

### **Objectives of the National Brokers Network**

The objectives of the NBN will be:

- To create a service that increases the control a person with a disability, mental health issues, or any other situation that requires them to have support funded through social care or health, and their friends and family have over the support they need.
- To provide a cost effective and rigorous alternative to a range of non- statutory roles and functions that could be carried out by care managers, social workers and nurses.
- To increase uptake of self-directed support options including self assessment, self review, direct payments and third party trusts.
- To maximise external funding options for individuals and groups by recognising funding expertise and the non-funded community based support (natural support')
- To develop a network of provider agencies capable of delivering the identified range of services across the country.
- To offer support and guidance to Brokers across the country by involving regional coordinators to develop awareness raising strategies and support the increase in knowledge and understanding amongst individuals, families, community groups and service providers in order to continually develop the input of Brokers.

### **The Broad Aims of the National Brokers Network**

- To promote personalisation and the use of person budgets and personal health budgets through independent support and representation from a Support Broker.
- To provide a network of Support Brokers who in turn will be supported by regional coordinators across the country
- The NBN aims to ensure that Support Brokers operate to a high calibre and will meet the standards set out in the 'Critical Standards' statement.
- The NBN will strive to be a diverse movement to provide a voice for people to achieve control and independence over their lives.

## Value Statement

The National Brokerage Network works in accordance with the ***Social Model of Disability*** and the ***Principles of Independent Living***. It aims to promote empowerment to all disabled and disadvantaged people by supporting the individual to gain control of their lives and control the choices and decisions they make about the things important to them. NBN follows the following concepts of empowerment:

- **Choice and control**
- **Identity**
- **Participation and Consultation**
- **Technology, Information, and Resources**

The NBN believes that without all of these components empowerment is impossible to achieve. Everybody has to choose his or her own identity and be able to control the way in which they live, who they live with, and how they are supported. Participation and Consultation is needed to form our identity. Without political, social and ideological views how can we form a voice in our society? Information, Technology and Resources are all aids to achieving our identity - choice and control.

The NBN works within the Principles of Independent Living. This means the NBN will support an individual to take control of their lives with as much, or as little, support as they want. Independent living does not mean the amount of tasks that you can physically do, and it is not the name of a particular service. Independent living is about the choices that a disabled person can make with as much, or as little, support as needed. Independence is seen in terms of the quality of life with support, not the quantity of tasks, which can be performed without support.

The Principles of Independent Living state:

- That all human life is of value,
- That anyone, whatever their impairment, is capable of making choices,
- That people who are disabled by society's reaction to their physical, intellectual or sensory impairment, and emotional distress, have the right to assert control over their lives.
- That disabled people have the right to fully participate in society.

The NBN will work within the principles of the Social Model of Disability. The social model of disability was designed in the 1970's by disabled people in answer to the medical model of disability, now known as the traditional model. Essentially a model is a representation to help us understand what may be different features of a real-life

situation; a model is just another way of thinking.

The social model defines impairment as a condition or diagnosis, which allows society to discriminate against people with impairments. Below is a quote summarising the social model of disability:

Below is a simple quote that we feel, captures the principles and the philosophy of the social model of disability.

**“Disability is caused by social organisation which takes little or no account of people who have impairments, and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of society” (Fundamental Principles of Disability, UPIAS, 1976).**

By working within the social model, we assume:

- Disability is not part of the individual.
- The experience of disability is not caused by the impairment, but by the relationship between the individual and the barriers faced in society.
- Disabled people are oppressed, not abnormal or tragic. They are oppressed because society does not give them the right to join in social activities on an equal basis with non-disabled people.

The outcomes of this model are:

- People make changes to the built environment, transport access, in its widest sense, and you take away disability.
- Take away negative attitudes and challenge discrimination, and you take away disability.
- Take away control by professionals and rigid rules, and you take away disability.
- Empower disabled people through partnerships, support and resources, and you take away disability.

CJ Lovell, April 2003.

The NBN aims to promote empowerment through knowledge, and challenge the barriers in order to achieve equality.

We believe to achieve this, the following statements taken from Not Just about Money - reshaping social care for self-determination, hold true:

- *When people who provide services are involved in individual planning, they will find it difficult to admit that the person would be better somewhere else.*
- *Care managers who organise services for someone who they probably don't know very well, are likely to prefer a set of services that is easy to organise, and not risky.*
- *There is a way of organising the system differently. It's called*

***Individualised Funding or IF. This covers Personal Budgets and Personal Health Budgets***

- *Brokers are not care managers. They are not employed by social services, and they are only there to offer help to the person. They only give their help in the way the disabled person wants. It is the broker's job to support the disabled person to make decisions and take control.*

**To make this happen, we think:**

- *You should decide for yourself what your 'needs' are.*
- If you need help in making your plans, or to find support, you should be able to get the help from a support broker, who doesn't have any links with the government or with service providers.
- You should have control over the way the money is used this may include buying support from an agency or employing support workers or personal assistants.
- If you need help with dealing with the money to pay for your support, you should be able to get this from people or organisations who are independent, if that is what you want.
- People who are providing support services should not have a big say in the persons planning meetings.

**Leadership**

The National Brokerage Network board will contribute and oversee and monitor the overall practice and effectiveness of the National Brokerage Network.

The National Brokerage Network as an authoritative body provides strong leadership drive and guidance in the practical development of support brokerage or initiatives supporting and complementing this.

The network will work and develop a common understanding of how support brokerage and related initiatives are developed and influence work to date, and in the future.

The Brokers network will organise and agree to work through the formation of a strong and committed group made up of representation from all citizens who have a stake in the development of support brokerage, both now and in the future.

### **Critical Standard**

**Supervision:** The NBN's regional coordinators will ensure that Brokers receive supervision, initially from themselves or from a Brokers 'Hub' agency if one is available within the local area. The NBN's suggested model of supervision is that Brokers will receive at least peer supervision every two months and a review of their work every six months. When conducting a supervision session consideration will be given to all cases being handled by that practitioner in order to support good decision-making, and monitor quality of practice.

The NBN will oversee and attempt to ensure that all case decisions agreed at supervision are recorded and that records are kept in line with the Data Protection Act, maintaining confidentiality at all times and working within our 'Sharing Information' agreement and complaints procedures.

We will also make sure that any records kept on an individual person will be accessible to them.

The NBN will also advise that all Brokers have up-to-date Disclosure Barring Service checks, insurances and have their professional development training needs identified.

**Training:** The NBN will also provide a rolling programme of approved Broker training and attempt to meet other training requirements, such as person-centred planning training, in order for its members to meet high standards in the delivery and promotion of Self Directed Support and Support Brokerage. Another standard is that Brokers have to attend the NBN approved training in order to maintain their registration with the NBN.

**References:** NBN requires two references, these should be from two people or families you have worked on behalf of, who are prepared to talk confidentially to other people looking to appoint their own broker.

**Disclosure Barring Service Clearance:** The NBN has requested a copy of all its members' DBS Clearance, and where up-to-date DBS clearance is needed the NBN will advise that this is in place before commencing Support Brokerage input.