

Seven Essential Elements of a Person-Centered Plan

1 Respectful and empowering

Plan language is descriptive, respectful, empowering and uses everyday words that the person, those important to the person, and providers can understand. Avoids using jargon. Creates a clear picture of a unique person. Clearly outlines who is making statements. Reserves the use of "I" statements for quoting the person directly.

2 Focuses on the positive

Identifies positive information and builds on strengths, using a trauma-informed approach. If the person has experienced trauma, the plan provides detailed information about how to support the person to feel safe. The detailed plan helps reader understand why the person has the issue and what will be done to address it.

3 Makes connections

Important ideas are organized and interwoven throughout. Makes connections so that it's clear that outcomes and services flow from information outlined elsewhere in the plan. Avoids "cutting and pasting". Refers back to a specific page or section when it's important for the reader to have more information. Uses a clear structure that helps organize the information, such as such as by daily routine, work, home, or community life.

4 Detailed and thorough

What's important for and important to the person is specific, detailed, and reflected in outcomes and services. Descriptions create a rich picture of the person. Goes beyond the surface and digs deeper. Doesn't ignore something important to the person simply because it's difficult to address. Creates outcomes and outlines services that weave together what's important to and for the person, along with other issues identified elsewhere in the plan.

5 Clear outcomes and action steps

Outcomes are clear and action steps describe how progress will be measured. Creates outcomes that describe something the person will accomplish and reflects information contained elsewhere in the plan. Length of time it takes to accomplish an outcome may vary. Each outcome has services connected to it, but not every service is connected to an outcome. If an outcome describes a one-time event then at least one additional outcome is listed, and services and supports to reach the one time event are listed. Provider payment is contingent upon delivery of authorized services, not on achievement of outcomes.

6 Clear description of services and supports

Includes a clear description of services and supports necessary to address needs and preferred method for delivery. Identifies which components of the service are needed and why. Doesn't necessary list discrete tasks. Descriptions live in the main plan document or in the assessment or discovery document, as long as the main plan document refers back to the specific section of the assessment or discovery. Plan writers use a schedule format to organize information. Plan writers might organize the information for this element by having a conversation with the person about a regular day and asking what they need help with. See MDA "Funnel Document" for a complete list of topics to cover in this conversation.

7 For Medicaid-Funded Services

Includes type, scope, amount, frequency, duration and provider type. Includes this information in main plan document and in one place so that it's easy to find and clear to providers. Counties could create a "plan roadmap" that outlines where to find essential information in the plan.

When using this tool, it is important to remember:

- None of the Seven Essential Elements stands alone. If a plan successfully meets one element, but not others, it is not a quality plan. A good plan meets the criteria for all seven elements.
- A good plan creates a detailed picture of a unique person. Attending to all seven elements helps create that picture.
- A good plan helps the person, those important to the person, and providers understand how services and supports will be delivered to help the person achieve his or her desired outcomes.
- Assessment and discovery information can be in either the main plan document, or in a separate document. When the assessment or discovery information is in a separate document, the main plan document should refer back to specific sections, or pages, of the assessment and discovery document in order to provide information that is important for providers and supporters to know.