

## **What Does the Choice Voucher Mean to me?** **Self-Direction at Shiawassee Health and Wellness**

Self-Direction uses a set of ideas and values that underscore a core belief that people who require support through the public mental health system must have the freedom to define the life they seek and obtain assistance to achieve that life.

Self-Direction is a belief in you. We believe you should have power and control of your life.

### **Self-Direction operates under four basic principles.**

**Freedom**-The ability for you, with your chosen family and/or friends, to plan your life with the supports you need

**Authority**-The ability for you to control a certain sum of dollars in order to purchase supports, with the help of your circle of friends and family members.

**Support**-Your support network will help you arrange your natural supports and resources, to assist you in creating a life rich in community associations and contributions.

Your support network could be... Family, Friends, Personal Assistant, Support Coordinator, Case Manager, Neighbors

**Responsibility**- The acceptance of a valued role in your community through employment, community connections, and general caring for others, as well as accountability for spending public dollars in ways that make your life better.

### **Self-Direction Supports Your right as a Citizen to Control Your Resources so that you may:**

- Make your own choices
- Be a part of your community
- Have meaningful relationships

### **Self-Direction BEGINS WITH YOUR PERSON-CENTERED PLAN**

- You talk about your dreams.
- You decide who will help you reach your dreams and goals.
- The family and friends you choose will support your choices about where you want to live, work, and have fun.

### **HOW Does Self-Direction Work**

Your family and friends will help you by respecting and supporting your choices so you can reach your dreams and goals

- Your family and friends can help you make choices that are healthy and safe.
- Some of the choices you make in your PCP will cost money. Your support network can help you develop an Individual Budget.

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**WHAT IS AN INDIVIDUAL BUDGET???**

- Your individual budget shows you how much your supports and services will cost.
- Your job is to stay within your budget.

**There are a few rules that must be followed when developing your individual budget.**

- Your personal money (SSI/SSDI, Paycheck, etc.) and your resources must be considered first. This money is usually used for expenses public dollars will not cover such as rent, utilities, food personal vehicle, vacations, etc.
- Next, community resources will be considered. An example of these include DHHS Home Help Services, Food stamps, Michigan Development and Career Development, Housing Subsidies (Section 8)
- Last of all, public mental health dollars, for which you qualify, will be considered. This amount will be based on your PCP Plan.

**WE WILL HELP YOU LIVE A Self-Directed LIFE BY**

- Focusing on your dreams, desires, and health and safety needs.
- Encouraging relationships
- Helping you develop your Individual Budget
- Helping you purchase supports and services you have identified in your Person-Centered Plan
- Helping you be a part of your community

**IT IS ALSO YOUR JOB TO BE A PART OF YOUR COMMUNITY BY:**

- WORKING
- VOLUNTEERING
- BECOMING A MEMBER OF A COMMUNITY GROUP OR SERVICE CLUB, IF YOU WANT

**Employment**

- When you think about employment there are a lot of choices available to you. You can think about the work skills you want to learn and what kind of job that you will enjoy. The kind of support you might need to be successful at work is also important
- In thinking about employment here are some questions to consider:
- What are the jobs and kinds of work that interest you most?
- What skills do you have now?
- What skills do you need to learn?
- How do you learn best?
- Is it important to you to work near home?
- What kind of transportation will you require?
- Do you want to work only during the day?
- Will you need any adaptive equipment or adaptive technology to assist you in working?
- Are you interested in working with a job developer and a job coach?
- Do you have an interest in starting a small business?

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**EDUCATION**

- Are there classes you want to take? If so where?
- Are there certain skills you would like to learn or improve?
- Do you need help with basic money skills and budgeting?
- Do you learn better from classes or practice?
- Do you know someone who is very skilled at what you want to learn?

**TRANSPORTATION**

- This can be one of the biggest barriers to participation in the community, so it's important to think about transportation and the options you have available in your community

**RELATIONSHIPS**

- You will start out by thinking about places that you want to go. You may want to try some activities out with friends or join a community group.
- By going places and doing things you enjoy, you will be more likely to meet people who like the same things as you.

**SELF-Direction is for Me:**

Participation in Self-Direction is voluntary and does not require you to make changes in your current supports.

- Self-Direction is about expanding, not limiting options.
- Self-Direction is about enhancing, not reducing supports and services.
- Self-Direction is about a new kind of partnership between you, your family and those who provide your supports and services.