

# Person-Centered Planning and Implementation

6 Writing Action Steps for Meaningful Outcomes



# Introduction

These slides contain content adapted from the Administration for Community Living's Person Centered Counseling Training Program. The content includes text and narration from online courses. To view original content or for more information, please visit [nwd.acl.gov](http://nwd.acl.gov) or contact [NoWrongDoor@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:NoWrongDoor@acl.hhs.gov).

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# Welcome! (1/2)

Discovery and the development of a person-centered plan always start with a purpose. The purpose will help people develop their goals for the plan. A person's goals will be uniquely their own. They will be defined by them and often written in their own words. In order to coordinate teams or ensure plans are useful, it is helpful to develop action steps and timelines related to the goals. The Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional can help the person shape their goals into action steps that are likely to lead to the outcomes they desire. They can also help ensure the actions steps reflect important considerations regarding identification and selection of approaches.

# Welcome! (2/2)

## **Learning Objective**

After completing this lesson: You will be able to support people in translating their person-centered goals into action steps that lead to desired outcomes.

# Person-Centered Goals and Outcomes (1/2)

Person-centered discovery helps you to listen carefully to people. A formal person-centered plan will list out the person's goals for the plan. It will also include action steps that are likely to lead to outcomes that are meaningful to the person. Being good at translating people's words and ideas in the plan is an important part of person-centered counseling. As with all aspect of planning, goals and actions steps should appear on a plan only when they reflect the person's view and with the person's permission. (Remember: Use the Guess/ask/write tool.)

# Person-Centered Goals and Outcomes (2/2)

Meaningful outcomes align with the person's goals. They can be actual accomplishments. Or they can be about gaining knowledge or experiences that will help them know more about what is important to them and how they want to manage their lives. Even if a goal feels unrealistic to you or others, it's important to include it and identify action steps. Using decision support processes prior to defining goals and action steps is helpful. This ensures people have enough information. In addition, one action step toward a goal may be to engage in a decision support process.

# Using the SMART Goal Approach

The SMART goal approach is one approach for remembering how to describe the most important aspects of action steps. SMART is an acronym of things to do so that it is clear who is doing what and by when.

# The Value of Clarifying and Defining Action Steps (1/3)

The three promises of person-centered thinking include listening, acting on what is heard, and being honest. The action steps of planning help the Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional keep the promise of acting on what is being heard. They also help with the promise of being honest. By clarifying who is doing what and by when, the person will have a realistic view of what it takes to achieve their goals. It will help clarify roles and potential barriers.



# The Value of Clarifying and Defining Action Steps (2/3)

It also is another chance for the person to clarify their views and expectations. If timing seems off or actions do not reflect their values or hopes, those issues should be explored. This is another opportunity to listen and fine-tune the plan. Making the action steps specific provides an opportunity to consider priorities in the “to/for balance.”

# The Value of Clarifying and Defining Action Steps (2/2)

In many ways the action-planning phase is a continuation of ongoing discovery. When supporters are involved, new concerns or issues can be brought to light as the plan becomes more specific. This process of listening and clarification ensures that plans will actually be useful and realistic. As with other aspects of planning, it will require good listening and facilitation skills on the part of the PCC professional.

# — Considerations for Defining Action Steps

Action steps flow from the person's goals and purpose. They must be considered in that context at all times. However, there are some other aspects of organizing action steps that a No Wrong Door counselor should consider.

# Revision and Timing of Goals and Action Steps (1/2)

People's plans and needs will be variable. Some may have many goals and others just a few. Some goals may have a few action steps. Others may have several individual action steps. Sometimes goals will be ongoing. Other times they will be achievable in a period of time. Goals are usually more enduring and long lasting. Action steps are often things that can be completed in a shorter period of time. Action steps that take too long to achieve and that can't be broken down into distinct and measurable steps and should be reviewed.

# Revision and Timing of Goals and Action Steps (2/2)

People will also approach movement toward goals differently. Some may be very anxious to get moving on goals and action steps. Other might see them as less of a priority and be willing to take more time. Very often the first approaches taken to achieve goals do not immediately result in the best or final option. Expect to review and revise. If people seem to be making no progress, it's very likely the plan is not as person-centered as hoped. If supporters are not making progress, it's likely care of the caregiver was not explored sufficiently. Make sure to engage discovery with this in mind.

# Conclusion and Lesson Review (1/3)

- Well-written action steps help ensure people are clear about how goals are going to be achieved. They provide an opportunity for the person to consider how best to balance resources and options based on their values and hopes.
- Using the SMART process helps ensure that action steps are written in a way that supports their completion and good follow-up. They are specific, measurable, assigned, relevant (to the person), and time-bound.

# Conclusion and Lesson Review (2/3)

- Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals will want to consider a variety of aspects when helping someone define actions steps. They can include use of natural supports, private pay options, adaptations or accommodations, risk management, care of the caregiver, future planning, and eligibility for public programs.
- Options and information brought to the person will be personalized based on their goals and their preferences as identified through the discovery and planning process. All action steps must be approved by the person, just as the rest of the plan has been.

# Conclusion and Lesson Review (3/3)

## Learning Objective

After taking this lesson, you will be able to support people in translating their person-centered goals into action steps that lead to desired outcomes.

## Reflection on Learning Objective

Directions: Review the objective(s) on this page. Write down your answers to the following questions.

1. What did you learn in this lesson that you felt was important?
2. What will you do differently because of the content in this lesson?