

## Hallmarks of a Person-Centered Approach

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**1. *The person's activities, services and supports are based upon his or her dreams, interests, preferences, strengths, and capacities.***

Indicators:

- The person's dreams, interests, preferences, strengths, and capacities are explicitly acknowledged, and drive activities, services and supports.
- Services and supports are individualized and do not rely solely on preexisting models.
- Supports and services have outcomes selected by the person, which are meaningful and functional.
- The person achieves personal goals.

**2. *The person and people important to him or her are included in lifestyle planning and have the opportunity to exercise control and make informed decisions.***

Indicators:

- The person and advocates participate in planning and discussions where decisions are made.
- A diverse group of people, invited by the person, assist in planning and decision-making.

**3. *The person has meaningful choices, with decisions based on his or her experiences.***

Indicators:

- The person has opportunities to experience alternatives before making choices.
- The person makes life-defining choices related to home, work, and relationships.
- Opportunities for decision-making are part of the person's everyday routine.
- The person decides how to use his or her free time.

**4. *The person uses, when possible, natural and community supports.***

Indicators:

- With the person's consent, the support of family members, neighbors, and co-workers is encouraged.
- The person makes use of typical community and generic resources whenever possible.

**5. *Activities, supports, and services foster skills to achieve personal relationships, community inclusion, dignity, and respect.***

Indicators:

- The person has a presence in a variety of typical community places. Segregated services and locations are minimized.
- The person has friends, and the opportunity to form other natural community relationships.
- The person can access community-based housing and work if desired.
- The person has the opportunity to be a contributing member of the community.

**6. *The person's opportunities and experiences are maximized, and flexibility is enhanced within existing regulatory and funding constraints.***

Indicators:

- Funding of supports and services is responsive to personal needs and desires, not the reverse.
- When funding constraints require supports to be prioritized or limited, the person or advocates make the decisions.
- The person has appropriate control over available economic resources.

**7. *Planning is collaborative, recurring, and involves an ongoing commitment to the person.***

Indicators:

- Planning activities occur periodically and routinely. Lifestyle decisions are revisited.
- A group of people who know, value, and are committed to serving the person remain involved.

**8. *The person is satisfied with his or her activities, supports, and services.***

Indicators:

- The person expresses satisfaction with his or her relationships, home, and daily routine.
- Areas of dissatisfaction result in tangible changes in the person's life situation.

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**\*Note:** A distinction between "person-centered planning" and a "person-centered approach" should be acknowledged. Formal person-centered planning systems (such as "personal futures planning," or "circles of support") prescribe the use of specific tools and techniques; they are not necessary for every person. However, programs should adopt a person-centered *approach* in their planning and delivery of activities, supports, and services. Such an approach would incorporate the hallmarks presented here, implemented in a flexible manner. This is viewed as an achievable and desirable goal.

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