“Using Collaborative approaches to facilitate staff employment for those self managing funds”

“A Non Government Organisations innovative and creative approach to assisting individuals who self manage to be empowered to recruit and retain staff.”
Introducing the Agency
The Community Living Project (CLP) formed in 1985 through the leadership shown by a small group of families in the southern region of Adelaide
Introducing the Agency

Community Living Project Inc.

“"To provide a quality service which enables people who have intellectual and/or multiple disabilities to achieve a purposeful and valued community life.”"
Introducing the Agency

The CLP’s philosophy and approach places the person with disability, together with their family and support network, clearly at the centre of all planning and decision making processes and works with each individual person and their family to provide support that reflects their individual needs, aspirations and dreams for the future.
Introducing the Agency
We work in a model of partnership

where each person and their family and
are encouraged and indeed expected to
take active control over the decisions
that affect their future
Rebecca

Strength
Resilience
Sense of humour
Caring
Zest for life
perseverance
determination
Current restrictions in S.A do not allow individuals to self employ staff; recruitment of staff for personal support must be undertaken through an agency that is on the “preferred provider panel.”
What was important to Rebecca

• *To maintain power and control of staff recruitment and selection*

• *To work collaboratively with an agency whose values and philosophies have created a system that puts the person at the centre of their supports*
CLP assists individuals and families who have chosen to use support funding they have available to establish a more immediate relationship with Support Workers by taking responsibility for recruiting and managing them directly.
Power and control – Safeguards offered by CLP

- Coordination assistance: purchased by the hour as required to support with advertising /interviewing/ and staff management
- Agency responsible for WHS, but works closely with families to ensure they understand their obligations around a safe workplace
- Hourly rates include all worker on costs
- Flexibility with hours
- Responsible for compulsory training
- Offers ready capacity for workers and families to use agency as a mediator for any tricky situations
In the self management relationship the agency encourages the family and individual to take control of decisions about staffing including:

- Recruitment
- Selection
- Interviewing
- Rostering
- Time sheet validation and control
- Leave approval.
Recruitment of staff is done in a way that ensures that the power remains with the individual and not the agency. Creating a “right relationship” between the individual self-managing and the agency.
Power and control

The agency has adapted systems and process to enable those self managing their funds to be in control of the recruitment and employment of staff whist the agency still maintains the safe guards required for employment.
Power and control – What it’s meant for Rebecca

• Above award wages/retention of staff
• Reporting relationship of staff directly to the self manager
• Flexibility with hours
• Stable staff happy staff
• An agency to use as a sounding board for issues
• Autonomy and control
• Opportunity to learn and grow
Comments from Agency

• We need to work differently with each family, enabling them to take the level of control they feel comfortable with.

• A flexible/experienced coordinator acts as a resource and trouble shooter if and when required, which provides reassurance to individuals and families.

• Workers are not “shared” by the agency, meaning that the worker sees themselves as reporting to the person/family, not the agency.

• Once a team is settled, they tend to ‘stick’.
The Future

CLP believe individuals/families **should** be the direct employer, this brings family the greatest degree of authority and control.

The 3 way split of worker/family/agency can be very confusing.

We have just tried to make the best of a cumbersome system.
Unless the family request support, the worker should have nothing to do with the agency other than perhaps getting their wages put in the bank....
Comments from staff

Working with Rebecca is great, I report directly to her and we have a great relationship.

I have flexibility in working arrangements and I negotiate them directly with Rebecca.

I am involved in supporting Rebecca to achieve her hopes and dreams.

I feel valued and supported.

In the team we work with our skills and strengths that are matched to Rebecca's needs.

We can be both a worker and a friend if we want.
Comments from Rebecca

I have a team of staff that support my vision for “a real life in the real world”

I can work out how best to train them with the things that are important to me

I can use the agency to help me as much and as little as I need

I can be as creative as I want

I can be friends with my staff if I want
The Future

Surely it is just a matter of time until SA makes direct employment possible, WA and Victoria have been doing it successfully for years.