

PRIMARY CARER'S STATEMENT RE: John's Review Plan

I have taken this opportunity to present to you my Carer's statement, including in it information that I feel is relevant to the formulation of his 2016/17 review plan.

I fully understand that the plan will be based upon the hopes, dreams and goals of my son John, as set out in his Plan Review Workbook. I believe that as such, it will hold a greater relevance and integrity.

However, I also believe that there are areas which need clarification and explanation and which I, as his sole primary Carer, can provide based on the knowledge and depth of understanding I have of my son.

I have a concern with his reflections on service providers, given that it was with their guidance that he completed the workbook. He requires a familiarity and consistency of Carers and his choices may not enable him to achieve his best outcomes.

I also feel that the brevity of his responses in the booklet requires further elaboration so that all relevant information can be considered. For this reason I have included here my assessment of his goals for the year, giving the highs and lows to add context to his remarks.

1. I want to learn to live by myself in my new unit.

Achievements

- * Able to fill own weekly medication container (mother monitors)
- * Manages own hygiene
- * Cooks own meals
- * Shops for food – does write out a shopping list
- * Cleans own home – has a timetable for cleaning chores for the week.

Problems

- * He is unable to buy or fill prescriptions without assistance or budget for their cost
- * He still needs to be monitored about taking medication
- * He still needs prompting for teeth, change of clothes and other personal hygiene
- * He needs to be driven to shops and his grocery purchases monitored
- * He needs to be prompted for cleaning chores
- * His existing Carers do not ensure his weekly routines are consistently followed and maintained. It does not help when the casualisation of staffing prevents rapport building and consistency which is essential for John
- * He still finds it difficult to cope and understand changes or unexpected money matters
- * He still tends to impulse buy and has no money left for the second week in his fortnightly budget.

2. I would like to keep my job in the short term but seek open employment in the future.

Achievements

- * Continued his employment at his job until August
- * Centrelink has matched him with a Job Service Provider and he has attended fortnightly meetings
- * Has built up a resume and distributed to local shops
- * Completed Internet research and applications online for different jobs.

Problems

- * Job Service Provider has been unable to find one single opportunity for him
- * He has lost motivation to work
- * He has lost motivation in his life skills and become isolated.

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As a mother, I have tried community participation with him at Community Gardens, Noah's Retreat and animal rescue, made contact with a pet grooming business and taken him to a volunteer agency. Through this last program he has been offered two shifts per week in one of their community programs.

3. *I would like to have friends of my own to go out with and have fun.*

Achievements

- * Has continued to participate with the Community Choir
- * Personally sought out a local circus school to attend every Saturday, travelling by bus each way
- * Continues to attend two peer support activities per month
- * He was successful in applying for the Ally Project. This initiative is intended to assist John in creating a friendship base, find regular and appropriate social activities and looking for employment opportunities with the help of a mentor. It is with the guidance of his Ally that he now attends a Disability Advocacy Group each month and has attended some planning sessions.

Problems

- * Difficulties arise when mother (or Wednesday night Carer) is unable to transport him to a performance or practice session
- * His motivation to attend varies, he needs to find new and different activities
- * His Saturday social participation with the service provider has been unsuccessful in promoting new and different activities. The two hours were inadequate so it was combined for a fortnightly event, which just confused him, and the activities did not involve social events, just the Carer and John. Now, with the additional transport costs imposed, they are financially impractical.

4. *I want to learn to keep myself healthy and happy.*

Achievements

- * Plan developed and provided by staff at Good Samaritan and distributed to Service Providers
- * Gym attendance regularly maintained
- * Improved fitness and attitudes towards exercise
- * Has built very positive rapport with both gym buddies
- * John has begun to show a positive responsibility in his dealings with these Carers due to his familiarity and the consistency of their input
- * John still sees a psychologist and a local podiatrist on a regular basis as part of his Medicare health plan.

Problems

- * Behavioural Plan distributed to service providers but effective implementation would require additional funding to adequately train all staff
- * He resigned from his employment so the effective use of the plan was not trialed there
- * Despite his gym progress and due to his sedentary habits and inappropriate snack foods, his weight has increased and there are concerns of possible future diabetes. He is now being regularly monitored by a dietician
- * He still has points of crisis with highly inappropriate behaviour and language.

As John's sole informal support and having his best interests and future well-being to consider, I cannot emphasise too strongly the importance of developing a sustainable and balanced plan that takes into account his complex emotional needs.

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He has an underdeveloped sense of personal responsibility for his actions. The inappropriate behaviours he frequently indulges in put at risk his successful transition into becoming a well-adjusted and independent young man living in his own home.

My personal anxiety and stress is considerable and relentless. I find I am always trying to anticipate and organize how to keep him healthy, happy, safe and secure as well as picking up the pieces when it all falls apart. I cannot always be at his beck and call or answer him at every phone call or text. My husband and I have our own health problems as well as aging relatives who also require our time and commitment to their well-being.

John's achievements over this past year have been significant and I believe indicate that his future can be a positive and successful one. However at this early stage in his life, despite his developing independence, I still remain fearful for her and need to ensure constant monitoring.