

Principle 2:

Support should be co-ordinated
across all services



Principles of Good Transitions 3

Scottish Transitions Forum
Second Edition 2019

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The Seven Principles of Good Transitions

1 Planning and decision making should be carried out in a person-centred way

2 **Support should be co-ordinated across all services**

3 Planning should start early and continue up to age 25

4 All young people should get the support they need

5 Young people, parents and carers must have access to the information they need

6 Families and carers need support

7 A continued focus on transitions across Scotland

Principle 2

Support should be co-ordinated across all services

This means:

- There should be a co-ordinated approach to transitions in each local authority
- Learning and development opportunities should include an understanding of all aspects of transitions
- Transitions should be evaluated

There should be a co-ordinated approach to transitions in each local authority

The Scottish Government has stated the importance of multi-agency planning to improve the experience of transitions for young people¹:

‘Partners who plan in a joined-up way are more likely to ensure that young people can access the support they need to make effective transitions. This means having an effective multi-agency approach and the involvement of universal services, with clearly defined responsibilities.’

Additional Support for Learning Report to Parliament (2013), p15²

During transitions, young people with additional support needs may come into contact with many practitioners from health, education, welfare, housing, social care and other services. Effective co-ordination of transition planning and support at a local level is therefore critical³, particularly for those with learning disabilities or multiple and complex needs⁴. Corporate parenting responsibilities also need to be considered

throughout the transitions process.

Strategic and operational managers in local authorities and NHS boards have told us that the lack of joined-up working between professional disciplines is the biggest challenge they face in effectively supporting transitions⁵. Where effective partnership working does exist⁶, it makes a significant difference in the transitions experience for young people⁷. Lead individuals and agencies involved in supporting transitions should agree a joint ‘transitions pathway’ in their local authority area⁸. Young people and carers should be involved in the development, testing and evaluation of these pathways⁹. This has to be supported by those at senior levels to ensure they are effectively implemented and monitored. Such pathways provide a mechanism to embed and sustain successful work carried out using short-term project funds into longer-term transitions strategies.

'There needs to be oversight across adult and children's services at high enough level. It needs somebody at the helm saying transitions are important'

Manager, children's service. "Where Next?" Evaluation of the STF [2015] p14.

Best practice

Co-ordinated approaches can be delivered in a number of ways. The most frequently used strategic approaches are transitions co-ordinators¹⁰ or local transitions forums or networks¹¹. Sometimes these two approaches are used in conjunction¹² and both are shown to lead to improvement in practice¹³.

The Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh (RCPE) Transitions Steering Group discusses co-ordinated approaches in the publication 'Think Transition'. RCPE advise joint boards, which may include health and social care partnerships across adult and children's services, to consider the need for transition co-ordinators that bridge health and social care areas. This is a role that could be fulfilled by an adolescent nurse specialist¹⁴. Where these professionals are already in post, their skills should be fully used in the co-ordination and delivery of transitions processes.

Transitions co-ordinator

Transitions co-ordinators may have different roles; some working strategically, others delivering face-to-face support. Best practice examples suggest that transitions co-ordinators should be available to all young people with additional support needs who require them. Where they are available, they have made a significant improvement in the overall quality of planning and positive outcomes for young people going through transition¹⁵ (NICE Transitions guidelines, 2016, 1.2.5-10).

The National Institute for Care Excellence (NICE) guidance states:

'[The transitions co-ordinator] is a role rather than a job title. This should be one of the people from among the group of workers providing care and support to the young person, who has been designated to take a co-ordinating role. It could be, for example, a nurse, youth worker, an allied health professional or another health and social care practitioner. It could also be someone who already has the title keyworker, transition worker or personal adviser.'¹⁶

The NICE guidelines 2016¹⁷ suggests that where transitions co-ordinators are in place, the local authority should:

- Consult with young people and take their views into account when choosing their transitions co-ordinator
- Develop a clear understanding among all professionals, the young person and their family of what their role is
- Facilitate and be part of the evaluation of the local authority's or joint board's transitions pathway
- Remain involved until the young person is settled in adult services.

Highland work in transitions

In Highland Council the transitions co-ordinator is working to enable planning for transition to commence at 14 years. They work closely with the Opportunities for All team to collate data that allows schools to identify those in need of enhanced support at an early stage. NHS Highland has appointed a project manager for transitions who is scoping the need for a dedicated health and social care transitions team for 14-25 year olds. The introduction of an updated transitions protocol and pathway to be used by the Highland Council and NHS Highland will allow for a consistent approach across services. These documents and others that complement the process are accessible via Highland's website www.hi-hope.org. Hi-hope is an online resource, listing opportunities for young people leaving school in the Highlands.

Current initiatives include:

- Formation of a local transitions network in Lochaber
- Transitions champions - practitioners who are able to sign post others to the best services to support the young person
- Appointment of a transitions social worker in Lochaber
- A team of self-directed support (SDS) peer advisers with real-life experience of using SDS to support and advise young people
- The CHAMPS board run by care-experienced development assistants who are setting up a "one stop shop" to support care experienced young people during transition
- Working with employers to give them the skills and confidence to provide young people with additional support needs work experience or long-term employment.

The future of transitions in Highland is bright. There is a real movement, backed by enthusiastic and passionate staff, to make the process person centred, pro-active and a positive experience for young people and their families.

Local transitions forums / networks

The second most frequently used strategic approach is the establishment of local transitions forums or networks that co-ordinate support across different services¹⁸, develop shared transitions pathways¹⁹, ensure planning starts early and anticipate future demand on services.

Local forums or networks should have representation from:

- Children and young people (UNCRC article 12)
- Parents and carers
- Health and allied health professionals from paediatric and adult health services
- Primary and secondary health-care representatives
- Skills Development Scotland / careers services
- Local Opportunities for All representatives
- Child and adult social work services
- Third-sector services - such as support, advice and advocacy

- Education professionals pre- and post-16 education
- Local area co-ordinators
- Housing and accommodation providers.

Other services or individuals that are key to commissioning workforce development, or who can offer co-ordinated and responsive support, should be included²⁰.

The benefits of investment in early years' intervention may be lost if the transition through childhood and into adulthood is not managed and co-ordinated effectively²¹. Demonstrating the value of 'spend to save' is important if we are to move toward more sustainable methods of resourcing joined up and strategic approaches to transitions, especially now that we are fully committed to the integration agenda as presented in the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014.

Work²² is underway to establish to what extent strategic approaches to supporting transitions are being adopted across Scotland, which approaches are being used and what resources are being dedicated to them. At the time of writing, the Scottish Transitions Forum is working with partners to develop the methodology to map this information.

With support from the Scottish Government National Strategy for Self-directed Support Innovation Fund (Building the capacity of Providers and Workforce development, 2015 – 18), the Scottish Transitions Forum helps to support and facilitate local transitions forums and networks across Scotland. Using the Principles of Good Transitions as a framework, approaches are adapted to meet the needs and circumstances in each local area. Our learning from this work will be shared to encourage and inform more co-ordinated approaches in other areas.

The report, 'From the Pond to the Sea'²³ echoes the Children and Young People's Health Outcomes Forum, stating:

'Poor transition can lead to frankly disastrous health outcomes for both physical and mental health ... at its worst, poor transition leads to drop-out from medical care for those with a long-term condition, and deterioration in those with disabilities – both leading to unnecessary, costly and often distressing hospital admissions.'

'From the Pond to the Sea' - Care Quality Commission Report, p12

We know that investment in the short term helps to improve the life chances for children²⁴, young people and families at risk²⁵, however, more work is needed to demonstrate the longer-term benefits of investment made in transition services.



Learning and development opportunities should include an understanding of all aspects of transitions

Everyone connected with supporting transitions should have access to innovative and aspirational learning as part of their initial training and continuing professional development²⁶. In order to help co-ordinate support across all services, this training should include an overview of the broad legislative and policy framework that impacts on transitions²⁷.

Best practice

Learning should include an understanding of the importance of a holistic approach to transitions. For example, how a young person manages their health care needs²⁸ can impact on transitions greatly²⁹. The Ready, Steady Go Health Transitions guidance initiative³⁰ is a useful set of guidelines, with key questions and literature exploring and building on self-efficacy to help young people manage their own health-care needs.

The Scottish Transitions Forum provides a peer-support network for practitioners³¹ across a range of professional disciplines that helps to improve understanding and share learning. We have developed training called 'Autism & Transitions: Understanding Your Role' that, is being trialled in nine local authority areas in partnership with the Autism Network Scotland. This has been delivered to professionals from all relevant sectors and parents and carers. The training includes the Principles of Good Transitions, associated legislation and rights and how they relate to young autistic people.

The importance of transition education for student nurses

‘Health and social care delivery for children and young people does not stop when they reach 16. It transfers to the adult care sector with new people, new philosophies and new services. This is a minefield of new information and a maze to search through. For young people with any sort of additional support needs, be they complex or exceptional health needs or additional support for learning needs, this maze becomes ever more complicated as each young person and their family strives to find people, services and information which will meet their individual situations. To enable the voices of young people and their families to be heard and understood, there needs to be a comprehensive baseline educational package made available for student nurses to help them understand what makes a good or bad transition for young people. This package should include the Principles of Good Transitions and should be supported by a placement learning experience which brings the principles to life.’

Lecturer in child health, Edinburgh Napier University

‘Learning about the Principles of Good Transitions and ways of working in theory is important. But it makes even more sense if we can see them in practice and hear how it is for young people. Seeing the work and time which goes into transition and the importance of person-centred care, involving the young person and their family, makes us appreciate how complex this process is and how important it is to get it right.’

Student child health nurse, Edinburgh Napier University

Transitions should be evaluated

Evaluation helps to ensure that professional duties are being met, areas of best practice and unmet need are being captured, young people's outcomes are being achieved and informs on-going improvement.

Evaluating transitions in Fife

A wide range of organisations and groups provide support for young people to make the transition into adulthood in Fife. These include the health and social care partnership, education and children's services and voluntary and independent organisations. To guide their work and ensure a consistent standard of service is provided, a Charter for Transition and a 'Moving On' website were produced in 2012. The Charter sets out four clear standards of care and support which young people and families can expect during transition. A copy of the charter can be downloaded from the Moving On website at: www.fifedirect.org.uk/movingon

Since the introduction of the Charter, new legislation has been developed and adult and children social work services in Fife have integrated into partnership arrangements with health and education. In 2017, the Fife health and social care partnership, education and children's services undertook a review, with the support of ARC Scotland, to explore the effectiveness of the tools they use to support transition. The review included consultation with young people, families and practitioners involved in transitions. It highlighted examples of good practice, identified potential areas for improvement and outlined recommendations for updating the available transitions resources in line with recent legislation changes.

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