



Creating a Context Map for Practicalities and Possibilities

The reason for developing and sharing this context map was to make connections between what is happening or starting to happen inside the world of personalisation and person centred approaches; and the wider world in which these changes are taking place. The aim of doing this was to develop a shared understanding of key priorities regarding person centred thinking with older people in relation to this complex agenda for change.

'Context maps' are best developed and used when the process of creating them pools people's knowledge about that topic, and highlights gaps in knowledge and understanding that need to be addressed.

The National Leadership Group for Practicalities and Possibilities first worked together to identify key features of public policy, wider societal and practice development pertinent to the range of aims, activities and interventions associated with Practicalities and Possibilities.

Representatives from the 9 participating authorities, communities and partnerships came together at a learning event in April 2008 to further develop this map; and identify the key issues, challenges and opportunities they were also working with at a local level.

The result was a map of the world as it looked and felt during 2008, when the majority of the local development work took place.

At the heart of this map is our shared goal of ensuring a good life for older people, with equal access to the same opportunities for participation, services and support as everyone else.

The key influences and drivers were identified as:

- An increased emphasis on self directed support and personalisation, including wider developments embracing all public services that enable older people to stay in control of their support and to increasingly have their voices heard.
- Lessons from various pilots and initiatives that have been exploring, testing and developing innovative approaches to supporting older people (e.g. the POPP pilots, the Link Age Plus pilots, best practice guidance from SCIE).
- New performance and regulatory frameworks affecting all public services, not just those traditionally associated with health and social care. For example the new Comprehensive Area Assessment framework which focuses on outcomes that relate to real differences in communities and individuals' lives, rather than pure volume and throughput measures related to services; and the development of the Care Quality Commission with a clear focus on demonstrating improved outcomes in individuals' lives and increased choice and control over people's support.

- The pressure for change resulting from numerous reports and reviews including the Darzi review of health and health care services; the review of the Fair Access to Care Services guidance and how this has been applied across the country; the impact of lifetime homes regulations.
- Various strategies and policy frameworks that promote person centred approaches including: the Independent Living Strategy, Putting People First, World Class Commissioning, Lifetime Homes Lifetime Neighbourhoods, the recently published National Dementia Strategy.

Person centred approaches encourage everyone involved in providing or commissioning services to take a whole person, whole life perspective. Services only matter in the context of someone's life. The first thing that Practicalities and Possibilities partners identified is missing from this map, is an arrow that captures the wider societal and environmental factors that influence every single one of us, regardless of our age or our need for support. Examples of such factors include: changing family structures and relationships; demographic change not just amongst older people but changes occurring within younger generations (e.g. the implications of smaller and diverse families, and migration); growing user and consumer movements; and an increasingly tight fiscal climate for communities, individuals and families, services and the public purse generally.

What this illustrates is the need for everyone to take a much broader view of the context within which radical change programmes are taking place. This is not just about transforming care and support; it is about improving life chances and therefore is also about building inclusive and sustainable communities.

Practicalities and Possibilities partners also mapped the internal factors impacting upon local developments, and in particular their areas of focus for embedding person centred thinking with older people.

These factors include a combination of local drivers for change including those directly connected to the Practicalities and Possibilities programme, as follows.

- Having diverse partnerships beyond health and social care, working together on shared priorities with and for older people.
- Opportunities to learn and share within and between the 9 sites.
- Having a range of practical materials and resources to guide local developments, and help keep partners on track.
- Developing a range of approaches and initiatives concerned with improving older people's choice and control.
- Keeping older people at the centre of all these developments, as well as the specific activities developed through Practicalities and Possibilities.
- Engaging senior leaders in this programme for change amidst the range of other pressures and changes competing for their attention.
- Connecting small scale change for initially small number of older people, to large scale transformation agendas for wider populations.

