



Self-directed Support through Family Leadership

1 What is Self-directed Support through Family Leadership

Community Living Project supports people with disability and their families to develop leadership skills to work towards building a good life for the future.

A key way to achieve this is through supporting each person with a disability and their family to make decisions around who works with them, and building their capacity to self-direct their day to day support.

Self-directed Support begins with assisting each person to identify what is important for them in their paid support, helping them to individually recruit workers who fit with their vision, as well as managing the workers in their day-to-day activities.

This is further strengthened through the active involvement of family and friends in supporting this process and helping to build the person's skills.

This booklet is a resource for people with disability and their families who are looking to strengthen opportunities to take leadership in the day to day management of their support.

The Community Living Project uses a **Self-directed Support model** that builds the capacity of people with disability and their families to choose, train and direct the staff who are providing support. This model offers the optimum environment for people and families to build choice, control and flexibility with paid support and services.

The focus is on 'one person at a time' (and their family), developing each person's capacity and understanding of how to build a good life. To us, this means a life of inclusion in which everyone matters and all people are welcomed, included and contributing to community life.

Family leadership is centred on practices that enable 'right relationship' where supports are strongly aligned to the person's individual needs and wishes and delivered with (not 'for', or 'to') the person.

Self-directed Support may not be for every person/family. Our experience is that people with disability who have a network of informal support (family and friends), and families who have the desire and belief that self-directing will provide the choice and control they are seeking, are best placed to succeed in this model.

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Community Living Project would like to acknowledge and thank Griffith University, in particular Dr. Margaret Ward, for sharing the 'Seven steps to self-direction' resource developed under the Innovative Workforce Fund with our families, and generously allowing us to use the information to enrich our model (see final page for details re the Innovative Workforce Fund).



What do I want for myself / my loved one's life?

Who might help me think about this?



2 Why is Family Leadership important?

Building family leadership is essential in building a community in which everyone is valued. Traditional models of 'care' generally reflect an organisation's needs rather than the individual's needs.

Family leadership requires a different mindset and moves towards inclusion and creating a real sense of purpose in people's lives. Family leadership safeguards vulnerable people for the future through locating the control where it belongs - with the person, their family and their informal network.

Family leadership fits well into the context of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) as it:

- strengthens opportunities to create more effective and sustainable support
- enables a focus on goals which are meaningful (eg working in a real job)
- enables people with disability to have greater choice and control over their support
- reflects the NDIS objectives of choice, autonomy and control.

For more information on the "natural authority" of families, see <http://cru.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/4.-The-Natural-Authority-of-Families-MKendrick-CT45.pdf>



What is my vision for the future?
Who might help me think about this?

3 What are the barriers to Family Leadership?

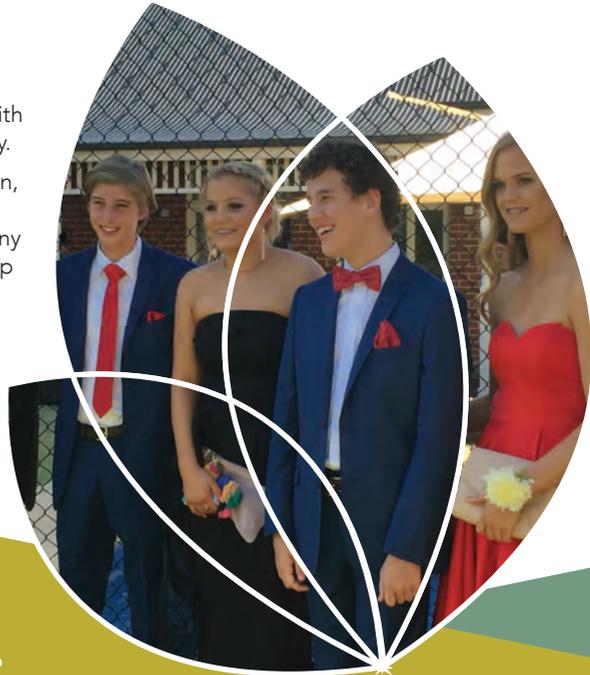
There are some barriers that may get in the way of people and families taking leadership roles around their support provision. These barriers arise from a long history of traditional models of 'care', where being 'done to' by powerful services with imposing bureaucratic structures and systems is often the norm. Many people have come to accept that agency needs often drive service decisions rather than the needs of the vulnerable person at the centre of the support.

For many years in human services, one size fits all solutions have been offered to families through a menu of services based on the availability of specific 'programs' and a shared pool of workers. While this has generally been seen as the most efficient way to offer services, the impersonality of this approach has meant that individual outcomes have been highly variable and individual needs have not been met. The NDIS is doing a lot to break down this power imbalance and is seeking to provide people with opportunities for greater choice and autonomy.

Family leadership requires the right information, skills, support and opportunity to build the necessary self-confidence and knowledge. Many vulnerable people lack informal support to help

work through problems and may not believe it is possible to make their own decisions and be heard. Negative community assumptions can further undermine people's confidence and families may feel weighed down by a sense of burden. Health crises and broader family issues can mean that short term pressures drive service delivery and a more standardised approach might be the preferred option for a family that is feeling under siege.

Community Living Project offers a different approach that creates the opportunity for the person with disability to build the life they desire.



**What are the challenges of keeping my vision on track?
How can I protect my vision?**

4 Putting Self-directed Support into practice

Community Living Project has developed a model of **Self-directed Support** that embraces Family Leadership. This model uses the 'Seven Steps to self-direction' developed by Griffith University under the Innovative Workforce Fund (see <http://pearl.staffingoptions.com.au/Article/GetResourceFile/327>)

The process gives a logical sequence of steps which build on each other. When something goes wrong, or is not working well, the process offers a way to identify and address the problem.

The seven-steps are:

1. Start with the person
2. Develop the vision and plan
3. Make a good match
4. Learn to support the person well
5. Build a relationship of trust
6. Solve problems quickly and locally
7. Check for resilience.

In addition to this, the **Self-directed Support model** coaches **people with disability, their families and informal network** to build their capacity and confidence to create a personal life vision and to understand and articulate the person's needs. Knowledge and strategies are

shared to attract, engage and maintain a group of workers who will match the needs, interests, culture, and aspirations of the person they are supporting.

Self-directed Support also builds the capacity and confidence of the group of workers to engage with and support the natural authority and wisdom of the family. The group of workers become increasingly self-managing over time as they take responsibility to deliver day to day support, whilst embracing the person's vision and contribution.

Community Living Project has developed the resources and structure to guide Self-directed Support:

- an **Inclusion Coach** helps to build the skills and expertise of people, families and workers around a life vision of inclusion, and building a group of workers to support and enable the hopes and dreams of the person;
- a **Support Manager** to build the knowledge of the person and their family around managing their NDIS budget and employment conditions for the workers; and
- **Administration and Finance support** to manage service agreements, payroll, risk management and service provider mandated requirements.



What does the 'right support' mean for me, and who should it include?

How can I build my skills?

What decisions do I want to make?

How will I find the right people to help me?

5 How is Self-directed Support different to traditional service provision?

Traditional Services	Self-Directed Support
Start with the services	Start with getting to know the person and building their life vision
Organisational systems and structure lead service delivery	The person with a disability and their families build capacity and skills to lead day to day support The group of workers build capacity to self-organise and deliver support specific to the needs and vision of the person they are supporting
Organisation professionals “know best”	The person and their family hold the expertise and wisdom around support needs
Offer a menu of services	Build the support around the person’s specific needs, embracing and contributing to the person’s life vision
Have a pool of support workers	Build the capacity of the person/family to identify “best fit” and recruit workers to meet individual needs
Build dependency	Create independence through building capacity and confidence
	Work in ‘right relationship’
Provide services to hold the status quo	Deliver services that build competencies, valued roles and community inclusion
The future is driven by life’s crises	The future is safeguarded through building and sustaining informal and freely given relationships

Who is in my informal network?

How can I build trust with my workers and the agencies involved in my support?

What training might we all need?

Who can help me stay on top of this?





For more information on self direction, please visit:

www.communitylivingproject.org.au
<http://pearl.staffingoptions.com.au/Article/Index/1204>
<http://wellbeingteams.org/>
<http://thegoodlife.cru.org.au/the-good-life/>



If you would like further information about Self-directed Support through Family Leadership please contact the Community Living Project on 08 8384 7866 or info@communitylivingproject.org.au

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