

The California Gatherings

Resource Note

Putting Person Centered Practices to Work

2021
June



The Learning Community
for person centered practices



Having Choice in Systems that Actively Work Against It

The HCBS final rule tell us that we need to discover people's preferences. Every year we need to ask:

- Who do you want to live with?
- Where do you want to live?
- What do you want to do with your time (including employment)?
- What do you want to do with your resources?
- Who do you want to provide the supports and services that you receive?

Learning these answers requires a discovery process and careful listening. The better the process the more the answers feel like commitments or even promises to the person with whom we are planning.

- When we know that what the person wants is not something that is available what should we do?

**June 30, 10-11 EST or 2-3 EST
(7-8 PST or 11-12 PST)**

Session 1

Time: Jun 30, 2021 10:00 AM EST or 7:00 AM PST

[Register for Zoom Meeting here.](#)

Session 2:

Time: Jun 30, 2021 02:00 PM EST or 11:00 AM PST

[Register for Zoom Meeting here.](#)

BE HEARD!



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Gatherings Archive of all
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notes [here](#).

What To Do? - Continued

The Challenge of Reopening and Reconnecting to Services and Supports

We posed the following survey questions to our mailing list:

- What are you trying and doing to provide a safe workplace environment for your staff and individuals you support and serve?
- What are you learning from what you tried or trying?

The answers to the last three questions are in this edition.

- **What are you pleased about from you tried/trying?**
- **What are you concerned about?**
- **What might you try next?**

THANKS to you all for responding.

What are you pleased about from you tried/trying?

- That we all shared the same value when it comes to what is important for and important to and defining the levels of support individuals need to participate in this joint responsibility.
- The number of people we can access at once and how many people we have been able to teach new skills to.
- Providing support, modeling how to support in the way other people want to feel supported.
- Staff are following the CDC guidelines and following policy and procedures. We have had minimal sickness.
- Staff/client ability to communicate and keep their relationships going, even over the phone and email.
- The ability to telework has created a change in our policies to meet the needs of the employees.
- More community options for individuals in their home-communities.
- Staff felt known.
- PPE drive throughs for clients and community.
- People re-engaged in their home & community routines safely and responsibly. We have provided education about the benefits of getting outdoors, and the risk/benefits of the vaccine(s).
- We remained fully operational throughout 2020, never stopped providing in person direct supports and even enhanced supports when other providers bailed on people.
- We remained community based and helped people to continue a life of their choosing - whether that meant hunkering down or going out.
- How staff showed up day in and day out. Very few staff lost any work due to individuals refusing or reducing services. Very few staff left due to the pandemic. Providing some hero pay and extra funds to individuals during this time was helpful. Our core staff that have been with us are amazing.

What are you concerned about?

- The strain a change in return to work will cause, especially for staff who are parents.
- Burn out/staff overturn, less people to provide paid supports to individuals
- Staff taking advantage of COVID sick pay
- Where do we go from here? How do we safely open facilities again for medically fragile individuals?
- How leadership are still needed in the office when they too may need to work from home.
- "Reopening" is confusing; not a lot of direction from state agencies or when given new direction there is no time to think about the change/what it means for all involved.
- Being able to provide support to all individuals who want to have community services. Able to provide services to individuals who may need more emotional support.
- Because the vaccine is not a cure, somebody will still get sick somehow and this could generate another scare that sets us back (living in fear of community integration).
- Concerned about staff exhaustion level, current recruiting environment.
- Return to the office for everyone by July 1 and managers by June 1. I am worried this doesn't take into consideration individuals who may have reasons to delay returning to the office. Many of us were hired during the pandemic and have responsibilities at home such as caring for an elder or a child.
- We are facing a staffing crisis statewide in CA. We have sent letters to the Gov and legislators in an attempt to increase our rates for in-person services to offer our staff higher wages, and have encouraged our Gov to STOP unemployment benefits for people who can work. WE HAVE WORK AVAILABLE, but prospective workers inform us that they can make as much or more to stay home; or they have to stay with their kids due to zoom-school.
- Cal OSHA is so far behind in reflecting new CDC guidelines that it is frustrating. Staff will start to break rules if they are not adjusted soon. Secondly, if the government keeps giving away free money and incentives to remain unemployed, we will have a serious staffing crisis. We either need higher rates or the free money needs to end.
- Staffing - no one new is coming in so we are starting to look at shortages if that does not change.
- Keep our staff once we are out of the pandemic who can get better pay somewhere else especially our newer staff.
- Finding the right people for the higher skilled back-up staff; transitioning into this new model, including convincing our funding source (regional center) that it is worth the cost to better support the person and avoid high costs of emergency responses .
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What might you try next?

- Looking at how the people we support have used their skills to take care of themselves, and build those strengths into what's reported in their plans. Work with staff on tele-commute option moving forward, post-pandemic, with criteria in place to make that work smoothly.
- Continue to focus on building leadership in the community
- Engaging back in the community in a safe manor and following CDC guidelines.
- Expanding community options, and taking a look at what kinds of activities are best done at a facility.
- Continue the work of making the agency a more person centered organization and system.
- Gather with my team more often to discuss changes and how to support homes
- The agency has received a state grant to hire a PT Behavioral Technician to assist in supporting individuals with emotional support while training staff on how to support the individual so they can be successful in the community and job sites.
- Continued mentorship and may be involving professionals such as disease control specialist and a dentist to provide continued training. we are going to "love the one you are with" and invest deeply in current staff hoping they will refer others to come apply.
- Talk to directors to ask for more flexibility and accommodation based on needs.
- Our rates are fixed, so we can't pay our staff that provide in-person services more (we would like to!). We will continue to contact our Governor and state legislators about this Hiring CRISIS.
- We are currently working on getting the people we support back into things as they reopen (CA has been extremely slow and LA is even worse). Most people are engaged in new volunteer or paid work, but reestablishing old relationships has been slow in coming.
- Continue to give all supplies to each person and staff. Increase pay to the best we can before the last min. wage increase. Once we are back to in person team/circle meetings, allow those to virtually attend if preferred.
- Helping more highly skilled staff to form a cooperative or business and work this way on retainer with a variety of consumers.