for agreement and signature.

Monitoring and review

14. The timescales for the intended outcomes and for the actions towards achieving them should inform the scheduling of reviews to identify progress or otherwise. Reviews should be scheduled prior to the recorded deadlines to ensure the plan is still on track.
15. The value and effectiveness of any review will depend on the plan manager/coordinator checking progress and liaising appropriately beforehand. Preparation for review of the Personal Outcomes Plan is crucial to good practice and decision-making.
16. Throughout the period covered by the Personal Outcomes Plan the plan manager/coordinator should have regular contact/liaison Appropriate to ensure that the planned activities are carried out

as envisaged and to anticipated effect.

Contingency planning

17. There may be a risk of significant harm in the short/medium term future if progress is not made towards some of the intended outcomes. In view of this, action may be required outwith the normal review timescale if plans are not progressed, circumstances change and/or perceived risk increases.
18. Contingency plans may, for example, involve arrangements for urgent case discussions/review and/or access to alternative support arrangements.

Areas of disagreement

19. A service user or primary carer may wish to sign overall agreement and acceptance of an initial Personal Outcomes Plan whilst wishing specific areas of disagreement to be noted within the document.
20. After an initial Personal Outcomes Plan is agreed between the service user or primary carer and social work services other relevant persons or agencies may wish to raise issues or qualifications of their own. These areas of disagreement may be added thereafter and an updated copy of the Personal Outcome Plan re-circulated.
21. It is a matter for balanced judgement and consideration whether any areas of disagreement so fundamentally or significantly affect the Personal Outcomes Plan that it requires to be reviewed or completely renegotiated.