

Can we do better? Where is the person in your person centred practice?

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Background

Assistive technology enables people with disabilities to function in their communities. It is well established that customer engagement in assessment and equipment prescription is positively correlated to equipment acceptance and retention (1). Noting that equipment abandonment is a significant issue, it is timely to question – what does true person centred practice look like?

Method

Yooralla's therapy team have been exploring these ideas with customers and how they impact our work processes. We invited therapists from disability, community and hospital sectors to attend an interactive forum about complex equipment prescription and customer empowered decision making.

Results

Communication, planning, transparency and advocacy have been identified as key person centred strategies to help customers make decisions about their complex equipment. The authors have also found discrepancy in the interpretation of person centred practice. What does it look like? Where is the power balance? How much should customers drive decision making? What is the therapist's responsibility?

Discussion

Evidence supports a person-inclusive interpretation of person centred practice (2). The authors propose that more discussion is needed to develop consensus on what person centred practice actually looks like. This presentation will share strategies to empower customers to make their own successful choices and challenge you to reflect upon your practice.

References

- (1) Philips, B, Zhao, H. Predictors of Assistive Technology Abandonment. *Assistive Technology* 1993; 5.1:36-45.
- (2) Johnston, P., et al. Getting it "right": How collaborative relationships between people with disabilities and professionals can lead to the acquisition of needed assistive technology. *Disability and Rehabilitation: Assistive Technology* (Posted online 21.3.14)
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