**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INDEPENDENT FACILITATED PERSONAL PLANS VS TRADITIONAL PERSONAL PLANS IN PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING: A QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS**

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**Objectives:** Person Directed planning has been common practice in the Developmental Services Sector (and other sectors) for over a decade. Yet the manner in which planning is carried out varies widely. In Ontario, planning through an independent facilitator became more possible when Passport Funds were allowed to be used to purchase this service. Yet this remains an expensive prospect for people receiving services. Over the past two years, Karis Disability Services has done a portion of annual plans using quasi-independent facilitators (i.e., plan completed by someone not involved in the provision of direct supports). In this study, we investigated the quality of these quasi-independently facilitated personal plans (IFPP) by comparing them to traditionally-done personal plans (TPP) which are created by employees who provide direct support to the person (e.g., direct support professionals and program managers))

**Methods:** We employed a mixed-method design, including a retrospective comparative research design (non-experimental between-subject and within-subject design) using quantitative and qualitative analyses. A stratified sampling design was used for the random allocation of plans to groups. Two sets of investigators were included in the study. Unmasked and masked investigators. The plan allocation to specific groups was blinded to the masked investigators.150 personal plans of people receiving services from Karis were evaluated by two masked researchers using a Personal Plan Quality Tool (PPQ), which is a non-standardized, dynamic measurement developed by the Quality Assurance Department within Karis Disability Services. After evaluating each plan using the PPQ tool, two assessors coded each plan with an overall quality rating. Cohen’s kappa was used to assess the Inter-rater reliability. The analysis revealed a kappa coefficient of 0.60, indicating moderate agreement between raters.

**Results:** Statistically significant difference in the quality of plans was observed in the between-subjects design (IFPP and TPP; t (98) = -2.984, p = 0.003, p<0.05) and within-subjects design, with the IFPP group performing well in both the designs. Additionally, qualitative analysis indicated that the IFPP provided more detailed information than the TPP.

**Discussion/Conclusion:** IFPP produced better plans compared to TPP, but still there is room for improvement around expanding goals and beyond. Future projects to investigate the outcomes of IFPP, goals and actions achieved etc. Additionally, this study demonstrates the ability to conduct sound research-based evaluation of planning processes and the value that our agency realized in investing resources in sound planning processes.

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